

Continuing Disability Reviews (CDRs)

What is a Continuing Disability Review (CDR)?

Most individuals who receive either Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) have to go through a continuing disability review at some point to continue to receive benefits. During the CDR, the Social Security Administration will evaluate any medical evidence in the client's file and any new evidence that the individual has obtained to determine ongoing eligibility. The evidence must show that the individual's disability renders them incapable of performing substantial work to continue to be eligible for benefits.

CDR Protection

The only time an individual will not have to go through a CDR is when they have their Ticket to Work assigned to an Employment Network (EN) or a state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency. **As long as the ticket is assigned, the ticket holder is making timely progress and completing the Timely Progress Reviews (TPR). If participation with the approved EN or VR agency began before the CDR was initiated, no CDR will be conducted.** Once the ticket is no longer assigned, the person no longer has the CDR protection.

CDR Timeframes

The timeframe for when a CDR will be conducted depends on the severity of the individual's impairment. There are three different CDR categories:

1. Medical Improvement Expected- Individuals in this category must undergo a CDR every six months to one year.
2. Medical Improvement Possible- Individuals in this category must undergo a CDR every three to five years.
3. Medical Improvement Not Expected- Individuals in this category must undergo a CDR every five to seven years.

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How Can You Help?

Clients often fear CDR's because they think that it will automatically result in a loss of benefits or that they have been "singled out." If you have a fearful client contact you, clarify that this is a normal process that beneficiaries have to go through. Advise them to start making a list of any new physicians, hospitals, or clinics they have been to since their initial application was taken. Be sure to include the name, address, and telephone number. SSA will always ask the client if they have new evidence to submit before deciding on the case. Be sure to advise the client to open any correspondence from Social Security promptly and not to ignore it as the needed response can be time-sensitive. Failure to comply with SSA's request for more information may result in a loss of the client's benefits.

What if the Decision is Unfavorable?

If Social Security determines that an individual is no longer disabled and no longer entitled to benefits, the individual has the right to appeal if they disagree. The appeal must be put into writing and is called "Request for Reconsideration." The individual has 60 days from the date of the decision to file an appeal. However, if they wish to have benefits continue during the appeal, they must request an appeal within ten days.

****CDR only applies to individuals who are receiving benefits based on disability, NOT individuals who are retired, or who begin to receive SSI at age 65****

This article was contributed by Michael Klinger, Work Incentives Specialist for the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services. For more information on CDR's or any other benefits related questions, contact Michael Klinger at 434-989-5782 or Michael.klinger@dars.virginia.gov.

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