

## Social Security Advocacy Services Overview

Social Security advocacy services help individuals (both children and adults) who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk for homelessness and are unable to do any substantial gainful activity (work) due to a medical, physical or mental impairment that is expected to last more than a year or result in death, apply for Social Security Administration disability programs: Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance.

## Social Security Advocacy Service Levels

Social Security Advocacy Services may help individuals with their Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance claim or continuing disability review at the following levels:

- Initial application/claim.
- Reconsideration on an initial claim.
- Hearing before an administrative law judge on an initial claim.
- Appeals Council review on an initial claim.
- Continuing Disability Review.
  - Reconsideration on a Continuing Disability Review.
  - Hearing by an administrative law judge on a Continuing Disability Review.

The services listed above are for disability claims administered by the Social Security Administration. This service does not include helping individuals apply for retirement benefits administered through the Social Security Administration.

## Eligibility Criteria for Individuals

Individuals served under a resulting contract must meet all of the following eligibility criteria:

1. If adults, they must have the inability to do any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment which can be expected to result in death or which has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than twelve (12) months. If children, they must be under the age of eighteen (18), and if they have a medically determinable physical or mental impairment or combination of impairments that causes marked and severe functional limitations, and that can be expected to cause death or that has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months; and
2. Live in Minnesota for the duration of the time GRANTEE works with them to apply for Social Security disability benefits; and
3. Individuals must be between the ages of birth and sixty-five (65); and
4. Are at risk for homelessness. An individual must meet one (1) of the following at risk for homelessness definitions:
  - a. Are behind in rent or utilities,

- b. Have an eviction notice,
- c. Reside in a boarding house or halfway house,
- d. Are exiting a publicly funded institution or system of care such as foster care, a mental health facility, or correctional institution or receive other supportive services in order to maintain their housing,
- e. Are receiving state or federal public assistance benefits such as General Assistance, Housing Support, Medical Assistance including Housing Stabilization Services, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or the Minnesota Family Investment Program,
- f. Do not have sufficient resources or support networks immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or place not meant for habitation,
- g. Are on a coordinated entry list or housing registry,
- h. Are currently a recipient of a housing subsidy program including but not limited to the following:
  - a. Public housing
  - b. Housing Support
  - c. Section 8 Housing or Housing Choice Voucher
  - d. Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Voucher
  - e. Moving Home Minnesota demonstration services, also known as Money Follows the Person (MFP)
  - f. Minnesota's Long-term Homeless Supportive Services
  - g. Bridges Rental Assistance Program
  - h. Family Unification Program (FUP) Voucher
  - i. Section 811 or other Project-based Rental Assistance Program

OR

- 5. Are currently experiencing homelessness. An individual must meet one (1) of the following homelessness definitions:
  - a. Lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence such as living in an emergency shelter, couch hopping, living outside, doubled up, living in transitional housing, or places not meant for habitation,
  - b. Not having a lease or ownership interest in a housing unit and lack the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing,
  - c. Are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, has no other residence, and lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing,
  - d. An unaccompanied youth under twenty five (25) years of age, or families with children and youth who qualify as homeless under other Federal statutes, such as the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

## Social Security Advocacy Services Duties and Deliverables

GRANTEES must perform all general duties on each individual served as identified below:

1. Conduct a thorough screening to determine if an individual is eligible for Social Security Advocacy services and be able to show the STATE that a screening was completed and that the individual met all criteria.
2. Serve as individual's authorized representative and waive fees.
3. Refer individual to apply for all eligible Minnesota Department of Human Services public assistance benefits such as cash, food, and health care while they help an individual apply for Social Security disability benefits or complete a Continuing Disability Review and wait for a decision from the Social Security Administration.
4. Enter an individual's data and submit an electronic invoice to the STATE for payment after an individual is awarded Social Security Administration disability benefits via the Social Security Benefits Advocacy Provider Payment System.
5. Attend STATE Social Security Advocacy technical assistance events.
6. Help an individual to complete and submit all required documents as directed by the Social Security Administration or Disability Determination Services with their Initial Application/Claim.
7. Help an individual to complete and submit all required documents as directed by the Social Security Administration or Disability Determination Services with their request for a reconsideration on an initial claim, if applicable.
8. Help an individual to complete and submit all required documents as directed by the Social Security Administration or Disability Determination Services with their request for a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge on an initial claim, if applicable.
9. Help an individual to complete and submit all required documents as directed by the Social Security Administration or Disability Determination Services with their Appeals Council review of an administrative law judge decision, if applicable.
10. Help an individual to complete and submit all required documents as directed by the Social Security Administration or Disability Determination Services with their Continuing Disability Review, if applicable.
11. Help an individual to complete and submit all required documents as directed by the Social Security Administration or Disability Determination Services with their reconsideration of a Continuing Disability Review, if applicable.
12. Help an individual to complete and submit all required documents as directed by the Social Security Administration or Disability Determination Services with their hearing by an administrative law judge on a continuing disability review.

## Social Security Advocacy Services and Payment Rates

Social Security Advocacy Service	Payment Rate
Approval by the Social Security Administration of an individual's Initial Application/Claim.	\$1650.00
Approval by the Social Security Administration of an individual's Reconsideration on an initial claim.	\$1650.00
Approval by the Social Security Administration for an individual's hearing before an administrative law judge on an initial claim.	\$3000.00
Approval by the Social Security Administration for an individual's Appeals Council review on an initial claim.	\$4000.00
Approval by the Social Security Administration for an individual's Continuing Disability Review.	\$900.00
Approval by the Social Security Administration for an individual's reconsideration on a continuing disability review.	\$1650.00
Approval by the Social Security Administration for an individual's hearing by an Administrative Law Judge on a continuing disability review.	\$2750.00
GRANTEE mileage incurred while assisting DHS Social Security Advocacy clients with their Social Security Administration application/claim or continuing disability reviews and when their client is approved for Social Security Administration disability benefits. Mileage is restricted to between GRANTEE's main or satellite office and meeting place with client. GRANTEE will be reimbursements at the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate up to \$100.00 per individual and only once during the life of this contract. STATE will not pay for mileage costs if no mileage information is submitted with invoice.	Current IRS mileage reimbursement rate up to \$100
GRANTEE reimbursement of transportation costs when they pay for an individual to use a taxi/Uber/Lyft service when no public or personal transportation is available to attend a Social Security Administration or Disability Determination Services appointment or exam or when meeting with their Social Security advocate to complete paperwork for contract purposes and when their client is approved for Social Security Administration disability benefits. STATE will reimbursement GRANTEE up to \$100 per individual and only once during the life of this contract. STATE will not pay GRANTEE for an individual's transportation expenses if no transportation receipts are submitted with invoice.	Up to \$100
Medical and vital record expenses while assisting DHS Social Security Advocacy clients with their Social Security Administration application/claim or continuing disability review and when their client is approved for Social Security Administration disability benefits. Receipts are required on all medical and vital records expenses submitted with invoice. Vital records include birth certificate, driver's license, and marriage license. STATE will pay GRANTEE up to \$125.00 per individual and only once during the life of this contract. STATE will not pay GRANTEE for medical and vital record expenses if no medical and vital record receipts are submitted with invoice.	Up to \$125

## What to expect from DHS

Grantees can expect to receive the following from the Social Security Advocacy team at DHS:

- Assigned a primary coordinator
- Guidance on how to complete Social Security Administration applications to meet Social Security Administration requirements
- Fast and accurate invoice payment
- Development of regional work groups to identify and address challenges facing individuals and/or grantees in the Social Security Administration disability application process
- Ongoing case consultations and training
- Documentation of successes and identification of areas for improvement and growth
- Collaboration with state and local stakeholders
- Lists of qualified individuals who need help applying for Social Security disability benefits.