

Patient's Guide

## Should I Apply for Social Security Benefits for My Sick Child?

### What is SSI?

Social Security has a program for very sick children called "SSI" or Supplemental Security Income.

### Does household income matter In SSI?

Social Security looks at household income when considering SSI applications. They will tell you if your household is financially eligible for benefits.

### Can children In DCF custody get SSI?

Children in DCF custody can apply for SSI. The child's DCF worker can help you apply.

### How sick does a child have to be to get SSI?

Only children with a complex medical condition get SSI. The condition also has to impact how the child functions at school and at home.

### How do I apply?

You can get an application from your local Social Security office. Call 211 (INFOLINE) for the contact information.

### Who decides whether my child gets SSI?

Social Security decides whether your child gets SSI. They will use information from your child's doctors, teachers and other medical professionals to decide.

### If you have questions, please contact:

Attorney Bonnie Roswig  
860-545-8581 or [broswig@ccmckids.org](mailto:broswig@ccmckids.org)

Attorney Jay Sicklick  
860-714-1412 or [jsicklick@kidscounsel.org](mailto:jsicklick@kidscounsel.org)

Center for Children's Advocacy  
Medical Legal Partnership Project  
[www.kidscounsel.org/mlpp](http://www.kidscounsel.org/mlpp)

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### What if Social Security says no?

You can disagree. You have to send in papers saying that you are "appealing" within 60 days of the date of the denial letter. There are a number of appeals.

The appeal of the first decision is called a "Request for Reconsideration." You are asking that Social Security look at your child's case again even though they said no.

If Social Security says no to your "Request for Reconsideration" you can appeal again. Again, your appeal papers must be sent in 60 days from the date of the denial letter. This time a judge will decide the case.

If you don't send in the appeal papers in time, you have to start the application process all over again.

### Should I get help from a lawyer?

Children's SSI cases are very confusing. Social Security suggests that everyone have a lawyer.