



Securing today  
and tomorrow

# A Special Examination Is Needed for Your Disability Claim

[SSA.gov](https://www.ssa.gov)



After you apply for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments, you may need to have a special medical examination or test before we can decide whether you qualify.

The Disability Determination Services (DDS) in your state reviews your disability claim and makes the disability decision for us. Sometimes, the employees there need more information before they can decide if you have a disability under Social Security law. If so, they ask you to have a special exam or medical test that we'll pay for. We'll also pay for certain related travel expenses. If a doctor who is not your regular doctor performs your exam or test, we can send a copy of the results to your doctor if you ask us.

## What should I do?

It's your responsibility to take the exam or test and cooperate with the doctor examining you. If you can't keep the appointment we made for you, let the state agency know right away. The contact phone number and address are provided with the letter you receive notifying you about the exam or test. If you don't let the state agency know that you can't keep the appointment, DDS will make a decision based solely on the information already available in your case. You may be told that you do not have a disability as a result of this.

## What will the doctor do?

The doctor (or other medical professional) who sees you will only conduct the exam or test and get specific information requested by the state agency. The doctor will not take part in deciding whether you have a disability and will not prescribe treatment or medication for you. The doctor will send a report of the exam or test to the state agency.

## What will the state agency do?

The state agency will review the doctor's report along with all of the other information in your case and make a disability decision. We'll send you a letter to tell you about the decision the state agency made on your case.

## What if I do not agree with the decision?

If you don't agree with the decision, you have the right to appeal. Your letter will tell you how to appeal the decision.

## Things to remember

- Confirm that you will attend the appointment. The exam or test requested is intended to provide additional information needed to help the state agency make a decision in your case.
- If you can't keep the appointment, you must let the state agency know

right away. If you don't, the state agency may decide that you no longer have a disability

## Contacting Us

The most convenient way to do business with us is to visit [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) to get information and use our online services. There are several things you can do online: apply for benefits; start or complete your request for an original or replacement Social Security card; get useful information; find publications; and get answers to frequently asked questions.

Or, you can call us toll-free at **1-800-772-1213** or at **1-800-325-0778** (TTY) if you're deaf or hard of hearing. We can answer your call from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., weekdays. We provide free interpreter services upon request. For quicker access to a representative, try calling early in the day (between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. local time) or later in the day. **We are less busy later in the week (Wednesday to Friday) and later in the month.** You can also use our automated services via telephone, 24 hours a day, so you do not need to speak with a representative.

**Social Security Administration**

Publication No. 05-10087

January 2023 (March 2021 edition may be used)

A Special Examination Is Needed For Your Disability Claim

Produced and published at U.S. taxpayer expense