



How to Qualify for Social Security Disability Benefits After an Organ Transplant

If you, or someone you love, received an organ transplant or is on the waitlist for an organ transplant, you may be eligible for assistance. The [Social Security Administration](#) (SSA) offers monthly financial assistance for people who are unable to work due to a disability.

On any given day there are over 100,000 people waiting for an organ transplant to survive. The supply of donor organs does not meet the demand of those needing an organ transplant. Only a small number of those needing a transplant will receive the organ donation they need, unfortunately. Some may find it difficult or impossible to work while waiting for a transplant and/or following the transplant surgery. Social Security disability benefits can help defray the costs of living while you are waiting for an organ and after the transplant surgery.

Automatic Benefits for Transplant Patients

For specific types of organ transplants you automatically qualify for Social Security disability benefits. Please refer to the list of organ transplants in the [Social Security Administration's Blue Book](#). You need to file a claim for benefits and submit medical documentation of your condition. Medical documentation required for disability benefits includes:

- a doctor's diagnosis of organ failure
- test results
- proof that you are on the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) organ transplant registry (waitlist)

After you submit your claim and all relevant medical proof of your condition your application is reviewed.

Starting the Application Process

If you are in organ failure and are approved for an organ transplant you should apply for Social Security disability benefits right away. You can either apply [online](#) or in person at a Social Security Administration [office close to you](#). You can have a family member, friend or a patient advocate fill out the application for you if you can't leave the hospital. A waiver to authorize the release of your medical records is required so that your representative can gather the medical documentation and submit it with the claim form required to meet the listing requirements.

One Year of Benefits

Following organ transplant surgery, you are automatically able to receive Social Security disability benefits for one year. These benefits provide money you can use for living expenses while you are recovering from surgery and while doctors assess whether the transplant surgery was effective. **Don't wait to file a claim for disability benefits.** You can apply for disability benefits as soon as you are placed on the UNOS waitlist. It's strongly recommended that you fill out a claim for disability benefits as soon as possible to begin the process—it can take a while until you are approved for benefits.



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After One Year

You can re-apply for Social Security disability benefits if you still are not well enough to work after one year of receiving benefits past the date of the initial transplant surgery. To re-apply, provide documentation that you meet one of the [Social Security Administration's Blue Book](#) listing requirements. You can still receive disability benefits each year following the first year after your transplant operation but you need to re-qualify every year.

Resources:

SSA's Blue Book: <https://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org/blue-book>

Apply Online: <https://secure.ssa.gov/iClaim/dib>

SSA Office Near You: <https://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org/state-social-security-disability>