

SSI & Age 18 Redetermination

Childhood disability standard: A child who receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits is considered disabled based on how the condition or illness affects development and functioning in typical daily environments (i.e., school, home, community). At age 18, a review is scheduled to determine whether the condition or illness meets the SSI definition of disability for an adult.

Adult disability standard: SSI considers an adult to be disabled when the illness or condition has prevented or will prevent substantial work activity for 12 months or longer, or is likely to result in death. Therefore, the main issue for adults is how the condition or illness affects the person's ability to work.

When the case is reviewed, evidence from all medical, vocational, and educational sources should be obtained. Therefore, it is important to:

- ◆ Continue to see doctors or therapists.
- ◆ Continue appropriate educational or vocational training, especially if there is no recommended treatment for the disabling condition.
- ◆ Provide SSI with information needed to obtain all medical, educational, and vocational reports.

Lack of any recent treatment, vocational or educational records may lead to a finding that the illness or condition does not meet the adult SSI disability criteria. If a finding is made that the person is not considered disabled under the adult standard:

- ◆ The SSI program is required to send a written notice of the decision with all appeal rights, including the right to appeal within 60 days. To continue the SSI benefits during an appeals process, the appeal must be requested within 10 days of receiving the notice of discontinuance.
- ◆ A person has the right to representation on the appeal.

Section 301 allows an SSI recipient to continue to receive SSI benefits after it is found that he or she does not meet SSI's adult disability criteria if: he or she is participating in an approved vocational rehabilitation (VR) program at the time the disability ended; and continuing the program will increase the likelihood of eliminating the future need for disability benefits.

Section 301 provides a special protection for special education students, ages 18 to 21, found to be no longer disabled or not disabled under the adult disability standard. If the student continues in a special education program, with services provided through an individualized educational plan (IEP), Section 301 will apply, and benefits will continue so long as they continue to be enrolled in the program (even if there is no vocational component to the program). For more information on Section 301, see our At-a-Glance sheet on the Section 301 rules.

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