

DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES
CLASS SPECIFICATION

DISABILITY CLAIMS ADJUDICATOR I

POSITION CODE: 12537

Effective: 07-01-2004

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF WORK:

Under general supervision, performs responsible work in adjudicating initial claims for disability benefits under both Title II and Title XVI of the Social Security Act; renders final decision authority on behalf of the United States Commissioner of Social Security with only limited post adjudicative review in the following types of claims: Initial Disability Insurance Benefit Claims, Disabled Widow(er) Benefits, Childhood Disability Benefits, Disability Freeze Benefits, Initial Disabled Individual (SSI), Disabled Spouse, Disabled Child, and Disability Decisions for Medicare purposes.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF WORK:

1. Examines and analyzes initial disability applications for Title II Social Security Disability Benefits and Title XVI Supplemental Security Income to determine proper jurisdiction; assures that appropriate case information documents have been completed by the Social Security District Offices.
2. Consults with Social Security District Office personnel in regards to internal problems affecting the adjudicative process, e.g., customer's work activity, income and resources, date last insured, Veterans Administration requests, establishing field contacts with customers.
3. Carries an initial claim case load; reviews aged cases for appropriateness of techniques assuring every effort is made to render a decision expeditiously and error free in accordance with state and federal guidelines.
4. Initiates correspondence and makes contacts with physicians, clinics, hospitals, state institutions, mental health facilities, workshops, Veterans Administration hospitals, employees, attorneys and others to secure appropriate information necessary for rendering of a programmatically defensible decision of allowance or denial of benefits; contacts customers and third party sources to fully develop activities of daily living in order to identify the adverse impact of physical/mental impairment.

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5. Reviews and analyzes all medical, technical and specialized information relative to the customer's alleged disability; evaluates same in light of highly complex technical, medical and statutory rules, regulations and policies of the Social Security Act; upon receipt of medical evidence, reviews such evidence and determines its adequacy as required by the law applying complex regulations and procedures, e.g., the sequential evaluation approach; determines if a presumptive disability decision can be made or a final decision rendered.
6. Authorizes consultative examination and testing in all fields of medicine, psychology and vocational rehabilitation, specific technical laboratory tests and studies to be performed pertinent to determining the extent of customer's impairment; evaluates adequacy of physician's report; prepares voucher authorizations for consultative examinations, reviews incoming vouchers from physicians insuring correctness, that proper tests were performed, fees are within fee schedule limitations and proper signatures are affixed.
7. Consults with Disability Determination Services in-house medical consultants on more difficult medical issues affecting the decision of a claim using medical terminology and applying an understanding of impairments and their affect on different body systems; affords the customer and/or the customer's representative a conference.
8. Assures credibility of medical and other source opinions, weighing opinion evidence; conducts a conference with the customer and/or the customer's representative when agreed to fully explain the disability program requirements thus increasing their understanding of the process and discussing all of the evidence in file, assuring that all allegations and sources of information have been obtained and documented before issuing less than a fully favorable decision; prepares a narrative summary of finding of fact and makes an adjudicative decision, independent of a medical consultant.
9. Prepares Residual Functional Capacity forms on physical and mental cases as required; completes Psychiatric Review Technique Form determining the type of impairment(s) and the degree of limitation imposed on ability to function; prepares childhood disability evaluation forms considering the impact of the impairment(s) and how the child functions as compared to non-impaired children.

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10. Works closely with vocational assessment specialists developing technical medical information necessary to determine need for customer participation in workshops and, if necessary, arranges for and works with vocational workshop personnel and customer.
11. Makes determination to disclose significant medical evidence from consultative examinations to an attending source, particularly where information reveals a previously undiagnosed condition that may require immediate treatment following all appropriate disclosure procedures.
12. Performs other duties as required or assigned which are reasonably within the scope of the duties enumerated above.

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS:

Education and Experience

Requires a bachelor's degree, with major courses in medical, premedical, legal, prelegal, nursing, psychology, pharmacy, health, biological sciences, physical sciences, business administration, management, or disability claims adjudication.

OR

Requires current valid licensure as a Registered Nurse in the State of Illinois, plus three years of professional registered nursing experience.

In addition to either of the above, requires successful completion of bureau's training program or one year of professional social security disability adjudication experience.

This class is included as an Upward Mobility Program credential title.

Knowledges, Skills and Abilities

Requires working knowledge of the Social Security Act and Amendments and the organization and operation of the Social Security Administration.

Requires working knowledge of the provisions of the Social Security Act and Amendments relating to the occupational and legal aspects of disability, opinions and instructions issued in connection with the Disability Program.

Requires working knowledge of the Disability Determination Services in Illinois and of the policies, regulations and standards under which the program functions.

Requires working knowledge of the Office of Rehabilitation Services, the service it offers and its organization and operation.

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Requires working knowledge of medical terminology, body systems and/or impairments and understanding their disabling effects.

Requires working knowledge of personal computers, keyboard skills, various PC applications, and the SSA/DDS operating systems.

Requires ability to analyze complex factual situations and to clearly and concisely document and organize the data.

Requires ability to consider the impact of pain, fatigue and weakness, etc., on the customer's ability to function and to sustain work-related activities on a regular and continuing basis.

Requires ability to apply knowledge of a wide variety of physical and mental conditions, the characteristics and effects of these conditions, quality and types of acceptable evidence to accurately interpret available medical data.

Requires ability to exercise considerable judgment in interpreting medical facts presented by a physician and to apply these facts in determining an individual's capacity to engage in gainful occupation.

Requires ability to make sound and consistent decisions regarding disability claims.

Requires ability to integrate, examine and evaluate medical evidence and to prepare comprehensive disability determinations.

Requires ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing on a professional level, as well as being sensitive to persons with disabilities.

Requires ability to establish and maintain good working relationships with customers, federal and state officials, lawyers, physicians, hospitals, clinics and other staff.

In addition to having a written and spoken knowledge of the English language, candidates may be required to speak and write a foreign language at a colloquial skill level in carrying out position duties in conjunction with non-English speaking individuals.