

August 2014

New Developments in Social Security Law: 25 New Conditions Added To The List Of Compassional Allowances

It is no secret that the Social Security Disability process is a very long, tedious, and technical process. Just in the Georgia area, it takes an average of 24 months from the time you apply to the time you get to prove your case at a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge. This lag time can be detrimental to you if you are suffering from poor health, not able to work, and cannot afford health insurance and medical care.



But under the Social Security's Compassionate Allowances (CAL) provision, the Social Security Administration is obligated to quickly award disability benefits to claimants whose conditions are so severe that just by the nature of their medical diagnosis they meet the definition of disability; these medical diagnoses fall under the severe impairments that are listed under CAL.

Rather than waiting months or years to gain disability benefits, under CAL claimants may receive disability benefits within weeks. There are a few factors that may affect how quickly the benefits are processed under CAL; these factors include: how fast Social Security can obtain your medical records from your doctors; if a medical source statement by a medical examiner or your doctor is needed to support your disability claim; and sometimes Social Security randomly selects disability claims for a quality review.

The medical conditions that are selected to meet the CAL standard are determined on an annual basis through public outreach hearings that the Social Security Administration holds. In January of 2014, the Social Security Administration announced 25 new conditions that fall under CAL; there are now 225 conditions that fall under this standard. The new conditions mainly involve impairments related to the digestive, neurological, immune, and multiple body systems; a dozen out of the 25 new conditions are cancer related diagnoses.

Tip of the Month: Take Your Pet to Work



In June of this year, I started taking my 12.5 year old lab, Simon, into the office. He has been a wonderful addition. He brings something unique to the workplace. His sweet wagging tail and happy disposition are everpresent and as a result, everyone in the office is happier: staff, guests, and clients alike. We've all noticed his contribution to our work efforts and have awarded him with an honorary title: CMO (Chief Morale Officer). Most

people I have talked to about the situation were pleasantly surprised by the obvious benefits of taking your pet to work. If you've been looking for a way to boost morale, this might be exactly what you need.

Benefits of Taking Your Pet to Work:

1. Breaks Up The Work Day: Bringing my pet to work gets me away from my desk because Simon needs to have a quick walk every 1-2 hours. It's the perfect reason to break the bad habit of being sedentary while you're hard at work all day long.
2. Provides an Instantly Comfortable Atmosphere: The office is more homey to both staff and clients when Simon is around. Everyone is more productive when they feel at home.
3. Lightens the Mood: Simon's presence makes a statement to clients that we are people, too. We enjoy animals and we have pets. It lightens the mood.
4. Offers Friendly Client Greetings: A friendly dog is a great client greeter; particularly for those clients who arrive with a heavy heart overburdened by the stress of medical financial situations. Simply petting Simon and seeing him wag his tail in happy response helps them to relax and become more joyful.

I highly recommend that you take your pet to work so you can enjoy similar benefits. If you decide to do so, take a couple simple precautions to avoid any difficulties: make sure no one on your staff has allergies and let your visitors know ahead of time that there will be a pet in the office in case they are allergic or do not enjoy animals. If you know ahead of time that there are allergies or adverse reactions to pets or animals to consider, you can easily take action to accommodate specific visitors and clients while still enjoying the benefits of taking your pet to work.

Administrative Announcement: Welcome Holly Casey!

We are pleased to announce the newest member of our team, Holly Casey, who is our new Legal Assistant/Administrative Assistant. Holly has been working in the legal field for over 15 years and over the years, law has become her passion. Although Georgia has become her home over the last three years, she is originally from Kansas, and that is where her journey with law began. Holly and her husband of 20 years are the proud parents of three amazing daughters, and two beautiful grandchildren. Holly's greatest hobby is simply her family, and her dream is to travel the world with her husband. Holly is very enthusiastic about learning, sharing her knowledge, and forming great relationships. We are so excited to have Holly on board with us as we know her willingness to help and make a difference will greatly benefit our clients and lead us to provide more effective legal services.



Calendar of Events:

August 2014



- August 4th: In Court - Atlanta, GA
- August 5th: In Court - Atlanta, GA
- August 13th: In Court - Atlanta, GA
- August 14th: In Court - Chattanooga, TN

August 19th: Sara will be a guest on the Atlanta Business Radio show [Atlanta Legal Experts](#)

August 20th: In Court - Covington, GA

August 22nd: In Court - Rome, GA

Contact

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