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Applying for Social Security disability benefits can be a challenge. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) contracts with agencies throughout the state to help eligible children and adults apply for Social Security disability benefits. This is a free service to help eligible individuals with their application, appeal, or continuing disability review. Agencies can refer people who need help to the Disability Hub MN at 1-866-333-2466 or the [Social Security Advocacy Directory](#).

DHS Social Security advocates can help:

- Conduct an initial screening and intake assessment.
- Act as an Authorized Representative with the Social Security Administration.
- Help fill out forms and talk with Social Security representatives.
- File and appeal if your application is denied.
- Represent at hearings.
- Represent at a continuing disability review.

### **MFIP, GA, GRH:**

Social Security Advocacy services are available to clients who need help applying for Social Security disability benefits.

Agencies are required to:

- Screen clients to identify who should apply for Social Security benefits. The screening can consist of reviewing documents used to determine eligibility for public assistance programs. For example: income, assets, immigration status, medical opinion forms, or professional statement of need.
- Explain why a client must apply and what will happen if they do not apply for the Social Security benefits.  
  
Ask questions to determine if there are barriers or other reasons for not applying for Social Security benefits. Determine if the client has good cause to not apply for benefits at that time.
- Provide referrals to a DHS Social Security Advocate or other service providers if additional help is needed.
- GA and GRH Only: Obtain the client's signature on the [SSI Interim Assistance Authorization \(DHS-1795\)](#) and [Interim Assistance Agreement \(DHS-1795A\)](#) and update the STAT/PBEN panel within 30 days of receipt. NOTE: SSA only accepts digital/electronic, pen capture, or "wet" signatures on the IAAs. See [0005.12.07 \(Electronic Signatures\)](#).
- Track the status of the client's Social Security application.
- Provide priority response to Social Security and DHS inquiries regarding the client's Social Security claim.
- Convert the client to MSA and MA and make other benefit adjustments as appropriate when the client becomes eligible for SSI.
- DHS will tell the county agency of clients who have received GA for 2 years or more for potential Social Security eligibility screening.
- MAXIS produces a DAIL/DAIL message alerting you to clients you must screen for referral for a Social Security application.

In screening potential referrals for a Social Security application, look for clients who:

- Have an illness, injury or mental condition that will prevent work for 12 months or more or result in death.  
OR
- Are not required to pursue Social Security benefits under their current GA basis of eligibility but may also have another basis of eligibility that does require a Social Security referral.  
OR
- Have a change in circumstances that indicates possible Social Security benefits eligibility including receiving GA for more than

24 months with little or no change in their condition.

**DWP, SNAP:**

No provisions.

**MSA:**

MSA clients must already be SSI eligible or would be except for excess income.

Social Security Advocacy Services are available to clients who need help completing a continuing disability review or if their SSI was terminated. Agencies should refer clients to SSA or a Social Security Advocate if they believe SSI should not have been terminated.