
Both programs provide monthly benefit checks and are administered by the Social Security Administration.

- **Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)** — An applicant must have sufficient work credit, be unable to work and meet the disability criterion for younger-onset (early-onset) Alzheimer’s disease. Family members (e.g., a spouse or minor child) may also be eligible to receive benefits under these programs based on the applicant’s work record.

- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** — An applicant must be aged, blind or disabled and have limited income and assets.

- While the programs are different, SSA uses the same criterion for determining whether an applicant is disabled due to younger-onset (early-onset) Alzheimer’s disease.

**How to apply**

- In person at your local SSA office (strongly recommended): Applicants should call 800.772.1213 to schedule an appointment. Do not walk in for service without an appointment.

- By telephone: Call SSA’s toll-free telephone number, 800.772.1213. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you can call SSA at TTY 800.325.0778.

- Online: [socialsecurity.gov/applyforbenefits](http://socialsecurity.gov/applyforbenefits).

**Important tips when applying**

- Do not delay applying for SSDI benefits. You should apply for benefits if you have younger-onset (early-onset) Alzheimer’s disease and are unable to work. You may lose substantial benefits by waiting to apply.

- When asked by the SSA claims representative what the disabling condition is, specify “early-onset Alzheimer’s disease,” not just Alzheimer’s disease.

- Many applicants receive help with the application process from their families, close friends or professionals.

**Information needed**

To apply for SSDI or SSI benefits, the following information needs to be obtained and documents completed, either in person or online:

- Application for SSDI benefit: [socialsecurity.gov/applyfordisability](http://socialsecurity.gov/applyfordisability).
  - There is no online SSI application at this time.

• Adult disability report:
  socialsecurity.gov/disability/disability_starter_kits_adult_eng.htm.
• Medical and Job Worksheet – optional but very helpful for interview:
• Original or certified copy of your birth certificate.
  o If born in another country, proof of age and U.S. citizenship or legal
  residency.
• If you were in the military, an original or certified copy of military discharge papers.
• If you worked, a copy of the W-2 from last year. Or if self-employed, a copy of your
  federal tax return with Schedules C and SE.
• Workers’ compensation information, if applicable.
• Social Security number for spouse and minor children, if applicable.
• Your checking and/or savings account numbers, if you have them.
• Name, address and phone number of a person SSA can contact if unable to reach you.

Medical information needed — to prove that you have been diagnosed with early-onset
(younger-onset) Alzheimer’s disease:
• Names, addresses and telephone numbers of your health care providers, including
  primary physician, neurologist, neuropsychologist and/or psychiatrist.
• The name and dosage information for all the medications that you are taking or have
  taken, especially for early-onset Alzheimer’s disease.
• Medical records from your health care providers, including primary physician,
  neurologist, neuropsychologist and/or psychiatrist. It is very helpful and important for
  the health records to show that there is a progressive decline in function or test scores
  over time.
  o If you do not have the medical records, SSA will help obtain them for you,
    but this may delay the determination process.
• Pertinent clinical information, which should be included in the medical records,
  includes history of onset (appropriate time when symptoms began); description of
  cognitive and functional impairments at home and at work; results from neurological,
  cognitive or neuropsychological examinations; and results from neuroimaging.
• Activities of daily living report or similar report completed by a relative or caregiver.
• Documentation of dementia by standardized testing, such as Clinical Dementia Rating
  (CDR) with a score of > 1, Mini Mental State Exam (MMSE) of <24, or equivalent
  test, is helpful.

After you apply
The Social Security office will assist you in filling the application for benefits, but the actual
decision is made by a disability case examiner in your state, usually working for an agency
called the Disability Determination Service or Disability Determination Bureau. If you receive
written correspondence or a phone call from a disability examiner, that person is working on
your claim and requires your cooperation.
Helpful resources
The Alzheimer’s Association: alz.org.
Social Security Administration: socialsecurity.gov. Specifically, there is a Social Security Disability Planner at socialsecurity.gov/dibplan.

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