

PLEASE STAND BY.
THIS EVENT WILL BEGIN SHORTLY.
>> GOOD MORNING.
MY NAME IS ROBIN, AND I'M THE
ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER IN THE
OFFICE OF QUALITY DATA MANAGEMENT
IN THE SOCIAL SECURITY
ADMINISTRATION.
I'M VERY HAPPY TO WELCOME YOU TODAY
TO THE SECOND PUBLIC FORUM THAT
SOCIAL SECURITY IS HOLDING AS PART OF
OUR AGENCY-WIDE SECTION 504
SELF-EVALUATION.
I FIRST WANT TO THANK MY STAFF AND
ALL OF THE FOLKS WHO VOLUNTEERED
AND CONTRIBUTED TO SETTING UP THIS
FORUM.
WITHOUT THEM, THIS WOULD NOT HAVE
BEEN MADE POSSIBLE, AND THEY'VE
DONE A TREMENDOUS JOB PULLING THIS
TOGETHER.
SSA IS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT
EVERYONE HAS MEANINGFUL ACCESS TO
OUR PROGRAMS, OUR ACTIVITIES AND
FACILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH
SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT
OF 1973.
AS PART OF THAT COMMITMENT WE ARE
FOCUSING TODAY ON THE
COMMUNICATION ASPECT OF OUR
SERVICE.
AND AGAIN, WE'RE PLEASED TO BE
HOSTING THE SECOND PUBLIC FORUM.
THE FOCUS OF THIS FORUM WILL BE ON
TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS,
AND WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU, THE
PUBLIC, ABOUT HOW WELL WE'RE DOING
IN PROVIDING YOU AND PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES MEANINGFUL ACCESS TO
OUR PROGRAMS.
WE WORK HARD TO ENSURE PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES ARE ABLE TO
EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE WITH
SOCIAL SECURITY STAFF, WHETHER IT'S
THROUGH OUR NOTICES, OUR

TELEPHONES, OR ONLINE OR BY ANY OTHER METHOD.

THE PUBLIC FORUMS WE HOSTING REPRESENT ONLY ONE PIECE.

THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT ASPECTS TO THIS PLAN THAT WILL TAKE A NUMBER OF YEARS TO COMPLETE.

OUR ROLE IN THESE FORUMS IS TO LISTEN TO YOU, THE PUBLIC, SO THAT WE CAN COMPLETE THE MOST AND BEST EFFICIENT SELF-EVALUATION PLAN POSSIBLE.

AS WE ALL KNOW, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS UNDER LIMITED RESOURCES RIGHT NOW, BUT WE INTEND TO MAKE THE MOST EFFECTIVE USE OF THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO US FOR THIS SELF-EVALUATION.

WE ENCOURAGE YOUR COMMENTS.

THEY'LL HELP US TO DETERMINE HOW TO DO THAT MORE EFFECTIVELY.

DURING BOTH FORUMS, WE'LL WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS FROM INDIVIDUALS AND FROM ADVOCATES, AND ONCE WE RECEIVE ALL THE COMMENTS, BOTH WRITTEN AND ORAL, WE WILL CAREFULLY REVIEW THEM AND PROPOSE -- AND DO FURTHER REVIEW OF THE COMMENTS.

AND THEN WHAT HAPPENS?

AT THE END OF OUR 504

SELF-EVALUATION ACTIVITIES, WE'LL PREPARE A TRANSITION PLAN AND WE'LL LIST THE AREAS WE RECOMMEND FOR IMPROVEMENT, ANY BARRIERS WE IDENTIFIED AND A RECOMMENDED NEXT STEP.

NOW I'M GOING TO TURN IT OVER TO OUR MODERATOR, MS. JASMINE LEE, FROM OUR OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS.

THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU, ROBIN.

GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE.

I'M JASMINE LEE, AND WELCOME TO OUR SECTION 504 SELF-EVALUATION OPEN FORUM ON COMMUNICATIONS AND

TECHNOLOGY.

I WILL BE TODAY'S FLOOR MODERATOR.

BEFORE WE BEGIN, I WOULD LIKE TO

MAKE A FEW ANNOUNCEMENTS.

PLEASE TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES AND

PLACE THEM ON VIBRATE AS NOT TO

DISTURB THE EVENT.

MANY PARTICIPANTS LET US KNOW IN

ADVANCE THAT THEY HAD A DISABILITY

THAT REQUIRED A REASONABLE

ACCOMMODATION.

IF AT ANY TIME YOU REALIZE YOU NEED

TO RECENTLY ACCOMMODATION, A

CHANGE OF REASONABLE

ACCOMMODATION, OR YOU FIND THAT

THE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

YOU'RE BEING PROVIDED IS NOT

WORKING FOR YOU, PLEASE LET US

KNOW IMMEDIATELY SO WE CAN WORK

TOGETHER AND ENSURE YOU ARE ABLE

TO PARTICIPATE MEANINGFULLY AND

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH US

TODAY.

SSA STAFF ARE HERE TO HELP YOU AT

THE FORUM AND ARE WEARING NAME

TAGS.

PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO ASK THEM

FOR ASSISTANCE, SUCH AS FOR A

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION,

LOCATING A REST ROOM, LOCATING A

PLACE FOR A SERVICE ANIMAL TO

RELIEVE THEMSELVES OR ANY OTHER

QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE ABOUT THE

FORUM TODAY.

AS EXPLAINED IN THE FEDERAL

REGISTER'S NOTICE, THIS EVENT IS BEING

RECORDED IN WEBCAST AND WILL BE A

MATTER OF PUBLIC RECORD.

EVERYONE HERE TODAY IS REMINDED

AGAIN THAT YOUR PARTICIPATION HERE

MEANS YOU CONSENT TO YOUR

PARTICIPATION BEING PUBLIC.

THIS IS THAT VIDEO AND TRANSCRIPTS OF

TODAY'S COMMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED

TO THE PUBLIC, INCLUDING ON THE

INTERNET.
WITH THAT IN MIND, WHEN YOU COMMENT TODAY, PLEASE DO NOT PROVIDE ANY UNNECESSARY PERSONALLY IDENTIFYING INFORMATION, MEDICAL INFORMATION OR CONTACT INFORMATION THAT YOU DO NOT WISH TO BE MADE PUBLIC.

WE KNOW THAT BREAKS ARE IMPORTANT. GIVEN TODAY'S SCHEDULE, WE ANTICIPATE TAKING BREAKS, BRIEF BREAKS WHEN TIME PERMITS.

WE ALSO INTEND TO BREAK FOR LUNCH, BUT IN THE EVENT THAT TODAY'S LIST OF SPEAKERS IS SHORTER THAN WE ANTICIPATED, WE WILL PRESS THROUGH. WE WILL KEEP YOU POSTED AFTER EACH BREAK AND POSSIBLY BETWEEN COMMENTS IF WE ANTICIPATE A CHANGE. AS MENTIONED IN THE PUBLIC REGISTER, YOU MAY DECIDE TO SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS AFTER THIS FORUM.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING WRITTEN COMMENTS IS NOVEMBER 15th.

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS ONLINE ON THE WWW DOT REGULATIONS DOT GOV.

AND SEARCH FOR DOCKET ID NUMBER SSA DASH 2011 DASH 0035.

THAT IS DOCKET IDSSA DASH 2011 DASH 0035.

YOU MAY ALSO SUBMIT YOUR WRITTEN COMMENTS HERE TODAY AT OUR DOCKET COUNTY.

THE AUGUST 2nd, 2011 FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE PROVIDES DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDANCE ABOUT AVAILABILITY OF REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS IN SUBMITTING COMMENTS.

BY WAY OF REMINDER, THE OPEN FORUM IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO TAKE IN YOUR COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS.

BECAUSE OF TIME AND PRIVACY CONSTRAINTS, WE CANNOT ANSWER

INDIVIDUAL BENEFIT QUESTIONS IN THIS SETTING.

WE WILL NOT RESPOND TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS REGARDING AGENCY POLICY OR PROCEDURES AT THIS FORUM.

HOWEVER, AS YOU KNOW, THE PURPOSE OF OURSELF EVALUATION IS TO EXAMINE OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING OUR PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES.

ACCORDINGLY, THE OBJECTIVE OF OUR LIMITED TIME TOGETHER TODAY IS TO GATHER YOUR INPUT AND IDEAS SO WE CAN CONSIDER HOW TO INCORPORATE THEM AS WE GO FORWARD WITH THIS SELF-EVALUATION.

TODAY, TOP TOPICS ARE COMMUNICATIONS IN TECHNOLOGY. COMMUNICATIONS INCLUDES, FOR EXAMPLE, OUR NOTICES AND TELEPHONE SERVICES.

TECHNOLOGY, OF COURSE, INCLUDES OUR INTERNET WEBSITE AND ONLINE APPLICATIONS.

THE PANEL MEMBERS HERE TODAY WITH US ARE FAMILIAR WITH COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY.

SO PLEASE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT YOUR COMMENTS ON THESE TOPICS TO THEM TODAY.

NOW I'LL ALLOW THE PANEL MEMBERS TO INTRODUCE THEMSELVES.

>> GOOD MORNING.

MY NAME IS DAN KNIGHT.

I'M THE DIVISION DIRECTOR IN THE OFFICE OF PROGRAM POLICIES SUPPORT, WHICH IS PART OF THE OFFICE OF RETIREMENT AND DISABILITY PROGRAMS.

OUR OFFICE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POSTING AND MAINTENANCE OF NATIONAL POLICY INSTRUCTIONS AND THE INTERNET.

>> MY NAME IS LARRY MONTGOMERY.

I WORK IN THE OFFICE OF

COMMUNICATIONS, THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING AND TECHNOLOGY.

MY MAIN AREA OF FOCUS IS OUR INTERNET WEBSITE, WHICH IS SOCIAL SECURITY DOT GOV.

>> GOOD MORNING.

MY NAME IS SAM RICHARDSON.

I'M WITH THE OFFICE OF OPERATIONS.

I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR INTERNET PROGRAM APPLICATIONS, INCLUDING RETIREMENT AND DISABILITY APPLICATIONS.

>> HELLO.

MY NAME IS ROBERT BAKER.

I WORK IN THE OFFICE OF SYSTEMS, THE OFFICE OF ELECTRONIC SERVICES, AND I AM THE SECTION COORDINATOR FOR THE AGENCY, 508.

I HELP THE AGENCY COORDINATE ITS COMPLIANCE FOR TECHNOLOGY ACCESSIBILITY WITH THE SECTION 508 REGULATIONS.

>> HELLO.

MY NAME IS JANET TRUEY, AND I'M A PROGRAM POLICY OFFICER IN THE OFFICE OF DISABILITY PROGRAMS.

>> THANK YOU.

NOW LET'S DISCUSS THE PROCEDURE FOR COMMENTING TODAY.

WE ARE ASKING EVERY COMMENTER TO LIMIT THEMSELVES TO FIVE MINUTES.

AS YOUR TIME IS COMING TO A CLOSE, WE WILL TURN ON LIGHTS HERE AND SOUND BELLS.

THIS IS A DEMONSTRATION OF WHAT THE LIGHTS WILL LOOK LIKE AND WHAT THE BELLS WILL SOUND LIKE.

AS TODAY'S MODERATOR, I MAY ALSO STEP IN TO INDICATE TO YOU THAT YOUR TIME IS ALMOST UP.

IF YOU HAVE A DISABILITY THAT REQUIRES A SPECIFIC MANNER OF COMMUNICATION ABOUT YOUR TIME, JUST LET US KNOW.

PLEASE TAKE TIME -- TAKE YOUR TIME,
TAKE FIVE MINUTES, IN THE TIME FRAME,
SO EVERY PERSON WHO JOINS US TODAY
WILL HAVE THE SAME COURTESY.

AGAIN, THANK YOU FOR JOINING US
TODAY.

IT'S GREAT TO SEE EVERYONE IN THE
AUDIENCE, AND WE AT SSA APPRECIATE
YOUR COMMENTS.

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SHARE WITH US
SO WE CAN LEARN FROM YOU, AND WE
WILL DO A BETTER JOB WORKING
TOGETHER AND SERVING YOU, OUR
CUSTOMERS AND THE PUBLIC.

WE HAVE OUR FIRST CALLER ON THE LINE.
CALLER, ARE YOU THERE?

>> CALLER: I AM.

>> PLEASE INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND
YOUR ORGANIZATION.

>> CALLER: .

>> CALLER?

MS. AMY VERSILLIO?

>> CALLER: GOOD MORNING.

>> GOOD MORNING.

PLEASE INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND
YOUR ORGANIZATION.

>> CALLER: GOOD MORNING.

MY NAME IS DR. AMY VERCILLO, AND I'M
THE NATIONAL CHAIR OF THE SOCIAL
SECURITY VOCATIONAL EXPERTS
ASSOCIATION, PART OF THE
INTERNATIONAL REHABILITATION
ASSOCIATES.

>> WE'RE WAITING FOR YOUR COMMENT.
HAVE YOU FIVE MINUTES.

-- YOU HAVE FIVE MINUTES.

>> CALLER: THANK YOU.

GOOD MORNING.

AS THE NATIONAL CHAIR OF THE SOCIAL
SECURITY VOCATIONAL EXPERTS, I'VE
HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SIT IN ON
THOUSANDS OF SOCIAL SECURITY
HEARINGS.

I AM ALSO A VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
PROVIDER THAT WORKS WITH

INDIVIDUALS APPLYING FOR SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS AND HAVE WORKED WITH SEVERAL EMPLOYEES OF SOCIAL SECURITY WITH DISABILITIES REQUIRING ACCOMMODATION.

FOR 504 ACCOMMODATIONS, I WOULD BE -- I'M GOING TO FOCUS MY COMMENTS ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS IN THE HEARING AND ADJUDICATION PROCESS.

FOR INDIVIDUALS THAT ARE DEAF OR WITH LOW HEARING, THE SECURITY INSTRUCTIONS NEED TO BE WRITTEN OUT FOR INDIVIDUALS AS THEY COME INTO OUR OFFICES.

OFTEN INDIVIDUALS THAT ARE DEAF OR HAVE LIMITED HEARING, THERE IS NOT A MANNER IN WHICH THEY ARE GIVEN SECURITY INSTRUCTIONS AS FAR AS SIGNING IN, BEING WANTED AND HAVING THOSE WRITTEN OUT AND POSTED WOULD CERTAIN HELP INDIVIDUALS UNDERSTAND WHAT THE SECURITY REQUIREMENTS ARE.

ANOTHER 504 ACCOMMODATION THAT CERTAINLY NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED IS THE ISSUE DURING HEARINGS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT. TYPICALLY WHAT HAPPENS IS, IF REQUESTED, A SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER IS BROUGHT IN, HOWEVER THIS IS VERY -- THE COMPLIANCE WITH THIS IS VERY LIMITED, AND OFTEN HEARINGS HAVE TO BE RESCHEDULED AT GREAT COST TO THE AGENCY, AND THEN IT ALSO REQUIRES THAT THE INDIVIDUAL COME BACK SOMETIMES MONTHS LATER FOR A FOLLOW-UP HEARING.

IF EITHER -- AND NOT IN EVERY HEARING ROOM BUT AT LEAST SOME OR AT LEAST ONE IN EACH OFFICE, THERE WAS TEXT TO -- VOICE TO TEXT SOFTWARE FOR THE COMPUTERS THAT ARE IN THE HEARING ROOMS.

THIS WOULD BE OF GREAT ASSISTANCE

TO INDIVIDUALS THAT HAVE HEARING IMPAIRMENTS AND THAT OFTEN THEY ARE UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES IF THERE IS NOT A SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER. THIS WOULD ALLOW THEM TO RECEIVE INSTRUCTION, EVEN INSTRUCTIONS THAT THEIR HEARING IS BEING RESCHEDULED. ANOTHER RECOMMENDATION I WOULD HAVE IS THAT INDIVIDUALS SHOULD HAVE THEIR -- SINCE THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE COURTROOMS HAVE VIDEO EQUIPMENT, PERHAPS HAVING A CENTRALIZED, HAVING A CONTRACT WITH A SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER INTERPRETING COMPANY THAT COULD PROVIDE SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION VIA VIDEO FOR HEARING AS IT IS A FREQUENT -- IT IS FOR CLIENTS AND APPLICANTS THAT DON'T HAVE REPRESENTATIVES. OFTEN THEY COME IN HERE, HAVE NOT REQUESTED A SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER AND ARE NOT EVEN UNDERSTANDING WHAT'S HAPPENING WHEN A HEARING NEEDS TO BE RESCHEDULED. SO USE OF THE VIDEO EQUIPMENT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL IN BEING ABLE TO PROVIDE SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS. THE OTHER WOULD -- ANOTHER WOULD BE IN AT LEAST THE REGIONAL HEARING OFFICES TO HAVE RF TRAINERS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LOW HEARING SO THEY CAN WEAR THE HEADSET AND THE JUDGE, THE ALJ, WOULD EITHER NOT HAVE TO YELL FROM THE BENCH OR COME DOWN AND SIT NEXT TO THE PERSON FOR THOSE INDIVIDUALS THAT HAVE LOW HEARING AND MAY NOT BE VERSED IN SIGN LANGUAGE OR LIP READING, FOR THEM, AT LEAST THEY WOULD HAVE A HEADSET AND COULD HEAR WHAT WAS GOING ON IN THE PROCEEDING.

THIS IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH.

>> EXCUSE ME.

>> CALLER: -- WITH LOW HEARING.

>> YOU HAVE ONE MINUTE LEFT.

>> CALLER: FOR CLIENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT OR LOW VISION, SCREEN AMPLIFICATION SOFTWARE ON THE COMPUTERS SO WHEN INDIVIDUALS ARE REVIEWING THEIR CDS -- THEIR RECORDS ARE ALL ON CDS, AND WHEN THEY COME INTO THE OFFICE, STAFFS SHOULD BE TRAINED ON HOW TO SHOW PEOPLE WITH LOW VISION TO VIEW THEIR DISCS.

THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR APPLICANTS OR CLAIMANTS THAT DON'T HAVE AN ATTORNEY OR REPRESENTATIVE IN THAT THEY ARE OFTEN UNSURE HOW TO USE THE DISC. THE INSTRUCTIONS ARE DIFFICULT, AND SO TO HAVE A STAFF MEMBER IN EACH HEARING OFFICE THAT UNDERSTANDS HOW TO USE THE SCREEN MAGNIFICATION SOFTWARE AND TO INSURE THAT THE SCREEN MAGNIFICATION SOFTWARE CAN BE UTILIZED WITH THE ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS.

>> YOUR TIME IS UP, DR. AMY VERCILLO. DO YOU HAVE ANY FINAL COMMENTS?

>> CALLER: NO.

THAT WOULD BE IT.

THE ONLY FINAL COMMENT WOULD BE ABOUT HAVING AT LEAST ONE COURTROOM THAT CAN ACCOMMODATE EXTRA WIDE WHEELCHAIRS IN THAT OFTEN THE DOORS ARE NOT -- FOR STANDARD WHEELCHAIRS, THEY ARE ACCEPTABLE, BUT FOR THE EXTRA WIDE, OFTENTIMES THEY DON'T FIT THROUGH, AND EXTRA WIDE SEATING FOR INDIVIDUALS OF SIZE.

THAT WOULD BE MY FINAL COMMENT.

>> THANK YOU SO MUCH.

>> CALLER: CERTAINLY.

>> OKAY.
WE HAVE ANOTHER CALLER ON THE LINE.
PLEASE INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND TELL
US ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION.

>> CALLER: HELLO.
THIS IS ANN CHECKLEY.
I WORK WITH AIDS ALLIANCE FOR
CHILDREN USE AND FAMILIES.
I HAVE DONE -- TO BE PERFECTLY
HONEST, I DON'T DO A MAJOR AMOUNT OF
ADVOCATING FOR OUR CONSUMERS.
WE DO MORE LEADERSHIP TRAINING
EMPOWERMENT, BUT WE DO CONNECT
PEOPLE WITH SOCIAL WORKERS AND
DIRECTLY WITH THE SOCIAL SECURITY
ADMINISTRATION IN ORDER TO
DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT THEY
QUALIFY.

I JUST WANTED TO FOCUS TODAY A FEW
MINUTES, THE QUESTION ABOUT
COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY
AND THE CURRENT ABILITY TO BE ABLE TO
ACCESS SOCIAL SECURITY
ADMINISTRATION AND GET THE
INFORMATION YOU NEED AND HOW EASY
IT MAY BE TO APPLY FOR DISABILITY
BENEFITS ONLINE.

I WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN TRYING TO HELP
A FRIEND, ACTUALLY, WHO WAS
SEVERELY DISABLED FROM A WORKERS'
COMP SITUATION.

HE WAS DEALING WITH TRYING TO
QUALIFY FOR WORKERS' COMP AT THE
SAME TIME AS BEING IDENTIFIED AS
FULLY DISABLED BY SOCIAL SECURITY.
SO THAT WAS A LITTLE BIT MORE
COMPLICATED.

HE ALSO DID NOT HAVE ACCESS TO
COMMUTERS.

THIS WAS TWO YEARS AGO.
SO IT'S A LITTLE OUTDATED.

BUT I JUST WANT TO SHOW YOU THE
TRANSITION.

HE HAD TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH A SOCIAL
SECURITY OFFICE, AND IT WAS

FRUSTRATING, AND MONTHS AND MONTHS WENT BY, AND HE REALLY COULDN'T MAKE ANY PROGRESS. HE ENDED UP HAVING TO HAVE HIS LAWYER, A LAWYER, WHICH COSTS MONEY, DEAL DIRECTLY WITH SOCIAL SECURITY AND GET EVERYTHING DECIDED.

THE BENEFIT, THE UPSIDE OF THAT, WAS BY THE TIME SOCIAL SECURITY DID GET AROUND TO MAKING THE DECISION, THEY COMMUNICATED BEAUTIFULLY, AND HE GOT BACKPAY, DISABILITY PAYMENT THAT WENT BACK TO WHEN HE FIRST APPLIED, SO THAT WAS GREAT.

RECENTLY, VERY RECENTLY, I'M DEALING WITH THE TECHNOLOGY SIDE OF THINGS TO PERSONALLY APPLY FOR DISABILITY BENEFITS, AND WHAT I'M HAPPY TO SEE, AND I HAVE LOTS OF ACCESS TO COMPUTERS.

WHAT I'M REALLY HAPPY TO SEE IS THERE IS A WELL -- WEALTH OF INFORMATION ON THE SOCIAL SECURITY SITE.

EVERYTHING I'VE HAD QUESTIONS ABOUT I'VE BEEN ABLE TO ANSWER ON THE SITE. WHETHER OR NOT THIS IMPROVEMENT IN TECHNOLOGY OR COMMUNICATIONS IS GOING TO MAKE ANYTHING WORK FASTER, I CAN'T TESTIFY TO THAT AT THIS MOMENT.

BUT I HAVE TO SAY I'M GREATLY PLEASED WITH WHAT'S CURRENTLY AVAILABLE ON THE SOCIAL SECURITY SITE AND JUST IN HOW IT SIMPLIFIES THINGS FOR PEOPLE. OF COURSE, PEOPLE NEED ACCESS TO COMPUTERS TO BE ABLE TO USE THIS. THE FLIP SIDE OF THAT, FOR THOSE WHO DON'T HAVE ACCESS, IT WOULD BE GREAT IF IN THE SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICES, WHERE THEY GO IN PERSON, MAYBE PEOPLE COULD GET THEM ONLINE RIGHT THERE AND STREAMLINE THE PROCESS FOR THEM.

ANYWAY, THAT'S REALLY ALL I HAVE TO

SAY ABOUT YOUR COMMUNICATIONS
TECHNOLOGY.

I HAVE OTHER THOUGHTS, BUT THEY'RE
NOT RELATED TO THIS SUBJECT.

>> OKAY.

THANK YOU, MS. CHECKLEY.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR
COMMENT.

>> CALLER: THANK YOU.

>> WE HAVE AN IN-PERSON COMMENTER.

WE WOULD LIKE TO ASK MS. CATHARINE
MCNALLY TO COME FORWARD, IF YOU
WILL.

YOU HAVE FIVE MINUTES.

PLEASE SHARE.

>> GREAT.

GOOD MORNING.

MY NAME IS CATHARINE MCNALLY.

I'M REPRESENTING THE GRAHAM BELL
ASSOCIATION FOR DEAF AND HARD
HEARING AS ONE OF THE BOARD
MEMBERS.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE INITIATIVE
TO DO THIS 504 SELF-EVALUATION.

MY HOPE FOR ALL THE OTHER AGENCY
TOSS FOLLOW OWE AGENCY TOSS
FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE IF THEY HAVEN'T
DONE THAT YET.

MEMBERS IN COMMUNITY OFTEN USE
ASSISTIVE LISTENING AIDS FROM
HEARING AIDS TO COCHLEAR IMPLANTS
TO LISTEN AND PARTICIPATE IN
EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES.

WE'RE BIG ADAPTERS TO TECHNOLOGY
TO COMMUNICATE, PARTICULARLY
COMPUTERS AND SMART PHONES.
AS TECHNOLOGY BECOMES MORE
ADVANCED, WE ARE PROVIDING NEW AND
EFFECTIVE WAYS OF USING TECHNOLOGY
TO PROVIDE ACCESSIBILITY.

WE ARE NOT ABLE TO TALK OVER THE
PHONE WITHOUT VOICE -- I MEAN,
LISTENING.

VIDEO CHAT, TEXT MESSAGING, INSTANT
MESSAGING AND SKYPE OVER THE

COMPUTER, THESE CORE AND SAVVY TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES HAVE REALLY MADE A -- TTY.
MY SUGGESTION IS TO OFFER ADDITIONAL METHODS.
I DON'T HAVE A TTY.
I'VE NEVER HAD ONE, AND THAT'S PRETTY REPRESENTATIVE OF MY GENERATION AND PEOPLE WHO ARE COMING UP TO ME.
I WOULD RECOMMEND THAT YOU GUYS CONSIDER E-MAIL, ONLINE COMMUNICATION FORUMS, CHAT, INSTANT MESSAGING, TEXT MESSAGING, AND EVEN OPPORTUNITES TO DO SKYPE IF YOU NEED TO, ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE IN REMOTE AREAS.
BY OFFERING THESE, YOU OFFER GREATER FLEXIBILITY, ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE WHO MAY NOT HAVE A TELEPHONE OR MAY NOT HAVE CELL PHONE MINUTES. THESE SERVICES YOU PROVIDE IN-HOUSE AND AT THE SSA ARE GROUND FROM SIGN LANGUAGE, NOTE TAKING, SPEECH MEETING, TTY.
COMPUTERS, TRANSCRIPTS.
IT WOULD BE GREAT FOR ALL AREAS TO HAVE ACCESS FOR SOMEONE, AND IT'S GREAT FOR ENGLISH TO SPANISH TRANSLATIONS AND MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS.
SO IT WOULD BE GREAT.
THIRD BUT NOT LEAST, SOME KIND OF VISUAL SYSTEM TO BE NOTIFIED WHEN IT IS YOUR TERM TO MEET WITH SOMEBODY. IT'S NOT LIKE THE DMV WHEN YOU HAVE A NUMBER TO PAY YOUR PARKING TICKET. IT'S REALLY FRUSTRATING FOR ME TO SIT IN LINE FOR HOURS AND NOT BE ABLE TO HEAR WHEN I NEED TO BE, CONSTANTLY LISTENING FOR MY NAME.
IN CLOSING, I COMMEND YOUR USE OF CAPTIONS AND YOUTUBE VIDEOS WITH PATTY DUKE.
THAT JUST CAME OUT LAST WEEK.
I THOUGHT THAT WAS A GREAT, GREAT

EXAMPLE OF USING CAPTIONS IN THE
YOUTUBE VIDEOS.

I FOUND A LOT OF THE OLDER ONES
DIDN'T HAVE CAPTIONS IN THEM, SO I
WOULD RECOMMEND GOING FORWARD
YOU CONTINUE TO DO THE SAME THING.

PATTY DUKE, HI.

>> YOU JUST HAVE ONE MINUTE LEFT.

>> THAT WAS IT.

SO I'M HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY
QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE, ANYTHING
LIKE THAT.

>> THANK YOU SO MUCH.

>> THANK YOU.

>> WE'LL TAKE A BRIEF PAUSE.

WE'RE WAITING TO NEXT THE CALLER ON
THE LINE.

PLEASE STAND BY.

THIS EVENT WILL CONTINUE SHORTLY.

>> WELCOME BACK, EVERYONE.

WE ARE BACK AND WE HAVE OUR NEXT IN
PERSON GUEST, BUT BEFORE WE MOVE
FORWARD, I'D LIKE TO SAY THAT WE
ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO SUBMIT
COMMENTS TO WWW DOT REGULATIONS
DOT GOV AND SEARCH FOR DOCKET ID
DASH 2011 DASH 0035.

WE HAVE OUR NEXT IN-PERSON
COMMENTER, AND HER NAME IS MS. AMY
MASON.

IF YOU WILL, PLEASE INTRODUCE
YOURSELF AND TELL US ABOUT YOUR
ORGANIZATION.

YOU HAVE ABOUT FIVE MINUTES.

>> THANK YOU.

>> MY NAME IS AMY MASON, AND I AM
SPEAKING TODAY ON BEHALF OF THE
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND.

I AM AN ACCESS TECHNOLOGY
SPECIALIST AT THE INTERNATIONAL
BRAILLE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER FOR
THE BLIND LOCATED AT THE

ORGANIZATION'S HEADQUARTERS.
THE NFB HAS OVER 50,000 MEMBERS WITH
AFFILIATES IN ALL 50 STATES PLUS
WASHINGTON D.C. AND PUERTO RICO.

I'D LIKE TO THANK THE SOCIAL SECURITY
ADMINISTRATION FOR HOSTING THIS 504
SELF-EVALUATION FORUM.

IT SHOWS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION
HAS A COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY
AND IS HOLDING ITSELF ACCOUNTABLE
FOR ITS LEGAL OBLIGATIONS.

AS BOTH A BLIND PERSON AND AN
EXPERT IN THE IT FIELD, I ENCOUNTERED
INACCESSIBLE TECHNOLOGY ON A
REGULAR BASIS.

IT IS FRUSTRATING TO SEE THAT SO MANY
FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE STRUGGLING TO
BE 504 AND 508 COMPLIANT AND
CONSEQUENTLY HAVE WEBSITES AND
CONTENT INACCESSIBLE BY THE BLIND.

IT IS PARTICULARLY FRUSTRATING WHEN
THE SSA DOES NOT PROVIDE
MEANINGFUL ACCESS FOR THE BLIND TO
ITS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY,
BECAUSE SO MANY BLIND PEOPLE ARE
SSI AND SSDI BENEFICIARIES.

BECAUSE TODAY'S FORUM IS
SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO IT AND
COMMUNICATIONS, I AM GOING TO LIMIT
MY FEEDBACK TO WAYS THAT THE SOCIAL
SECURITY ADMINISTRATION CAN
IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY.

THE MAJORITY OF THESE ARE SPECIFIC
WAYS THE SSA WEBSITE VIOLATES
SECTION 508, BUT WE CONSIDER THEM
RELEVANT TO TODAY'S FORUM
CONSIDERING THE CONNECTION
BETWEEN THE 508 GUIDELINES AND THE
504 REQUIREMENTS.

FIRST, SSA NEEDS TO TAKE THE PROPER
STEPS TO ENSURE THAT WEBINARS ARE
ACCESSIBLE.

THE ADMINISTRATION OFTEN USES
WEBINARS TO EDUCATE BENEFICIARIES,
YET ALL OF THEM ARE INACCESSIBLE TO

BLIND PEOPLE.

FOR EXAMPLE, THE SLIDES WERE NOT PROPERLY TAGGED ON THE 2010 WEBINAR WHICH HIRE ONLINE, IT'S SO EASY.

FURTHERMORE THE CONTROLS FOR MOVING ARE NOT IN THE TAB ORDER, AND THE ACCESSIBLE SLIDE SHOW IS IN A PDF.

WHILE THE TEXT CAN BE READ, NAVIGATING THROUGH THE TEXT WITH SEARCH COMMANDS IS IMPOSSIBLE. THE SSA ALSO RAN A WEBINAR RELATED TO THE BOND PROGRAM, A BENEFIT OFFSET PILOT PROGRAM OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO OUR MEMBERS, BUT THERE WAS NO WAY FOR US TO TEST THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THIS WEBINAR BECAUSE NO ARCHIVED WEBINARS CAN BE FOUND.

SECOND, THERE ARE UNABLED COMBO BOXES ON THE SSA WEBSITE WITH AT LEAST ONE EXAMPLE FOUND ON THE COMMON SOCIAL SECURITY FORMS PAGE. THIS IS IN DIRECT VIOLATION OF SECTION 508, WHICH REQUIRES ELECTRONIC FORMS, INCLUDING FIELDS, INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR COMPLETION AND FUNCTIONS TO BE FULLY ACCESSIBLE.

THIRD, THERE ARE A FEW DEFECTS WITH THE BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY SCREENING TOOL QUESTIONNAIRE.

QUESTIONS WITH RADIO BUTTONS ARE NOT PROPERLY TIED TO THOSE RADIO BUTTONS.

THE NEXT BUTTON IS NOT IN THE TAB ORDER ASSOCIATED WITH THE FORM, THUS NOT EASILY ASSOCIATED WITH THE KEYBOARD, AND DIRECTIONS AND REFERENCES TO ERRORS IN RED ARE UNCLEAR TOP BLIND USERS.

FOURTH, THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION'S BENEFITS CALCULATOR, A STAND ALONE APPLICATION, IS NOT ACCESSIBLE.

THE CHECK BOX FOR MILITARY PERIODS

IS NOT PROPERLY LABELED AND RADIO
BUTTONS ON FORMS LIKE THE
SUPPLEMENTARY WORKER INFORMATION
ALSO HAVE BEEN -- SHOULD ALSO HAVE
MORE DESCRIPTIVE LABELS.

FIFTH, THE INTRO PAGE FOR THE
MEDICARE BENEFITS APPLICATION IS NOT
FULLY COMPATIBLE WITH THE POPULAR
SCREEN ACCESS SOFTWARE.

WITH THE SOFTWARE FINDING, THE EDIT
BOXES ON SOME OF THE PAGES, EVEN
THOUGH THESE BOXES DO NOT ALWAYS
INVOLVE EDITING.

AND FINALLY, WE HAVE RECENTLY
DISCOVERED THE ADMINISTRATION
STOPPED SENDING YEARLY BENEFIT
LETTERS IN THE MAIL IN APRIL.

THE ONLY WAY TO OBTAIN THE CONTENTS
OF THIS LETTER IS OVER THE PHONE,
WHICH POSES MAJOR AND OBVIOUS
COMMUNICATION BARRIERS FOR THE
DEAF BLIND.

WE URGE SSA TO CONSIDER MAKING THIS
LETTER AVAILABLE ELECTRONICALLY, IN
BRAILLE AND IN OTHER ALTERNATIVE
FORMATS.

>> MS. MASON, YOU HAVE ONE MINUTE.

>> THANK YOU.

ALL OF THESE PROBLEMS CAN BE EASILY
REMEDIED WITH TECHNIQUES USED BY
ACCESS TECHNOLOGY SPECIALISTS FOR
SEVERAL YEARS.

WE HOPE THE SSA WILL CONTINUE TO
STRIVE TO PROVIDE MEANINGFUL
ACCESS TO BLIND BENEFICIARIES AND
THIS EFFORT STARTS WITH FULL 508
COMPLIANCE AND UTILIZING BEST
PRACTICES, SUCH AS INCLUDING TESTING
FOR ACCESSIBILITY REGULARLY,
CREATING A PANEL OF USERS WITH
DISABILITIES WHO CAN PROVIDE
FEEDBACK ON INTERFACE DESIGNS AND
USING A CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
OR CMS.

WITH SO MANY OF OUR MEMBERS HAVING

REGULAR COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR AGENCY, THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND LOOKS FORWARD TO WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE FULL ACCESSIBILITY AT THE SSA.

I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

>> THANK YOU SO MUCH.

>> THANK YOU.

>> WE HAVE OUR NEXT CALLER ON THE LINE.

MS. LATIFA RING.

IF YOU'RE THERE, YOU CAN BEGIN.

YOU HAVE FIVE MINUTES.

>> CALLER: MY COMMENTS ARE INDIRECTLY RELATED TO TECHNOLOGY, BUT NOT DIRECTLY.

THEY'RE RELATED TO DISCRIMINATION OF ELDERLY AND DISABLED CITIZENS WHO HAVE BEEN DECLARED MENTALLY INCOMPETENT AND ALSO THOSE THAT ARE LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY UNDER COMMUNITY WAIVER PROGRAM, AND I JUST HAVE A COUPLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

WHILE -- ONE OF THE PROBLEMS WE HAVE IS WHEN PEOPLE BECOME ELDERLY, WE KNOW MANY WILL

BECOMING -- HOPEFULLY THEY WILL HAVE MAINTAINED THEIR POWER OF ATTORNEY OR GUARDIAN IN ADVANCE, BUT WE KNOW THIS DOES NOT HAPPEN, SO WHAT HAPPENS IS THEY END UP WITH A COURT APPOINTED GUARDIAN.

I HAVE A RECOMMENDATION TO SOCIAL SECURITY THAT MIGHT HELP WITH THIS AS MANY OF THESE ELDERLY AND DISABLED SIT -- CITIZENS ARE SEEING THEIR SOCIAL SECURITY ASSETS AS WELL AS MANY OTHER ASSETS DISSIPATED WHEN STRANGERS ARE APPOINTED TO TAKE OVER CARE OF THEIR ASSETS.

I RECOMMEND WHEN A PERSON SIGNS UP WITH SOCIAL SECURITY THROUGH YOUR SYSTEM AT RETIREMENT THAT THEY BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY

ELECTRONICALLY TO DESIGNATE WHO THEY WOULD WANT THEIR FINANCIAL SURROGATE DECISION-MAKER TO BE FOR THE PURPOSES OF ADMINISTERING AND MANAGING THEIR SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS IF AND WHEN THEY BECOME INCAPACITATED.

THIS COULD ALL BE DONE ONLINE IN YOUR ONLINE BENEFITS ENROLLMENT PROGRAM, WHICH WOULD BE SECURE.

IT WOULD GO A LONG WAY IN PREVENTING EXPLOITATION OF AN ELDERLY PERSON'S SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS WHEN THEY BECOME INCAPACITATED WHEN A STRANGER IS APPOINTED WHO IS MORE INTERESTED IN MAKING MONEY OFF THE ELDERLY PERSON THAN ACTUALLY TRYING TO PRESERVE THEIR ESTATE AND TAKE PROPER CARE OF THEIR SOCIAL SECURITY DOLLARS.

I THINK THIS IS SOMETHING THAT IS VERY SIMPLE TO DO AND COULD GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS HELPING END FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION OF ELDERLY AND DISABLED ADULTS, AND ANYONE IN A GUARDIANSHIP, OF COURSE, IS DISABLED. SO THAT'S MY FIRST RECOMMENDATION. MY SECOND RECOMMENDATION HAS TO DO WITH AN EXPERIENCE THAT I HAD WITH MY FOSTER MOTHER AS HER GUARDIAN.

MY FOSTER MOM WAS ON SSI. AND IF I UNDERSTAND CORRECTLY FROM TALKING TO THE ADMINISTRATION, UNDER SSI, SHE AUTOMATICALLY BECAME ELIGIBLE FOR MEDICAID BENEFITS.

I ENROLLED HER IN THE COMMUNITY WAIVER PROGRAM, AND SHE WAS ABLE TO LIVE IN THE COMMUNITY AS WE WANT ALL OF OUR ELDERLY PEOPLE TO DO TODAY.

BUT AS WE ALL KNOW, MOST OF THESE PEOPLE ARE EVENTUALLY GOING TO DETERIORATE AND HAVE TO GO INTO A

LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY.
MY FOSTER MOTHER WAS ONE SUCH
PERSON.
SHE BROKE HER HIP AND ENDED UP IN
REHAB AND WAS FORCED TO ENTER A
LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY.
AFTER 100 DAYS IN THE LONG-TERM CARE
FACILITY, SOCIAL SECURITY SENT A
LETTER TO THE STATE, WHO WAS
PROVIDING MEDICAID SERVICES THAT
SHE QUALIFIED FOR UNDER SSI, STATING
THAT SHE WAS NO LONGER ELIGIBLE FOR
SSI BENEFITS.
I'M SURE IT WAS A COMPUTER GLITCH
SOMEWHERE, BUT ESSENTIALLY WHAT
THE PROBLEM WAS SHE WAS STILL
ELIGIBLE FOR SSI FINANCIALLY BUT
BECAUSE SHE WENT INTO A LONG-TERM
CARE FACILITY, SHE LOST QUALIFICATION
FOR THE MONTHLY ALLOWANCE OF \$190.
SO WHAT THEY DID IS THEY NOTIFIED THE
STATE THAT SHE WAS NO LONGER
ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE BENEFITS.
AND THEREFORE, WHAT HAPPENED
OF -- WHAT HAPPENED WAS THE STATE
CANCELLED HER COMMUNITY WAIVER
MEDICAID BENEFITS, AND OF COURSE,
SHE WAS FORCED TO REAPPLY FOR
LONG-TERM CARE MEDICAID, WHICH WE
KNEW WOULD BE APPROVED, BUT IT
TAKES ABOUT 8 WEEKS TO GET THAT
APPROVED.
SO SHE WENT 8 WEEKS WITH NO
COVERAGE DURING THAT TIME.
SHE WAS A VICTIM OF ABUSE, AND
TERRIBLE ABUSE IN THE NURSING HOME,
AND I WAS UNABLE TO MOVE HER
ANYWHERE.
THERE IS A LOOPHOLE IN THE SYSTEM
SOMEWHERE THAT WHEN A PERSON IS
ELIGIBLE FOR SSI BUT LOSES ELIGIBILITY
FOR THAT MONTHLY ALLOWANCE
AMOUNT, A FLAG IS GOING OFF
SOMEHOW, SAYING THAT THEY'RE NOT
ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS, AND ANYBODY

THAT GOES INTO THE COMMUNITY ON THE
WAIVER PROGRAM UNDER SSI COULD
RISK THIS BEING A PROBLEM.

>> PLZ -- MS. RING, EXCUSE ME, YOU HAVE
ONE MINUTE, PLEASE.

>> MY SUGGESTION IS THAT SOMEBODY
LOOK AT THAT PROBLEM OF
TRANSITIONING FROM COMMUNITY CARE
TO LONG-TERM CARE MEDICAID AND THE
SOCIAL SECURITY SSI TRIGGERS THAT
CAN MAKE THAT HAPPEN.

MY LAST COMMENT IS SIMPLY THAT WE
KNOW THAT MANY THIRD PARTY
SURROGATE FINANCIAL DECISION
MAKERS THAT ARE HANDLING SENIOR
CITIZENS ASSETS ARE EXPLOITING THEIR
ESTATES, AND WHAT WE WANT TO DO IS
FOR THOSE THAT ARE DISABLED AND
INCAPACITATED, THE SOCIAL SECURITY
ADMINISTRATION SHOULD BE NOTIFIED
ANY TIME A PERSON IS DECLARED
INCAPACITATED AND REQUIRE THE THIRD
PARTY GUARDIAN OR SURROGATE
FINANCIAL DECISION-MAKER TO SUBMIT
ONLINE TO SOCIAL SECURITY AN
ACCOUNTING OF THE MANAGEMENT AND
DISPOSITION OF ALL SOCIAL SECURITY
FUNDS THAT COME UNDER THEIR
CONTROL.

THIS WOULD GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS
ENDING THE FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION OF
DISABLED ELDERLY ADULTS.

>> OKAY.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR
COMMENTS, MS. RING.

>> THANK YOU.

>> WE HAVE A BRIEF PAUSE, A BRIEF
BREAK BEFORE OUR NEXT CALLER
COMES.

SO WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK.

PLEASE STAND BY.

THIS EVENT WILL CONTINUE SHORTLY.

PLEASE STAND BY.

THIS EVENT WILL CONTINUE SHORTLY.

>> WELCOME BACK TO OUR SECTION 504

FORUM ON COMMUNICATIONS AND
TECHNOLOGY.

AGAIN, WE WOULD LIKE TO ENCOURAGE
ALL COMMENTERS TO SUBMIT COMMENTS
TO WWW DOT REGULATIONS DOT GOV.
WE HAVE OUR NEXT COMMENTER ON THE
LINE.

HER NAME IS KIM LIDELL.

PLEASE BEGIN YOUR COMMENTS.

>> CALLER: I'M WAITING FOR THE TONE.
DO I START?

>> YES, WE'RE READY FOR YOU.

PLEASE BEGIN.

HAVE YOU -- YOU HAVE FIVE MINUTES.

>> CALLER: HI.

I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR THE
OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK AT THIS SOCIAL
SECURITY FORUM.

MY NAME IS KIM LADELL.

LIDDELL IN THE SUBURBAN CHICAGO
AREA.

IMPART OF THE BLIND VISION ADVISORY
GROUP COMMITTEE, WHICH IS PART OF
THE MEDICARE WORK COALITION, MMW,
AND THIS COALITION IS ABOUT PROVIDING
ACCESSIBILITY AND EDUCATION TO
OLDER ADULTS AND PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES.

WE ARE INTERESTED INDEFINITELY
PROVIDING

ACCESSIBILITY -- FURTHERING
ACCESSIBILITY FOR THESE INDIVIDUALS
REGARDING HEALTH CARE AND
MEDICARE, SOCIAL SECURITY, AND THE
BENEFITS ON THE STATE LEVEL AS WELL
AS THE FEDERAL LEVEL.

NOW HERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT WE,
INDIVIDUALS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS
OF DIFFERENT LEVELS, HAVE COME
ACROSS AND WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT.
ONE, WE'RE CONCERNED ABOUT THE
CONTRAST FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOW
VISION.

THEY USE MAGNIFICATION SOFTWARE OF
DIFFERENT KIND, AND IT'S VERY

IMPORTANT THAT THE TEXT AGAINST THE BACKGROUND ON THE WEBSITE ARE VERY CONTRASTING, SUCH AS BLACK TEXT AGAINST WHITE BACKGROUND. SOME INDIVIDUALS ON THE BLIND LOW VISION ADVISORY GROUP HAS BROWSED THE SOCIAL SECURITY DOT GOV WEBSITE AND OTHER WEBSITES, AND WE NOTICED THAT THE CONTRAST WASN'T AS SHARP AS IT COULD BE, AND WE WERE CONCERNED ABOUT HAVING THE TEXT SIZE INCREASED MORE.

ANOTHER ISSUE THAT WE WERE CONCERNED ABOUT, WHEN THERE ARE IMAGES, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, IMAGES ARE NOT REALLY THAT IMPORTANT TO THE BLIND/LOW VISION COMMUNITY.

ANOTHER AREA THAT I WOULD LIKE TO BRING UP ON HEADINGS, SUCH AS TOPICS.

WHEN THERE IS A LISTING ON THE WEBSITE WITH PARAGRAPHS, AND EACH PARAGRAPH IS HEADED BY A HEADING, WE ACTUALLY USE HOT KEYS WITHIN OUR SCREEN READER SOFTWARES, SUCH AS JAWS OR WINDOW EYES.

WHEN WE'RE USING A HOT KEY TO JUMP FROM HEADING TO HEADING, IT WAS NOTICED THAT IT WAS ACTUALLY SKIPPING HEADINGS, SO WE WERE MISSING POTENTIAL INFORMATION THAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR.

WE WOULD NOTICE THAT WHEN WE ARROWED BACK UP WITH THE ARROW KEYS, WE WOULD FIND THAT IT ACTUALLY SKIPPED A PARAGRAPH, AND THIS IS SOMETHING THAT CAN EASILY BE CORRECTED WITHIN THE WEBSITE.

TO BE ABLE TO SKIP FROM HEADING TO HEADING REALLY HELPS US TO ELIMINATE HAVING TO READ EVERYTHING FROM TOP TO BOTTOM.

WE WANT TO ZERO IN ON THE TOPIC THAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR.

ANOTHER AREA THAT WE'RE CONCERNED

ABOUT ARE LINKS.

SOMETIMES -- I KNOW LINKS ARE TYPICALLY COLOR CODED BLUE, BUT FOR THOSE WITH LOW VISION, WE FIND IT KIND OF DIFFICULT TO SEE THAT AGAINST THE BACKGROUND, TRYING TO READ IT, SO THAT'S ANOTHER ISSUE THAT WE'RE CONCERNED ABOUT.

NOW, WE DO -- WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE COUNSELORS AND PEOPLE THAT ARE RECEIVING BENEFITS FROM SOCIAL SECURITY, ABOUT HAVING A LIBRARY OF INFORMATION, YOU KNOW, ACCESSIBLE AND EASIER TO MANIPULATE FOR THE COUNSELOR AS WELL AS THE CONSUMERS WHO ARE LOOKING TO -- YOU KNOW, FOR INFORMATION ON BENEFITS AND THE HEALTH CARE INFORMATION.

>> MS. LIDDELL, YOU HAVE ONE MINUTE.

>> CALLER: OKAY.

ANOTHER AREA THAT WE WERE WONDERING -- OH, AUDIO FILES. WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT AUDIO FILES. I WAS ACTUALLY BROWSING, AND I CLICKED ON A LINK TO LISTEN TO AN AUDIO FILE WHICH POPPED UP IN WINDOWS MEDIA PLAYERS.

I COULDN'T HEAR ANYTHING, AND I HAD MY VOLUME ALL THE WAY UP.

SO I DECIDED TO TRY IT ON ANOTHER COMPUTER.

I COULD BARELY HEAR IT ON THE NEXT COMPUTER, AND I HAVE JAWS SPEAKING TO ME, WHICH IS MY SCREEN READER SPEAKING TO ME, YOU KNOW, AT A COMFORTABLE LEVEL THAT I AM COMFORTABLE WITH TO HEAR, BUT YET I COULD BARELY, BARELY HEAR THE AUDIO FILES, SO I WAS JUST WONDERING IF THE AUDIO FILES COULD BE CREATED AT A HIGHER VOLUME RATE.

NOW, WE DO HAVE A WISH LIST THAT WE WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT, YOU KNOW, IN WRITING, AS WELL, AND WE WILL DO THAT.

I WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT I THINK IT WOULD BE GREAT TO EXPAND ON THE TELEPHONE SERVICES WHERE WE CAN HAVE INDIVIDUALS AT SOCIAL SECURITY DOT GOV THAT ARE FAMILIAR WITH SCREEN READERS AND MAGNIFICATION SOFTWARE SO THAT THEY KNOW WHAT HOT KEYS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL TO USE. THAT WAY, IF I WERE TO CALL IN AND SAY, HEY, I'M LOOKING FOR SOMETHING ON THE WEBSITE, THIS INDIVIDUAL CAN ASSIST ME, SAYING, OKAY, THIS IS WHAT YOU NEED TO DO. THIS IS THE LINK YOU LOOK FOR. USE YOUR HOT KEY TO DO THIS, TO FIND THAT, AND IT JUST REALLY ELIMINATES A LOT OF WANDERING AROUND IN THIS VAST WEBSITE.

>> EXCUSE ME, MS. LIDDELL, YOUR TIME IS UP.

DO YOU HAVE ANY FINAL THOUGHTS.

>> CALLER: ANY WHAT?

>> DO YOU HAVE ANY FINAL THOUGHTS? YOUR FIVE MINUTES IS UP AT THIS TIME. ANY FINAL COMMENTS.

>> CALLER: I DO.

YOU KNOW, WE ARE A GROUP OF PEOPLE, YOU KNOW, APPRECIATING THE ADA ACT AND HOW THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS REALLY TAKEN STEPS TO IMPROVE THAT IN MANY WAYS, AND OF COURSE, THERE'S ROOM TO GROW, AND WE'RE DEFINITELY VERY MUCH INTERESTED IN CONTINUING TO WORK WITH SOCIAL SECURITY FORUM, FURTHERING THE EFFORTS AND ENDEAVORS TO PROVIDE ACCESSIBILITY.

>> OKAY.

THANK YOU SO MUCH.

>> CALLER: YOU'RE WELCOME.

THANK YOU.

>> WE HAVE OUR NEXT CALLER ON THE LINE.

MS. JULIE CHAVEZ.

SHE HAS TEN MINUTES TO COMMENT.

PLEASE INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND
YOUR ORGANIZATION.

>> CALLER: GOOD MORNING.
MY NAME IS JULIE ANN CHAVEZ.
CURRENTLY ANN CHECKLEY
INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT PROVIDING
SERVICE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING
SERVICES LOCATED IN FOREST PARK AS
WELL AS MAKE MEDICAL -- MAKE
MEDICARE WORK COLLATION.
THROUGH MAKE MEDICARE WORK
COALITION, WE HAVE A GUEST ADVISORY
GROUP THAT MEETS ON A QUARTERLY
BASIS TO DISCUSS ISSUES THAT ARE
GOING ON FOR CONSUMERS WHO ARE
DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING.
IT IS A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT
PROVIDING EFFECTIVE MEDICARE,
OUTREACH AND PRODUCT
DEVELOPMENT.

THE COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS WOULD
MAMMA -- MAKE MEDICARE WORK
COALITIONS OUR PRIVATE CENTER,
OPTIONS OF OAK PARK ILLINOIS AND
HEALTH AND DISABILITY ADVOCATES
LOCATED IN CHICAGO.

THERE ARE A FEW ISSUES THAT HAVE
COME UP FOR THE DEAF AND
HARD-OF-HEARING THAT I WOULD LIKE TO
DISCUSS.

FIRST OFF, THE TTY HOTLINE, WHICH IS
ALSO KNOWN AS THE TELEPHONE DEVICE
FOR THE DEAF.

WHILE VIDEO PHONES ARE PRETTY MUCH
THE WAY THAT MOST DEAF OR
HARD-OF-HEARING PEOPLE USE TO MAKE
THEIR PHONE CALLS AND IT'S CALLED
VIDEO RELAY SERVICE, WHICH IS WHAT
I'M USING RIGHT NOW, AND I HAVE A
VIDEO PHONE, AND I'M SPEAKING ON MY
OWN BEHALF BECAUSE I AM CAPABLE OF
DOING THAT, AND I HAVE AN
INTERPRETER THAT'S ON MY SCREEN
THAT WILL FIND EVERYTHING THAT YOU
SAY TO ME IN -- THAT WILL SIGN

EVERYTHING THAT YOU SAY TO ME IN AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE.

TTY'S THESE DAYS ARE BECOMING OBSOLETE.

HOWEVER, THEY ARE VERY IMPORTANT FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT AFFORD INTERNET, WHICH IS REQUIRED TO HAVE VIDEO PHONES CONNECTED TO.

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE TTY HAVE COME TO ME STATING THAT THEY HAVE CALLED A TTY HOTLINE BUT NO ONE ANSWERS THE PHONE.

I'M NOT SURE WHAT THE ISSUE IS OR WHAT'S GOING ON, BUT I THOUGHT I WOULD BRING THAT UP BECAUSE THAT IS ONE ISSUE THAT IS STILL ONGOING WITH THE DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING.

I HAVE HEARD THAT THROUGH SEVERAL STATES, AND THEN IN TERMS OF VIDEO PHONES, THERE ARE TIMES WE WILL USE A VIDEO PHONE TO MAKE A CALL TO SOCIAL SECURITY OR TO MEDICARE TO HAVE AN ANSWER REGARDING A QUESTION THAT WE HAVE.

AS YOU NOTICE, THERE MAY BE A LITTLE BIT OF A DELAY WHILE WE'RE USING VIDEO RELAY SERVICE, AND THE REASON IS, ONE, IS WHILE YOU GUYS ARE TALKING, THE INTERPRET IS INTERPRETING.

IF THERE IS NO IMMEDIATE RESPOND, IT IS BECAUSE I AM STILL WATCHING THE SIGN LANGUAGE ON MY SCREEN OR THERE COULD BE A LITTLE BIT OF A COMPUTER GLITCH, DEPENDING ON THE LOCATIONS WHERE WE LIVE.

FOR EXAMPLE, I LIVE IN ARKANSAS, AND I LIVE IN THE FOOTHILLS OF THE MOUNTAINS, AND CERTAIN TIMES OF THE DAY, THERE WILL BE A LITTLE GLITCH WHERE MY SCREEN WILL FREEZE JUST FOR A FEW BRIEF SECONDS, AND THEN EVERYTHING WILL WORK AGAIN, AND THEN OFTENTIMES WE ARE HUNG UP ON BECAUSE THERE'S NO IMMEDIATE RESPONSE.

SO WHAT WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE, OUR ADVISING GROUP WOULD LIKE TO SEE A TRAINING OR AN EDUCATION, YOU KNOW, TO ALL REPRESENTATIVES AS TO HOW THE VIDEO PHONES AND TTY WORKS, YOU KNOW, HAVE LIKE A DO NOT HANG UP CAMPAIGN SORT OF DEAL IN ORDER TO PROVIDE TO ALL OF YOUR REPRESENTATIVES.

I KNOW YOU HAVE REPRESENTATIVES ALL ACROSS THE UNITED STATES, AND IT'S HARD TO CONTROL ALL OF THEM.

AND THEN THE OTHER THING IS, SOMETIMES IT'S THE ATTITUDE OF REPRESENTATIVES WHILE WE HAVE THEM ON THE PHONE.

FOR INSTANCE, MY OWN PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, I HAD CALLED SOCIAL SECURITY AND WAS ON HOLD, AND THEN THE REPRESENTATIVE QUESTIONED MY USING A VIDEO PHONE, WAS THINKING THAT I WAS AN INDIVIDUAL THAT WAS FRAUDULENT AND STARTED GETTING LOUDER AND LOUDER ON THE VIDEO PHONE SAYING THAT I WAS FRAUDULENT AND THAT HE WAS NOT GOING TO, YOU KNOW, PROCEED TO CARRY ON TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE SIMPLY BECAUSE I HAD AN OPERATOR, RELAY OPERATOR ON MY PHONE, AND I WAS KIND OF SURPRISED BY THAT.

SO SOME OF THE OTHER EXPERIENCES MAY NOT BE THE SAME AS MINE, BUT THERE HAVE BEEN SOME REPRESENTATIVES THAT HAVE ATTITUDES WITH THOSE WHO ARE UTILIZING VIDEO RELAY SERVICE OR TTY RELAY SERVICE WHERE THEY THINK THAT THEY ARE NOT THE PERSON THAT'S CALLING, YOU KNOW, IN REGARDS TO THEIR OWN SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT OR MEDICARE ACCOUNT.

AND IN ADDITION, I WANTED TO SHARE SOMETHING WITH YOU.

MEDICARE DOT GOV THROUGH CENTERS

OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES,
AND THE MAKE MEDICARE WORK
COALITION AND MYSELF HAVE IN
CONJUNCTION WITH CONGRESSWOMAN
JANUARY'S OFFICE WHO HAVE PROVIDED
SUPPORT ALL ALONG, WE ARE DOING ASL
VIDEOS ON MEDICARE DOT GOV WEBSITE,
AND THE REASON BEING THAT WE HAVE
REQUESTED TO HAVE ASL VIDEOS ON THE
MEDICARE DOT GOV WEBSITE IS THERE
ARE THOSE WHO ARE DEAF, AND THEIR
PRIMARY LANGUAGE IS AMERICAN SIGN
LANGUAGE.

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH
ARE TWO SEPARATE LANGUAGES, AND SO
FOR THOSE WHOSE FIRST LANGUAGE IS
AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE, THE
WRITTEN CONTENTS ON MEDICARE DOT
GOV MAY NOT BE WHERE THEY
UNDERSTAND WHAT'S WRITTEN,
WHEREAS IF WE PUT IT IN ASL, THEY WILL
UNDERSTAND MUCH BETTER.

SO WE ARE SET TO GO TO BALTIMORE
NEXT TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27th,
PUTTING MEDICARE DOT GOV WEBSITE
CONTENTS, SUCH AS THE OVERVIEW OF
MEDICARE, MEDICARE PARTS A, B, C AND
D, AND THEN THREE VIGNETTES WILL
ALSO BE INCLUDED.

NOT ONLY WILL IT BE PROVIDED IN
AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE, WE WILL
ALSO HAVE IT IN CAPTION, AND WE WILL
ALSO HAVE A VOICE-OVER.

THE REASON WHY WE WANTED TO DO ALL
THREE IS NOT ONLY WILL IT HELP THOSE
WHO ARE DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING,
IT WILL ALSO HELP THOSE WHO HAVE
LANGUAGE BARRIERS, WHO MAY NOT BE
ABLE TO READ THE CONTENTS ON THE
WEBSITE BUT AUDITORIALLY CAN
UNDERSTAND WHAT IS BEING SAID.

SO WE ARE ASKING IF THIS COULD BE
SOMETHING THAT THE SOCIAL SECURITY
ADMINISTRATION WOULD CONSIDER FOR
THEIR WEBSITE, AND I WILL BE IN THE

VIDEOS PROVIDING ASL, AS WELL AS A COUPLE OF OTHER PEOPLE THAT ARE DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING THAT ARE ACTORS AND ACTRESSES, AND WE ALSO ARE INCLUDING AN ASL COACH JUST TO MAKE SURE THAT THE CONTENTS ARE CORRECTLY STATED IN ASL JUST TO PREVENT ANY ERRORS ON THE FILMING.
>> MS. CHAVEZ, DOES THAT CONCLUDE YOUR COMMENTS?
>> CALLER: YES.
>> THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR TIME.
>> CALLER: YOU'RE QUITE WELCOME.
>> THANK YOU.
>> AT THIS TIME, WE'RE GOING TO TAKE A LUNCH BREAK.
SO WE'LL BE BACK MOMENTARILY WITHIN THE HOUR, I DO PRESUME.
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SELF-EVALUATION FORUM.

>> GOOD AFTERNOON, WELCOME BACK TO THE SECTION 504 EVALUATION FORM, SELF-EVALUATION FORM. WE'D LIKE TO ENCOURAGE ALL COMMENTERS TO GO TO REGULATIONS.gov AND SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS.
ABOVE MY HEAD WE HAVE A LINK TO A SURVEY WHICH IS AN EVALUATION SURVEY FOR THIS FORM.
WE ALSO ENCOURAGE YOU TO COMPLETE THAT.
WE HAVE OUR NEXT CALLER ON THE LINE, MR. STEVE WEISS.
WE'RE READY FOR YOUR COMMENTS.
>> THANK YOU, THIS IS STEVE WEISS FROM BAY AREA LEGAL AID IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, AND MY COMMENTS ARE SPECIFICALLY ON PARTICULAR POPULATIONS THAT HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH ACCESSING SSA SERVICES AND BENEFITS IN IN AND NEED HELP WITH TECHNOLOGY, LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES, REFUGEES AND ASYLEES WITH MENTAL HEALTH

ISSUES AND ANXIETY AND
DIFFICULTY INTERACTING WITH
AUTHORITIES AND GOVERNMENT
ENTITIES.
AND WE SEE CHRONIC PROBLEMS WITH
THIS POPULATION NOT
UNDERSTANDING BENEFITS AND NOT
GETTING THE HELP THROUGH SSA TO
ACCESS THE BENEFITS TO WHICH
THEY'RE ENTITLED, YOU KNOW,
APPLYING REPEATEDLY AND NOT
COMPLETING THE PROCESS OR NOT
APPEALING DENIALS AND
REAPPLYING, NOT GETTING
INTERPRETERS, BEING ASKED TO USE
FAMILY MEMBERS TO INTERPRET.
PROBLEM THAT CONSULTIVE EXAMS,
BEING REFERRED FOR USUALLY
UNNECESSARY CONSULTIVE EXAMS
BECAUSE THEY'RE IN TREATMENT FOR
DEPRESSION AND PTSD BUT THEY'RE
STILL SENT TO CONSULTIVE EXAMS
WHERE THEY'RE CONFUSED, THEY'RE
NOT PROVIDED WITH ADEQUATE
INTERPRETATION, NOT GIVEN
APPROPRIATE TESTING EITHER FOR
THEIR DIAGNOSES, THE STANDARD
BATTERY WITH I.Q. TESTS AND FOR
ORGANIC DAMAGE WHEN THEY HAVE
PTSD AND DEPRESSION, GIVEN TESTS
THAT ARE NOT CULTURALLY
APPROPRIATE, THAT ARE -- THAT
USE WESTERN SYMBOLS LIKE FOR
MALINGERING.
SO THEIR INABILITY TO COMPLETE
THOSE TASKS DUE TO LIMITED
EDUCATION AND LIMITED ENGLISH
SPEAKING RESULTS IN A USELESS CE
THAT SAYS THEY'RE MALINGERING
EVEN THOUGH THERE MAY BE PAGES
AND PAGES OF DOCUMENTATION OF
DEPRESSION AND PTSD.
AND MORE OFTEN THAN NOT THE
STATE WILL RELY ON THOSE
CONSULTATIVE EXAMS AND IF THE
FOLKS AREN'T ABLE TO APPEAL
TIMELY AND GET TO A JUDGE THEY
DON'T GET THEIR BENEFITS FOR
YEARS AND YEARS.
SO THAT'S MY PARTICULAR CONCERN,
THAT THERE SHOULD BE SOME KIND

OF HEIGHTENED ATTENTION TO THIS
POPULATION, TO MENTAL HEALTH
CLAIMS GENERALLY.
BECAUSE THOSE FOLKS HAVE A
SIGNIFICANT BARRIER JUST
ACCESSING THE PROGRAM AND
UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAM AND
UNDERSTANDING THEIR APPEAL
RIGHTS.
BUT WHEN YOU COMBINE THAT WITH
LIMITED ENGLISH-SPEAKING,
LIMITED EDUCATION, THAT
POPULATION REALLY NEEDS
PARTICULAR ATTENTION.
I THINK THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO
COMMENT ON.
THANKS.

>> OKAY, THANK YOU SO MUCH.
>> THANK YOU.
>> WE'RE GOING TO HOLD TIGHT FOR
OUR NEXT COMMENTER.
WE'LL TAKE A SHORT BREAK.
PLEASE STAND BY.
THIS EVENT WILL RESUME SHORTLY.

>> AND WE'RE BACK.
WE HAVE OUR NEXT CALLER ON THE
LINE, MR. STEVEN BRUCE.
MR. BRUCE, YOU HAVE FIVE MINUTES
TO SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS.
>> OKAY.
CAN I START?
>> YES, SIR.
>> YES.

MY NAME IS STEVEN BRUCE, I'M THE
DIRECTOR AT PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES FOUNDATION WHICH
FOCUSES ON MENTAL AND
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.
WE'RE HEADQUARTERED IN
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.
I WANT TO COMMENT ON EFFECTIVE
COMMUNICATION FOR THIS
POPULATION.
FOCUSING ON WORK, CDRs AND
ALSO GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS,
WRITTEN AND VERBAL.
TWO CASES, ONE IS MENTAL,
SCHIZOPHRENIA WITH ANXIETY AND
DEPRESSION.

THE OTHER ONE IS WE HAVE AUTISM WITH ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND LEADING TO SUICIDE, ACTUALLY BOTH ARE SUICIDAL.

THE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PEOPLE LIKE THIS, AND COMMUNICATING WITH SOCIAL SECURITY, AND I'M JUST PICKING WORK CDRs BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT WE'RE FOCUSED ON AND IT'S EASIER FOR US, RATHER THAN GENERALLY. WE WOULD THINK AND WE BELIEVE THESE PEOPLE DO NEED REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS SO THAT THEY HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN THE AREA OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION. SO THAT THEY HAVE MECHANISMS TO COMMUNICATE IN WAYS THAT WILL REDUCE ANXIETY AND HAVE THE EQUIVALENT OF LIMITED ENGLISH-PROFICIENT INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATED BUT SOMEONE WHO'S TRAINED LIKE A CLAIMS REPRESENTATIVE TO COMMUNICATE AND DEVELOP A RAPPORT WITH EACH INDIVIDUAL'S COMMUNICATION NEEDS.

WE HAVE SENT IN WRITTEN COMMENTS, ABOUT 20 PAGES LONG, AND THE ACCOMMODATIONS THAT WE HAVE AGREED TO THAT ARE NOT EFFECTUATED ARE AS FOLLOWS: TO TRAIN TWO CRs OR EQUIVALENT AT THE LOCAL D.O. FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL, AND THE TRAINING IS FROM FACTS FROM THEIR PRIMARY TREATING PSYCHOTHERAPIST OR WITH A D.D., DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED INDIVIDUAL FROM AN INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS COUNSELOR.

IN OTHER WORDS, ANYONE WHO KNOWS THE INDIVIDUAL BEST. IT SHOULD BE DONE AT THE INITIAL DDS APPLICATION STAGE.

IN OTHER WORDS, A COMMUNICATION EVALUATION OR ASSESSMENT TO DETERMINE IF PEOPLE WITH MENTAL AND/OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES NEED ASSISTANCE SO THAT THEY CAN EFFECTIVELY

COMMUNICATE IN ANY SSA PROCESS.
WITH RESPECT TO WORK REVIEWS,
THEY NEED TO UNDERSTAND WORK
EXPENSES AND SPECIAL
CIRCUMSTANCES.

IN OTHER WORDS, REASONABLE
ACCOMMODATIONS, HELP FROM A
FRIEND OR RELATIVE, AS OPPOSED
TO WHAT EMPLOYERS SUBSIDIES
MEAN, AN UNSUCCESSFUL WORK
ATTEMPTS.

THESE CATEGORIES ARE OFTEN
RELEVANT AND IMPORTANT IN
DETERMINING WHETHER SOMEONE
SHOULD BE SEEN BASED ON WORK.
HOWEVER, THE CLAIMANT NEEDS TO
UNDERSTAND WHAT FACTORS ARE
INVOLVED WHEN THEY RECEIVE A
NOTICE THAT THEY WILL BE HAVING
A WORK REVIEW OR THAT THEY HAVE
TEN DAYS TO REPLY BEFORE THEY
GET TERMINATED, BEFORE THEIR
BENEFIT CHECKS GET TERMINATED.

SOME OF THESE INDIVIDUALS DO
HAVE COMPULSIONS TO WORK EVEN IF
IT IS AN S.G.A., AND HAVE
EMPLOYERS WHO ARE VERY NICE AND
MAYBE GIVE THEM TWO OR
THREE-HOUR BREAKS AND
ACCOMMODATIONS AS OPPOSED TO
EMPLOYER SUBSIDIES WHICH IS A
SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT CONCEPT.
SO THE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS
GENERALLY NOW WOULD INCLUDE
DEVELOPING A RAPPORT WITH A
SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL AT THE LOCAL
FIELD OFFICE WHO IS TRAINED, FOR
EXAMPLE, TO TALK IN SHORT,
CONCRETE SENTENCES AT AN
APPROPRIATE LEVEL.

MAYBE THE READING LEVEL IS SIXTH
GRADE FOR A GUY WHO HAS
SCHIZOPHRENIA.

THE ANXIETY CREATED BY THE LOSS
OF BENEFITS, WHETHER IS RESULTS
IN A 67 OR THOUSAND-DOLLAR
OVERPAYMENT, CAN CREATE
DECOMPENSATION TO A FULL-BLOWN
PSYCHOSIS.

SO IT IS REALLY IMPORTANT THAT
SOCIAL SECURITY, IN

COMMUNICATING WITH THESE PEOPLE,
BE AWARE OF SUCH THINGS AS
SUICIDAL DECOMPENSATION AND
SOMEONE WHO'S AUTISTIC AND WHO
CANNOT COGNITIVELY PROCESS THESE
COMPLEX WORK REVIEW SSA CONCEPTS
LIKE UNSUCCESSFUL WORK ATTEMPT,
PARENT-RELATED WORK EXPENSE AND
VARIOUS SUBSTANTIAL
CIRCUMSTANCES AS DEFINED BY
SOCIAL SECURITY.

SO WE HAVE OUT HERE IN REGION 9,
WITH THE REGIONAL ATTORNEY, GONE
THROUGH AND EXERCISED --

>> EXCUSE ME, MR. BRUCE, YOUR
TIME IS UP.

DO YOU HAVE ANY FINAL COMMENTS?

>> YES.

WE BELIEVE AN ASSESSMENT
GENERALLY HAS TO BE MADE FOR
EVERYONE WITH A MENTAL OR
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY WITH
RESPECT TO EFFECTIVE
COMMUNICATION, AND THEN THE
ACCOMMODATION NEEDS TO BE
INSTITUTED AS APPROPRIATE.

I MEAN, IN SUM, THAT IS MY FINAL
COMMENT.

>> OKAY, THANK YOU SO MUCH.

>> AND I HAVE SENT WRITTEN
MATERIALS.

>> THANK YOU SO MUCH AND DON'T
FORGET TO SUBMIT OTHER
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS TO
REGULATIONS.gov .

>> WE SHOULD RESUBMIT WHAT WAS
ALREADY SUBMITTED?

>> IF YOU'VE ALREADY SUBMITTED,
THERE'S NO REASON FOR YOU TO
RE-SUBMIT.

BUT IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING
ADDITIONAL OTHER THAN WHAT
YOU'VE ALREADY SUBMITTED, PLEASE
FEEL FREE TO FIND THAT WEB SITE.

>> OH, OKAY.

WE SUBMITTED IT AS INSTRUCTED BY
SSA TO SOME ASSOCIATE
COMMISSIONER ABOUT A MONTH AGO.

I DON'T KNOW IF WE SHOULD --

MAYBE WE'LL RE-SUBMIT IT JUST IN
CASE.

ALL RIGHT.
ANYTHING ELSE?
>> NO, SIR.
THANK YOU SO MUCH.
>> OKAY, THANK YOU.
BYE.
>> THANK YOU.
WE'RE GOING TO TAKE A BRIEF
BREAK.
WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK.
PLEASE STAND BY.
THIS EVENT WILL RESUME SHORTLY.

.
.
>>> GOOD AFTERNOON AND THANK YOU
SO MUCH FOR JOINING US FOR THIS
SECTION 504 SELF-EVALUATION
FORUM.
CURRENTLY WE HAVE NO MORE
COMMENTERS TODAY BUT I'D LIKE TO
THANK ALL OF THE COMMENTERS FOR
THEIR INPUT IN REGARDS TO
COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY
AND FOR OUR AUDIENCE MEMBERS
TODAY.
AGAIN WE'D LIKE TO DIRECT YOU TO
THE REGULATIONS.gov WEB SITE
FOR ALL COMMENTS YOU HAVE
REGARDING THIS FORUM TODAY.
NOVEMBER 15th IS THE DEADLINE
FOR SUBMITTING ALL COMMENTS.
WE'D ALSO LIKE TO DIRECT YOU TO
THE SURVEY LINK ABOVE MY HEAD
WHICH IS AN EVALUATION SURVEY OF
THIS FORUM THAT YOU'VE BEEN
PARTICIPATING IN TODAY.
AND LASTLY, WE'D LIKE TO DIRECT
YOU TO OUR SSA WEB SITE,
SOCIALSECURITY.gov
/ACCESSIBILITY/504.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR
PARTICIPATION, AND WE LOOK
FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU
AGAIN.