

## *The Social Security Representative Payee: Who, What, Why?*

### **Do You Have Someone You Trust?**



What happens if a claimant is awarded disability but either can't or doesn't feel they can manage their Social Security Disability funds properly? Fortunately, a system is in place where Social Security will appoint a representative payee to manage the funds. More often than not, Social Security will recommend this as an option if they find a claimant lacks the mental or physical ability to manage their own funds once the claimant

has been awarded. This is usually most common in severe mental health cases or the claimant has a history of drug and/or alcohol abuse.

The role of the representative payee is fairly simply. He or she receives monthly payments on behalf of the claimant and uses the funds to meet the individuals basic needs (i.e. food, clothing, and shelter). They are required to keep records and ensure that the disability funds are used to care for the beneficiary.

Some of our clients who have been recommended to have a representative payee assigned to their benefits have expressed concern that they do not have a person in their life that they can trust to take on such a major responsibility for them. In fact, a surprising 21% of claimants do not have trusted family or friends who can help manage their award. Some of this can be attributed to their severe mental health conditions which often manifests as paranoia and trouble trusting someone in their life; however,

the fact still remains that such a trusted person cannot be found in the beneficiary's life. So what are they to do?

Recently, the SSA released a report in October 2014 stating that the agency has implemented a pro bono pilot in Maryland which allows attorneys to be the representative payee for a Social Security beneficiary. The goal of this pilot is to provide crucial help to a vulnerable population by allowing these attorneys to manage a client's disability income payments. The benefit of this program is that attorneys are already held to high ethical standards and are in a position to truly serve the needs of this particular population. At this time, license Maryland attorneys in good standing can volunteer for this project at [www.socialsecurity.gov/payee/probonopilot.htm](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/payee/probonopilot.htm).

Acting Commissioner Colvin reinforced that "representative payees play a vital role in serving our beneficiaries and creating a stable living environment for the most vulnerable people in our society. I encourage eligible Maryland attorneys to participate in this pilot."

The hope is that this program is a huge success and will begin to expand to other states. If it does reach Georgia, The Khaki Law Firm would be honored to help our clients in this capacity. We believe it will provide a great assurance to so many claimants who are not well enough to manage their own money but feel they do not have anyone in their life they can trust to handle such a big responsibility.

## Feel Good Moment of the Month: Way to go The Khaki Law Firm team!

The Khaki Law Firm received the  
**2014 Client's Choice for Social Security Award**  
by [Avvo.com](http://Avvo.com)!

We are very thankful to our clients for their feedback  
and our wonderful staff's hard work!



## The Khaki Law Firm Presents at *The American Diabetes Association Expo*



The Khaki Law Firm recently had the honor of being a vendor at the 2014 American Diabetes Association Expo in Atlanta, Georgia this November. We had the opportunity to meet a lot of people, learn more about diabetes and its effects, and inform people about Social Security benefits. Many people don't realize that as the disease progresses and becomes more and more debilitating, those afflicted may qualify for Social Security disability benefits.

November 2014 Expo

The American Diabetes Association serves as an educator, advocate, fundraiser, and supporter. With so many roles to fill, this organization works with local communities to raise awareness about the potential severity of diabetes. The purpose of the Expo was to spread awareness, provide free screenings, and provide the latest information on preventing and managing diabetes. We had a great time and look forward to future partnerships.



### ***Administrative Announcement:*** **Our office is closed the following days.**

Wednesday December 24, 2014  
Thursday December 25, 2014  
Thursday January 1, 2015

*You can reach us any other day during our normal office hours.*

## *Want to Volunteer or Need Assistance This Season?*

Check out one of these places.



~ North Fulton Community Charities

Address: 11270 Elkins Rd.

Roswell, Georgia 30076

Phone: [770-640-0399](tel:770-640-0399)

Website: <http://nfcchelp.org/>

We've had the opportunity to work with NFCC and are constantly impressed and inspired by everything they do to serve the community.

~ Atlanta Mission

Address: They have several locations, so call them at the number below.

Phone: [404-588-4000](tel:404-588-4000)

Website: <http://www.atlantamission.org/index>

Need help? Want to make a holiday wish come true? Check out the Atlanta Mission. They serve the homeless population throughout Atlanta and metro-Atlanta.



## *Contact*

### **The Khaki Law Firm**

*'We help people get through the Social Security Disability process with personalized legal care.'*

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