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How to Improve the Credibility of Your Testimony at Your Disability Hearing

Knowing how the administrative law judge evaluates your testimony is crucial because your credibility can either improve or hinder the chances of getting the disability claim approved. There are several factors the judge will assess in order to decide if your testimony is credible.



1. Statements Regarding Your Symptoms and Limitations: These should be consistent with the objective medical findings.
2. Statements Made to the Treating Physician and Social Security Representatives: These can range from your impairment to your own ability to work.
3. Details About Your Condition: The testimony has more credibility when you are able to provide such details about the severity and frequency of the pain, your response to medical treatment, and how the symptoms make it difficult to complete specific activities such as lifting, sitting, or standing.

What the Administrative Law Judge Will Ask Regarding Your Work History and Education

In order to qualify for Social Security disability benefits, you must have a medical condition that prevents you from working for at least a year. The judge needs to know if it's possible for you to meet the demands of a job even though you have certain functional limitations. Asking questions about your impairment, work history, and education will help the judge decide if you are disabled. To get more information regarding your educational background, the judge will ask:



1. What level of school you completed
2. The type of diplomas or degrees you obtained
3. Any certifications and on-the-job training you have received
4. Jobs you've had within the past 15 years and the skills you acquired. You will need to explain the duties you completed for each job and any difficulties you will have performing those jobs with your current medical condition

What is Past Relevant Work in a Social Security Disability Claim?

When you apply for Social Security disability benefits, proving that you are unable to perform past relevant work is part of the evaluation process. The claims examiner or administrative law judge has to assess the physical and mental demands of the jobs you've had within the past 15 years. Then, they need to decide if your functional limitations will prevent you from performing those types of jobs. Showing that you aren't able to successfully complete certain work-related duties is often very challenging in a disability claim.



"Past relevant work" is defined as work you've had within the past 15 years that is considered substantial gainful activity, according to Social Security regulations. If you are still able to perform the easiest job you had within the past 15 years, your disability claim may not be approved.

Your case is important to us. If we can't help you, we'll do our best to refer you to someone who can.

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