

# Social Security Disability FAQ

## **Will I be represented by a lawyer?**

To be a Social Security representative, a person does not have to be a lawyer. Even those firms that employ lawyers may assign your case to a paralegal or other nonlawyer representative. It costs no more to be represented by a lawyer at every phase of your claim.

## **Is the lawyer located in my town or a nearby town?**

There are firms that advertise statewide. They may not have an office near your home. Most people find it works better to sit down with the lawyer who will be handling their case. You should be able to look that person in the eye and make a decision about whether you trust that person to provide professional help with your claim. You should have confidence that the person who has been handling your claim will be there when you appear before the administrative law judge.

## **What will it cost me?**

The initial consultation at most firms will be free, and most lawyers will represent you on a contingency basis for their fees. That means that if you are awarded benefits, the lawyer will receive 25 percent of the back benefits up to a maximum of \$6,000. Some law firms also require a deposit to pay for medical records or reports. I do not

require any advance payment for costs, and costs are assessed only if you win and are awarded back benefits.