



# TURNING 18 & SOCIAL SECURITY

NEIGHBORHOOD LEGAL SERVICES

*Because Justice is for All*



**SOCIAL SECURITY  
DISABILITY BENEFITS FOR  
CHILDREN TURNING 18**

# What Happens When a Child Who Is Getting SSI Disability Benefits Becomes An Adult?

When a child getting SSI benefits turns 18, Social Security will review their case to decide whether the child is eligible under the adult definition of disability. Children are considered disabled if they have a physical or mental condition that very seriously limits activities and the condition has lasted or is expected to last at least one year.

Adults are considered disabled if their condition is severe, lasts or is expected to last a year or more and prevents them from doing substantial work (paid employment). It is harder to prove disability under adult rules.

## Tips to improve your chances:

- Continue with your medical treatment
- Stay in touch with your teachers as they will be asked by social security to answer questions about any issues you had in school and how they affected your work
- Continue to work with any approved vocational rehabilitation programs, employment services or other support services.

## **This process is called Age-18 Redetermination**

Sometime after you turn 18 or graduate from secondary school, you will receive a notice from Social Security telling you that your case is being reviewed under the adult standard.

You will be asked to provide information about your conditions and the treatment you are getting.

Social Security will interview you in person or over the phone. The questions will be about how your disability affects your ability to work.

Social Security will send written notice of the decision by mail. It will indicate whether benefits will continue or be stopped due to a finding that you are not disabled under the adult standard.

If benefits are stopped, you will still receive two more months of benefits before they stop completely.



# IF YOUR BENEFITS ARE STOPPED, YOU CAN DISAGREE BY FILING AN “APPEAL”

1. To appeal the decision, file a Request for Reconsideration. If you file this within 10 days of receiving the decision, you can receive continuing benefits until a final decision is made.
2. If your Request for Reconsideration is denied, you can appeal again by filing a Request for Hearing by Administrative Law Judge.
3. Keep in mind that if you choose to have continuing benefits while your case is reviewed, you will have to pay back anything you received during that time if you lose on appeal unless you are given a waiver.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Pay attention to all mail from Social Security and provide all the information they need.
2. Talk to your doctors about your conditions and how they impact your day-to-day functioning.
3. Continue to take prescribed medications.
4. You can try part-time work, but be prepared to give good reasons why your disability prevented you from working full time at that job and tell Social Security whether or not your employer is providing some support that helps you to work despite your disability.

## How NLS Can Help

If you are 18 or 19 years old and Social Security has decided that you are no longer disabled under the adult standard, NLS can assist with the appeal process. It is important that you contact NLS immediately after receiving notification of benefit termination.

Please be sure to inform the intake staff of the date of termination because deadlines are critical in this process.



**NEIGHBORHOOD**  
**LEGAL SERVICES**



## NEIGHBORHOOD LEGAL SERVICES

# How to Get Help

Visit our website and apply online at

[www.nlsa.us](http://www.nlsa.us)

and choose “Get Legal Help”

or call **1-866-761-6572**

NLS provides interpreters and translation services.  
All services are confidential.

Neighborhood Legal Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, handicap/disability, national origin, ancestry, creed, and religion or any other characteristics protected by law with regard to employment and/or delivery of legal services.

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