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Your Social Security Disability Law Firm

Common Reasons for Denial of Social Security Disability Benefits

By Sharon A. Christie, Esq.

If you just received notice that your initial application for disability benefits was denied, you are probably shocked and dismayed and wondering why. It is important to remember that it is only an initial application and that you can appeal the decision and improve your chances of obtaining benefits by hiring an experienced disability attorney. It is important to know that decisions on initial applications are made by state agency employees and these employees often deny cases that are later approved. There are several common reasons that Social Security will initially deny someone benefits:

- The state agency did not gather all the medical evidence showing that your impairment meets the Listings.
- The state agency established your educational level based on how much school you completed, but your true educational level, as shown by testing, is considerably lower.
- The state agency did not consider all of your impairments and their combined effect on your ability to work.
- The state agency reviewing your application may have incorrectly determined that your impairment is “not severe.”
- The state agency did not properly consider your allegations of pain.
- The state agency underestimated the physical or mental demands of your past work and thus, incorrectly decided that you can still do your job.

After you receive the notice denying your benefits, you may feel hopeless and may even consider not pursuing your claim further. This would be a mistake. Keep two important facts in mind. The first is that two-thirds of all applications for Social Security disability benefits are initially denied. The second is that over half of Social Security disability claimants who appeal to the administrative hearing level are ultimately awarded disability benefits. An experienced disability attorney can assist you in pointing out the mistakes made by the state agency and in turning your denial in to an award of benefits.

For more information on Social Security disability claims and to order a FREE copy of my book, *The Unofficial Guide to Social Security Disability Claims*, visit www.SharonChristieLaw.com.