

Social Security Disability

RCC Fact Sheet

What is Social Security Disability?

For the purpose of Social Security benefits, disability is defined as the inability to engage in any *substantial gainful activity* by reason of any *medically determinable* physical or mental impairment, which is expected to last 12 months or result in death.

Which population does this program serve?

To qualify for disability benefits, a worker over the age of 31 must meet the following: be fully insured, be currently insured, be a U.S. Citizen or lawful admitted resident, have a physical or mental condition that prevents work or earning substantial gainful activity for a period of at least 12 months or have a terminal condition, and complete an application for benefits. Workers under the age of 24 qualify with six credits earned in the three-year period ending when the disability began. Workers between the ages of 24 and 31 qualify with credit for having worked half the time between the age of 21 and the time the worker became disabled. For example, if the worker becomes disabled at age 27, three years of work (12 credits) out of the past six years (time between ages 21 and 27) would be required.

How can this program help wounded warriors and their families?

Many recovering Service members experience illnesses or injuries that qualify them for Social Security Disability benefits. These benefits can help recovering Service members and families reach a level of financial stability, and can help support families in the event that recovering Service members are unable to return either to Active Duty or the workforce.

How can this program help Recovery Care Coordinators?

Recovery Care Coordinators (RCCs) can help recovering Service members and their families access Social Security Disability benefits. Specifically, RCCs can help recovery Service members and families collect the information necessary to make a Social Security Disability claim, including detailed information about the applicant, the nature of the disability, and how it affects their ability to work. Other required information includes contact information for physicians, psychologists, optometrists, nurse practitioners, therapists, chiropractors, acupuncturists, etc; reasons for treatment; and types of treatment and treatment dates, including types and dates of hospital visits, such as inpatient, outpatient and emergency room treatments. Information about medications and medical tests is also required. Finally, the applicant is required to submit details about previous jobs, including job title and type of business, dates of work and amount of pay, job skills and duties, physical activity required and designation of the longest job held.

Where can I find more information?

Qualified individuals can apply for disability benefits online by visiting www.ssa.gov/applyfordisability/adult.

You can also contact Social Security by calling 1-800-772-1213, visiting www.socialsecurity.gov or going to your local Social Security Office.