

How to Qualify for Social Security Disability With HIV/AIDS

If you have a medical condition, such as HIV or AIDS, that keeps you from working, you may qualify for [Social Security Disability benefits](#). The Social Security Administration (SSA) oversees two disability programs that provide monthly benefits to those who are disabled or have a serious and can no longer work full time. The SSA uses a medical guide, which is called the [Blue Book](#), to determine eligibility. The Blue Book has a listing that applies to HIV/AIDS. To be approved with that listing, you must meet the specific criteria.

To be approved for disability benefits with HIV/AIDS, you need to meet the criteria of the listing for that disorder. You will need to provide [medical evidence](#) and documentation to confirm your diagnosis and either an opportunistic disease or serious complication from it. Documentation and medical evidence are essential to a successful disability claim so you can be approved for monthly benefits.

Meeting the Listing Criteria

To show that you meet the criteria of the [Blue Book listing](#), you will need to provide medical documentation that confirms you are HIV positive or that you have full-blown AIDS. The Blue Book is the [list of conditions that qualify](#) for Social Security disability benefits. HIV/AIDS is one of those conditions. There are different ways in which one can show HIV infection, including medical tests and laboratory results. If the SSA cannot review your records, you will need to have new laboratory tests done so those records can be accessed.

Accepted laboratory tests for disability approval include HIV antibody tests, HIV DNA or RNA detection test, HIV p24 antigen test, isolation of HIV in viral culture, and other specific lab tests that are used for the diagnosis of HIV. You should be able to prove your diagnosis through laboratory tests, medical evidence, or medical records. As an example, a confirmed diagnosis of opportunistic disease that is common for those who have HIV or AIDS and has no other legitimate cause could be adequate for proving your diagnosis.

Any opportunistic disease that you have been diagnosed with should have indications of a cell-mediated immunity and it should have been diagnosed by laboratory testing. For example, if you have cancer, you must be able to provide biopsy results or for toxoplasmosis of the brain provide records that indicate the traditional symptoms such as seizures, headache, fever, lesions on the brain, and serology tests that were positive. Some tests, such as CD4 tests, aren't adequate confirmation of an HIV diagnosis. That is a test that counts the T-helper lymphocytes in your bloodstream and it cannot definitively confirm an HIV diagnosis.

Applying for Disability Benefits

If you are unable to work because of HIV or AIDS, you should apply for Social Security Disability benefits. Remember, medical documentation is the key to a successful claim. You should [consult with your doctor](#) beforehand to make sure you have all of your paperwork in order before you start your application. You must prove your diagnosis, show any symptoms and side effects, and be able to detail your limitations and restrictions. The [application process](#) can get underway online at the SSA's website. If you have any further questions regarding your claim, you can call the SSA toll free at 1-800-772-1213.

Resources:

- <https://www.ssa.gov/disability/>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook/AdultListings.htm>
- https://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook/14.00-Immune-Adult.htm#14_07
- <https://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org/social-security-disabling-conditions>
- <https://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org/faq/forms-doctor-fills-out> <https://www.ssa.gov/applyfordisability/>