

# FAQs: Availability & Scheduling Calendar

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## I. Accessing ASC

### 1. How do I access ASC?

If you have been selected for the pilot, are a Verbatim Hearing Reporter (VHR), and you have visited a Hearing Office to set up your Profile for ASC: Select the “Log In Or Create An Account” button located on the [Medical/Vocational Experts And Verbatim Hearing Reporters](#) (<http://www.ssa.gov/hearings>) main page. Once you have logged in, select Automated Scheduling from your menu. (Please be patient while we are making changes to the application name.)

### 2. Why can't I access the ASC link?

At this time, only selected VHRs participating in the ASC pilot can access the application. As the pilot expands, other VHRs who routinely conduct business with the added pilot offices will receive an invitation to participate.

### 3. Do I need to have my cell phone with me to access ASC?

No, a cell phone is not required to access ASC.

## II. Pilot Phase

### 1. Which hearing offices are participating in the ASC pilot?

- Baltimore, MD
- Norfolk, VA
- Manchester, NH
- Grand Rapids, MI
- Providence, RI
- Portland, ME

### 2. When will my local hearing office be added to the pilot?

At this time, ASC is in the pilot phase. During this early phase, SSA will gather data in order to further streamline the scheduling process and to improve the ASC application. As we progress, we will add additional offices. SSA will notify you when your associated hearing office is added to the pilot.

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## III. Using ASC

### 1. How do I set my availability?

You can set your availability by selecting any of the hyperlinks on your Monthly Calendar screen that indicate your current availability setting, i.e., Available, Unavailable, etc.

### 2. Will I get an email notification when calendars are updated with scheduled hearings?

No, ASC does not send email at this time.

### 3. Why can't I set my availability as "Available AM" or "Available PM"?

If you indicated in ASC, that you have multiple associates, then you can only set availability as "Available All Day" or "Unavailable".

### 4. How can I get details on the hearings scheduled?

Within the days on the calendar, select "Details" or a hearing office link to view more details. Days with no links indicate days with no hearings scheduled.

### 5. Why can't I change my availability for some days?

You cannot change your availability for days you have hearings scheduled or when scheduling is in progress. You may contact your associated hearing office to resolve any scheduling conflicts.

### 6. How far in advance may I provide my availability?

You can update your availability for dates up to 12 months out, in 6 month increments.

### 7. I have multiple associates working for me, how can I track hearings scheduled for all of my associates?

During the registration process, the hearing office will update your ASC Profile screen to indicate the number of associates working on your behalf. Then when you are using the Availability screens, you can indicate the number of associates available for each day of the month. All hearings scheduled for you and your associates will be displayed on the Monthly Calendar.

### 8. Will I be able to download the calendars to my home/office calendar application?

No, that functionality is not available.

### 9. Can I print the monthly and daily calendars?

Yes, you can print any screen.

### 10. How do I indicate the number of hearings I want per day?

If you have specific preferences regarding your availability, please communicate them to the associated hearing office.

### 11. Can I indicate my travel time when inputting my availability?

No, if you have specific preferences regarding your availability, please communicate them to the associated hearing office.

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## 12. I do not want to have hearings scheduled without travel time built into it. How do I restrict this on my calendar?

You cannot place these types of restrictions on your schedule using ASC. If you have specific preferences, please communicate them to the associated hearing office.

## IV. Error Messages or Alerts

### 1. Why am I getting the following alert when I attempt to access ASC? “At this time, you do not have access to ASC. Either you are not included in the pilot, or we do not have you in our database. If you have questions or think this is in error, please contact the associated hearing office for assistance.”

The application is only available to those VHRs who have been invited to participate in the ASC pilot and who routinely conduct business at one of the pilot hearing offices.

### 2. What do I do when I have problems or receive HTTP error messages accessing the application?

Do not have multiple browser windows open when you access the application. If you get error messages, try closing any open browser windows, shutting down and restarting your computer.

Also ensure that **JavaScript** has been enabled on your computer, if not, complete these steps for **Internet Explorer**:

- In the IE toolbar go to Tools
- Internet Options
- Click on the Security tab
- Click on 'Internet'
- Click the 'Custom level' button
- Scroll to 'Miscellaneous' section and under "Display mixed content select 'Enable'
- Scroll to 'Scripting' section in the 'Active Scripting' section click 'Enable'
- When the 'Warning' window pops out asking 'Are you sure you want to change the settings for this zone.'
  - If you are using IE version 7, select "Yes" or the "OK" button to apply the changes
  - If you are using IE version 8 or 9, select "No" button to apply the changes
- Click 'OK' to close window and 'Refresh' button on the web browser.

If you still cannot access the application, send a problem report to [ODAR.HQ.ARS@ssa.gov](mailto:ODAR.HQ.ARS@ssa.gov). Provide the following information:

1. User ID
2. Browser type and version (e.g. Firefox 15, Internet Explorer 9, Safari 5)
3. Computer operating system (e.g. Windows 7, Vista, Mac OS 10.6)
4. Steps taken before the error occurred

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## V. Scheduling Business Process

**1. Does the system account for the location of the associates on the day before, or the day after a hearing is to be scheduled?**

The application is a tool for schedulers to process the hearing office workflow for scheduling cases. It will not eliminate the need to work together with a scheduler during the special situations you described. Schedulers will use this tool, as well as make manual adjustments in order to meet the needs of all hearing participants.

**2. How much time do I have from the day the hearing shows up on my calendar to change my availability?**

Once a scheduled hearing is posted on your calendar, you will not be able to change your availability. You must contact the hearing office where you have hearings scheduled to resolve availability conflicts.

**3. If I have a busy schedule and I am not able to show availability far in advance, will it affect my claimant's cases?**

The system default for your availability is set to Unavailable. If you have access to the ASC, you need to provide changes to your availability 60 to -150 days in advance. You can update your availability up to a year out, as frequently as needed. If you do not have access to the ASC, the hearing office will follow the current business process to schedule cases for you.

**4. Will I be double booked or have time conflicts with the pilot and non-pilot offices?**

Every precaution will be taken to avoid conflicts; however, this new process is only partially automated. Hearing office schedulers still review the hearing dates and times along with the utilization of resources prior to any scheduled hearings.

**5. How should I provide my availability to non-pilot hearing offices?**

For non-pilot hearing offices, please continue to follow your current procedure for providing availability.

**6. How should I provide my availability to a pilot hearing office when I don't have access to ASC?**

Please continue to follow your current procedure for providing availability to a given hearing office.

**7. Will non-pilot hearing offices be able to view my calendar and schedule me accordingly?**

Non-pilot hearing offices will continue to follow current procedures for scheduling hearings.

**8. How is the scheduler involved in this process?**

The schedulers use an internal Calendar application to view your availability and profile settings. They will follow the current business process to schedule hearings based on all participants' availability.

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**9. Will the role of the scheduler change in the new process or at the pilot hearing office?**

No, the schedulers will continue to manage the scheduling business process at hearing office. The scheduler will use your Calendar in conjunction with the calendars of other participants and the current business process to schedule hearings.

**10. Will I have enough hearings scheduled for a day?**

Hearings are scheduled by hearing offices based on your profile settings and availability. The current scheduling business process will still be followed. If you have specific preferences, please communicate this with your associated hearing office.