

## Applying for Social Security Disability Benefits with Epilepsy

For many people who are disabled, finding work is an insurmountable task. Fortunately, many people who are unable to work may be eligible to receive Social Security disability benefits, which are administered through the Social Security Administration (SSA). If your epilepsy is not manageable with treatment, you could receive financial assistance to help ends meet.

### Types of Disability Benefits

There are two forms of disability benefits:

- [Social Security Disability Insurance](#) (SSDI) - These are disability benefits that are determined by work credits, which is a metric determining how long a person worked and paid taxes. Generally a person must have sufficient work experience relative to their age.
- [Supplemental Security Income](#) (SSI) - These are benefits that are intended for those that are disabled and impoverished. As these are funded by general taxes, they are granted only to people with a severe financial need. Anyone who is disabled, low-income, and does not have additional financial assistance from friends and family could be eligible.

### The SSA Blue Book Evaluation and Epilepsy

The SSA's disability examiners use a medical guide called [the Blue Book](#) to process claims for disability benefits and determine whether a person's disability is severe enough to qualify.

For epilepsy, the Blue Book measures the frequency and type of seizures that claimant has had, as well as how long those seizures have lasted. Claimants should have their treating doctor testify about the seizures and their effect on employment. Testimony from others who have witnessed any seizures is also important.

For convulsive epilepsy, grand mal seizures should occur more than once a month despite 3 months of treatment or more. These seizures can involve loss of awareness or consciousness and convulsions.

For non-convulsive epilepsy, petit mal seizures should occur more than once a week despite 3 months of treatment or more. These types of seizures usually involve losing awareness or consciousness for several seconds or minutes.

### Residual Functional Capacity Form

A claimant can still qualify for disability benefits with epilepsy even without meeting one of the listings in the Blue Book. This can happen if he/she completes a [Residual Functional Capacity](#) form, or RFC. This form evaluates a claimant's ability to work. The form will determine how much an applicant can sit, stand, walk, or lift weight. Claimants can complete an RFC in two ways: by having their doctor or having an examiner at Disability Determination Services complete an RFC form.

### How to Apply for Disability Benefits

There are three ways to apply for Social Security Benefits.

- The most convenient way to apply is online at <https://www.socialsecurity.gov/>.
- A claimant can also file by phone at 1-800-772-1213 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mon-Fri.
- An in-person application at a Social Security office is possible, but an appointment is usually required to do so.

You will need your Social Security number to apply. It is also important to have as many medical records as possible regarding your epilepsy, as well as documentation regarding your employment. SSA will usually send their decision via mail 5 months after you applied.

This article has been provided by *Social Security Disability Help*. For any additional questions or help, feel free to contact us at [help@disability-benefits-help.org](mailto:help@disability-benefits-help.org).