

C GA Up to Six Additional Months - SSA Three Level Appeal Process

The Social Security Administration (SSA) has the following three level appeal process when an application is initially denied:

- **RECONSIDERATION.** Applicants have 60 days from the date of the initial denial decision to request a reconsideration from the Disability Determination Services Administration (DDSA). This satisfies the appeal eligibility requirement when the RSDI or SSI denial occurs in or outside the 12-month GA time limit.
- **ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING.** When the reconsideration is denied, the applicant again has 60 days to request a hearing before a Federal Administrative Law Judge. This is the stage at which the applicant may obtain legal representation. This level of hearing takes a minimum of eight months and often longer to complete. This satisfies the appeal eligibility requirements.
- **APPEALS COUNCIL.** When the Administrative Law Judge rules against the applicant, the case can be further appealed to a Federal Appeals Council. The Appeals Council is comprised of a higher level of Administrative Law Judges. The applicant has another 60 days to appeal this hearing decision. This process takes approximately eight months to complete. This satisfies the appeal eligibility requirements.