

How Someone with a Mental Health Condition Can Qualify for Social Security Disability Benefits

Mental health conditions can be just as serious as a physical illness. And just like a physical illness a mental health conditions can make it impossible for you to work if it's severe enough. You can file a claim for [Social Security disability benefits](#) if either a physical or mental illness makes it too difficult for you to work. As long as you expect that you won't be able to work for at least a year and you have worked at some point in the past you are eligible for disability benefits. The money that you get from disability benefits you can use for things like a housing payment or food as well as for medical or treatment costs that aren't covered by your insurance.

Medically Qualifying For Disability Benefits With A Mental Health Condition

When you file a claim for disability benefits you also need to submit medical documentation which shows proves that your medical condition meets the Social Security Administration's requirements. Every condition that is eligible for benefits is listed in the SSA's [Blue Book](#), and every listing has a written set of requirements that must be met in order for someone to be approved for benefits because of that condition. In addition to your claim you need to submit a diagnosis, [medical tests](#) like MRIs or PET scans, blood tests, or any other medical records that will help document condition.

For example, if you're submitting a claim for disability benefits because of PTSD you will also need to submit medical records that show that you meet at least one of these requirements:

- You must recall a traumatic experience; and/or
- You must have recurring obsessions or compulsions; and/or
- You must exhibit an irrational fear of a situation, object, or activity that is persistent enough that it causes a compulsion in you to avoid the situation, object, or activity; and/or
- You must have severe panic attacks, with symptoms of fear, intense apprehension, and feelings of impending doom and terror, on an average of at least once a week; and/or
- You must experience generalized persistent anxiety accompanied by at least three of the following symptoms: autonomic hyperactivity, apprehensive expectation, motor tension or vigilance and scanning behavior.

You must also be able to provide documentation showing that you have an extreme limitation in one of these areas, or a severe limitation in two of them:

- You have marked difficulties in maintaining social functioning.
- You have marked difficulty in maintaining your concentration, persistence, or pace.
- You have repeated episodes of decompensation that are of extended duration.

You can submit statements from [your doctor](#), case workers, social workers, or even past employers if that will help your case.

Submitting A Claim

It's important to start a claim as soon as possible so that you can get your benefits started. You can apply online through the [Social Security Administration's website](#) at any time you're ready. If you're confused about the process or if you need some questions answered as you try to fill out the claim paperwork, you can call the SSA toll free at 1-800-772-1213. After your initial application is processed, you should hear back from the SSA with a decision in three to five months.

Resources Found Via

- <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/disability/>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook/general-info.htm>
- <https://www.disability-benefits-help.org/glossary/social-security-disability-medical-sources>
- <https://www.disability-benefits-help.org/blog/role-doctor-plays-disability-application-process>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/applyfordisability/>
- <https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>