

How To File An Unfair Treatment Complaint



The Social Security Administration wants to treat all claimants and their representatives fairly and equally. We do not treat you differently because of your race, sex, age or for disability, the amount of money you have, or for any other reason. Below we tell you more about what you should do if you think the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) who conducted your hearing treated you unfairly.

What you should do if you think you were treated unfairly

If you think any ALJ treated you unfairly, you should tell us about it and ask us to look into it. You can ask even while we are deciding your claim for benefits.

You should give us your complaint in writing. But you also can tell us about your complaint, and we will write it down for you. Please give us as many details as you can, including:

- Your name, address and telephone number;
- Your Social Security number;
- Who treated you unfairly;
- How you think you were unfairly treated;
- When you think you were unfairly treated;
- The actions or words you thought were unfair;
- Who else saw or heard the unfair treatment; and
- If you are making the complaint for someone else, also give us your relationship to that person, and your name, address and telephone number.

What you need to know

Filing an unfair treatment complaint is not the same as appealing a decision. If you received a decision on your claim and you do not agree with it, you have 60 days from the date you receive the decision to ask for an appeal. The ALJ's decision letter will explain how to file an appeal. You can describe the unfair treatment in your appeal. For more information, ask for *The Appeals Process* (Publication No. 05-10041), which also is available online at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10041.html.

Where to send your request

You can ask for help at any Social Security office to make your complaint. You also can write to:

The Chief Administrative Law Judge
Office of Disability Adjudication and Review
5107 Leesburg Pike, Suite 1608
Falls Church, VA 22041-3255

What Social Security will do

We will let you know that we received your complaint. Someone who has not been handling your claim before will look into the information you gave us in the complaint. You will be advised when the matter is closed.

If you also appealed the decision on your claim and included information about your complaint, the Appeals Council will address your complaint when responding to your appeal.

Contacting Social Security

For more information and to find copies of our publications, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov or call toll-free, **1-800-772-1213** (for the deaf or hard of hearing, call our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**). We treat all calls confidentially. We can answer specific questions from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. We can provide automated phone service 24 hours a day.

We also want to make sure you receive accurate and courteous service. That is why we have a second Social Security representative monitor some telephone calls.



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