

SOCIAL SECURITY/SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

IMPORTANT INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR COMPLAINT FOR SOCIAL SECURITY OR SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

PLEASE KEEP THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Filing the Complaint

- (1) The filing fee for a complaint is \$350.00. If you cannot afford to pay the filing fee, you may ask the Court to waive the fee by completing an application to proceed *in forma pauperis*. You must submit three (3) copies of the complaint, along with a copy of the Appeals Council letter and any other attachments for each copy of the complaint.
- (2) The complaint is a fill-in-the-blanks form that is not difficult to complete. If necessary, you should ask a friend or relative for help in preparing your papers. It is most important that you (a) submit the complaint to the Court's Pro Se Office within **60 days** from the date you received the Appeals Council letter and (b) attach a copy of the **"Appeals Council" letter** to the complaint.
- (3) If you have not received an Appeals Council letter from the Social Security Administration, it may mean that you have not exhausted all your administrative remedies within the agency. If you received the Appeals Council letter much later than the date stamped on the letter, you should also include a copy of the postmark from the envelope.
- (4) All papers must be in English. All Court conferences will also be held in English. If you are not English proficient or have difficulty understanding or writing in English, you should bring someone to act as your interpreter whenever you come to Court. You can also contact your local community services agency, they may have someone who will assist or translate for you.
- (5) The Pro Se Office will assist you with any questions you may have regarding the Court's procedures and forms, but the Pro Se Office staff cannot write or complete any of the forms which are necessary to file the complaint or to proceed with the case. The Pro Se Office is open from Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (except federal holidays).

**Pro Se Office
United States District Court
Southern District of New York
500 Pearl Street, Room 230
New York, NY 10007
Telephone (212) 805-0175**

What it means to be *Pro Se*

By filing this action *pro se*, it means that you are representing yourself and that you do not have an attorney. The Court will **not** automatically **appoint an attorney** to represent you in this matter since this is a civil case. You have the right to represent *yourself* in court and the case will proceed without an attorney.

Request for Counsel

You may apply for an attorney who may represent you for no charge from the Court's volunteer Pro Bono Panel by filing an "Application for the Court to Request Counsel" and by serving a copy of the application on the defendant's attorney. This form and information concerning the Pro Bono Panel is available from the Pro Se Office. Unfortunately, **there is no guarantee that an attorney will volunteer to take your case even if the Court grants your request.** Therefore, we suggest you contact the following legal services providers to request representation or assistance.

Bronx County

Bronx Legal Services Corporation
Courtlandt Avenue Office
579 Courtlandt Avenue
Bronx, NY 10451
Telephone (718) 993-1206
**Call last Tuesday & Thursday
of the month to make appt.*

The Legal Aid Society
The Bronx Neighborhood Office
953 Southern Boulevard
Bronx, NY 10459
Telephone (718) 991-4600
** Call Thursday at 9:00 a.m. for appt.*

New York County (Manhattan)

MFY Legal Services
299 Broadway
New York, NY 10007
Telephone (212) 417-3815
**Call Monday & Thursday
1:00-3:00 p.m. for appt.*

The Legal Aid Society
Harlem Neighborhood Office
2090 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd (124-125 Sts)
New York, NY 10027
Telephone: 1(800) 335-0049
**Call Thursday from 9:00-11:00 a.m. for appt.*

Harlem Legal Services, Inc.
144 West 125th Street
New York, NY 10027
Telephone (212) 222-7800
**Call Monday from 2:00-2:30 p.m.*

The Legal Aid Society
90 Church Street
New York, NY 10007
Telephone (212) 387-2220
**Call Monday 9:30-11:00 a.m. for appt.*

All New York City Counties

Center for Disability Advocacy
Rights, Inc. (CeDAR)
841 Broadway (between 13-14th Sts)
Suite 605
New York, NY 10003
(212) 979-0505

Westchester County

Westchester Putnam Legal Services
4 Cromwell Place
White Plains, NY 10601
Telephone (914) 949-1305
**Call Monday-Friday 9:00-5:00 p.m.*

Private Attorneys

You may hire a private lawyer, but you must arrange the terms and conditions of such legal representation. The Court cannot recommend any particular attorney, but you may call the Association of the Bar of the City of New York's **Legal Referral Service at (212) 626-7373 (English)** or **(212) 626-7374 (Spanish)** for referrals to lawyers who handle Social Security and/or SSI cases.

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