

## Key Points

Social Security is a federal income support program administered by the Social Security Administration. It provides monthly cash assistance to persons who have disabilities, limited income and limited resources to help them meet their basic needs for food, clothing and shelter.

To qualify for Social Security (SSI) income, the disability must be medically determined and is expected to last for a year or longer and prevents you from being substantially gainfully employed.

An individual can apply for Social Security benefits in the month of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. For Example, If a person turns 18 on June 12<sup>th</sup>, you can apply on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

To apply for Social Security and to see disability criteria, you can go to [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) and file an application on-line. Once you have completed the form online, you will be contacted by a representative from Social Security to set up an appointment to go to the local office and complete the process. The appointment generally takes an hour. Be prepared to wait even if you have an appointment.

The following documentation will help make the application process more effective.

- Social Security Card
- Birth Certificate (or other proof of age)
- Paycheck stubs or copies of payments received (including child support) that you are currently receiving (proof of income) for the past 4 weeks.
- Bank account statements, life insurance policies, record of cash kept (proof of resources)
- Proof of living arrangements (for example a lease or utility document)
- Names, addresses and telephone numbers of doctors, hospitals and clinics
- Individual Education Plans, psychological evaluations, vocational evaluations
- Documents showing medical history, proof of disability

If you are found eligible, benefits are retroactive to the first day of the month following your application date. Determination can take 3-6 months or more.

A representative payee is a person or agency that manages your benefits if you are unable to do so yourself. They will assess if you need one. A guardian or parent can apply to be the representative payee. Your Family Support Service Coordinator can assist you to apply online.

**Please contact your Family Support Service Coordinator**