



News Release

SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security Expands Compassionate Allowances Conditions

Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security, today announced 13 new Compassionate Allowances conditions involving the immune system and neurological disorders. The Compassionate Allowances program fast-tracks disability decisions to ensure that Americans with the most serious disabilities receive their benefit decisions within days instead of months or years. Commissioner Astrue made the announcement during his remarks at the U.S. Conference on Rare Diseases and Orphan Products in Washington, D.C.

“Social Security handles more than three million disability applications each year and we need to keep innovating and making our work more efficient,” Commissioner Astrue said. “With our Compassionate Allowances program, we quickly approved disability benefits for more than 60,000 people with severe disabilities in the past fiscal year. We have made significant improvements, but we can always do more.”

The Compassionate Allowances initiative identifies claims where the nature of the applicant’s disease or condition clearly meets the statutory standard for disability. With the help of sophisticated new information technology, the agency can quickly identify potential Compassionate Allowances and then quickly make decisions.

Social Security launched the Compassionate Allowances program in 2008 with a list of 50 diseases and conditions. The announcement of 13 new conditions, effective in December, will increase the total number of Compassionate Allowances conditions to 113. The conditions include certain cancers, adult brain disorders, a number of rare genetic disorders of children, early-onset Alzheimer’s disease, idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, and other disorders.

The agency announced a small grant program for graduate students that will help Social Security improve its list and has recently awarded an approximately \$1.5 million grant over a five-year period to Policy Research, Incorporated (PRI) through the Disability Determination Process Small Grant Program. This new program aims to improve the disability process through innovative research by graduate students who will receive small stipends for their work. In addition, the agency recently streamlined its online disability application for people who have a condition on the Compassionate Allowances list.

For more information on the Compassionate Allowances initiative, please visit www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances.

New Compassionate Allowances Conditions

Malignant Multiple Sclerosis

Paraneoplastic Pemphigus

Multicentric Castleman Disease

Pulmonary Kaposi Sarcoma

Primary Central Nervous System Lymphoma

Primary Effusion Lymphoma

Angelman Syndrome

Lewy Body Dementia

Lowe Syndrome

Corticobasal Degeneration

Multiple System Atrophy

Progressive Supranuclear Palsy

The ALS/Parkinsonism Dementia Complex