

## What if my doctor doesn't agree that I am Totally Disabled?

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Since Social Security disability applications focus on the medical proof of symptoms and their impact on function, approval can be problematic if the treating doctors do not agree that the Claimant is totally disabled.

There are usually three reasons this happens.

First, most often the problem is the failure of the patient to complain, or explain, to the doctor, just how difficult life has become. Many people get to like their doctors, trust them and do not want to let them down. Therefore, they minimize their symptoms and problems when they go to the doctor. At the visit they say they "are ok" or that "things are stable." Often, however, the truth is that life is challenging and the medical symptoms limit the ability to do even basic activities of daily living.

The need for a patient to fully communicate with every doctor is critical.

We teach our clients: "Tell Your Doctors the Truth! Do not put on an act for your doctor." We often encourage clients to talk about the person that they see in the mirror and describe that life to the doctors – that bypasses the "ego from talking." The more information provided to the doctors, the better medical care that they can provide.

Second, some doctors just do not believe in the disability programs. They do not believe any of their patients should get this assistance, even if they paid for it with their Social Security FICA taxes. If your clients' treating doctors express this attitude, the patient needs to have a long talk with the doctors and consider whether this is the proper relationship.

Third, some people really should not apply for Social Security Disability benefits. They truly are not "totally disabled." They are likely medically impaired. That is, there is much work that they cannot perform, but there probably exists easier or less physically or mentally demanding work that they can complete. They should seek those jobs and not file a Social Security disability benefit application.

Early consultation with an experienced Social Security Disability attorney can help your clients get ahead of these issues before it is too late to generate the evidence needed to win a Social Security case. We often meet with clients before they even file their application so that we can explore these issues early in the process. If you would like us to come out to your agency or community group for a no cost in-service presentation just give us a call.