

## Social Security Administration

## § 404.906

to a consumer reporting agency (see §§ 404.527 and 422.305 of this chapter);

(u) Determining whether we will refer your overpayment to the Department of the Treasury for collection by offset against Federal payments due you (see §§ 404.527 and 422.310 of this chapter);

(v) Determining whether we will order your employer to withhold from your disposable pay to collect an overpayment you received under title II of the Social Security Act (see part 422, subpart E, of this chapter);

(w) Determining whether provisional benefits are payable, the amount of the provisional benefits, and when provisional benefits terminate (see § 404.1592e);

(x) Determining whether to select your claim for the quick disability determination process under § 404.1619;

(y) The removal of your claim from the quick disability determination process under § 404.1619;

(z) Starting or discontinuing a continuing disability review;

(aa) Issuing a receipt in response to your report of a change in your work activity; and

(bb) Determining whether a non-attorney representative is eligible to receive direct fee payment as described in § 404.1717 of this part.

[45 FR 52081, Aug. 5, 1980, as amended at 51 FR 8808, Mar. 14, 1986; 55 FR 1018, Jan. 11, 1990; 56 FR 52469, Oct. 21, 1991; 57 FR 23057, June 1, 1992; 59 FR 44925, Aug. 31, 1994; 62 FR 6120, Feb. 11, 1997; 62 FR 64278, Dec. 5, 1997; 68 FR 74183, Dec. 23, 2003; 70 FR 57142, Sept. 30, 2005; 71 FR 16443, Mar. 31, 2006; 71 FR 66853, 66866, Nov. 17, 2006; 72 FR 51177, Sept. 6, 2007; 76 FR 45192, July 28, 2011; 76 FR 80245, Dec. 23, 2011; 80 FR 400, Jan. 6, 2015]

### § 404.904 Notice of the initial determination.

We will mail a written notice of our initial determination to you at your last known address. The written notice will explain in simple and clear language what we have determined and the reasons for and the effect of our determination. If our determination involves a determination of disability that is in whole or in part unfavorable to you, our written notice also will contain in understandable language a statement of the case setting forth the evidence on which our determination is

based. The notice also will inform you of your right to reconsideration. We will not mail a notice if the beneficiary's entitlement to benefits has ended because of his or her death.

[72 FR 51177, Sept. 6, 2007]

### § 404.905 Effect of an initial determination.

An initial determination is binding unless you request a reconsideration within the stated time period, or we revise the initial determination.

[51 FR 300, Jan. 3, 1986]

### § 404.906 Testing modifications to the disability determination procedures.

(a) *Applicability and scope.* Notwithstanding any other provision in this part or part 422 of this chapter, we are establishing the procedures set out in this section to test modifications to our disability determination process. These modifications will enable us to test, either individually or in one or more combinations, the effect of: having disability claim managers assume primary responsibility for processing an application for disability benefits; providing persons who have applied for benefits based on disability with the opportunity for an interview with a decisionmaker when the decisionmaker finds that the evidence in the file is insufficient to make a fully favorable determination or requires an initial determination denying the claim; having a single decisionmaker make the initial determination with assistance from medical consultants, where appropriate; and eliminating the reconsideration step in the administrative review process and having a claimant who is dissatisfied with the initial determination request a hearing before an administrative law judge. The model procedures we test will be designed to provide us with information regarding the effect of these procedural modifications and enable us to decide whether and to what degree the disability determination process would be improved if they were implemented on a national level.

(b) *Procedures for cases included in the tests.* Prior to commencing each test or group of tests in selected site(s), we

will publish a notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER. The notice will describe which model or combinations of models we intend to test, where the specific test site(s) will be, and the duration of the test(s). The individuals who participate in the test(s) will be randomly assigned to a test group in each site where the tests are conducted. Paragraphs (b) (1) through (4) of this section lists descriptions of each model.

(1) In the disability claim manager model, when you file an application for benefits based on disability, a disability claim manager will assume primary responsibility for the processing of your claim. The disability claim manager will be the focal point for your contacts with us during the claims intake process and until an initial determination on your claim is made. The disability claim manager will explain the disability programs to you, including the definition of disability and how we determine whether you meet all the requirements for benefits based on disability. The disability claim manager will explain what you will be asked to do throughout the claims process and how you can obtain information or assistance through him or her. The disability claim manager will also provide you with information regarding your right to representation, and he or she will provide you with appropriate referral sources for representation. The disability claim manager may be either a State agency employee or a Federal employee. In some instances, the disability claim manager may be assisted by other individuals.

(2) In the single decisionmaker model, the decisionmaker will make the disability determination and may also determine whether the other conditions for entitlement to benefits based on disability are met. The decisionmaker will make the disability determination after any appropriate consultation with a medical or psychological consultant. The medical or psychological consultant will not be required to sign the disability determination forms we use to have the State agency certify the determination of disability to us (see § 404.1615). However, before an initial determination is made in any case where there is evidence which indicates the existence of

a mental impairment, the decisionmaker will make every reasonable effort to ensure that a qualified psychiatrist or psychologist has completed the medical portion of the case review and any applicable residual functional capacity assessment pursuant to our existing procedures (see § 404.1617). In some instances the decisionmaker may be the disability claim manager described in paragraph (b)(1) of this section. When the decisionmaker is a State agency employee, a team of individuals that includes a Federal employee will determine whether the other conditions for entitlement to benefits are met.

(3) In the predecision interview model, if the decisionmaker(s) finds that the evidence in your file is insufficient to make a fully favorable determination or requires an initial determination denying your claim, a predecision notice will be mailed to you. The notice will tell you that, before the decisionmaker(s) makes an initial determination about whether you are disabled, you may request a predecision interview with the decisionmaker(s). The notice will also tell you that you may submit additional evidence. You must request a predecision interview within 10 days after the date you receive the predecision notice. You must also submit any additional evidence within 10 days after you receive the predecision notice. If you request a predecision interview, the decisionmaker(s) will conduct the predecision interview in person, by videoconference, or by telephone as the decisionmaker(s) determines is appropriate under the circumstances. If you make a late request for a predecision interview, or submit additional evidence late, but show in writing that you had good cause under the standards in § 404.911 for missing the deadline, the decisionmaker(s) will extend the deadline. If you do not request the predecision interview, or if you do not appear for a scheduled predecision interview and do not submit additional evidence, or if you do not respond to our attempts to communicate with you, the decisionmaker(s) will make an initial determination based upon the evidence in your file. If you identify additional evidence during

## Social Security Administration

## § 404.911

the predecision interview, which was previously not available, the decisionmaker(s) will advise you to submit the evidence. If you are unable to do so, the decisionmaker(s) may assist you in obtaining it. The decisionmaker(s) also will advise you of the specific timeframes you have for submitting any additional evidence identified during the predecision interview. If you have no treating source(s) (see § 404.1502), or your treating source(s) is unable or unwilling to provide the necessary evidence, or there is a conflict in the evidence that cannot be resolved through evidence from your treating source(s), the decisionmaker(s) may arrange a consultative examination or resolve conflicts according to existing procedures (see § 404.1519a). If you attend the predecision interview, or do not attend the predecision interview but you submit additional evidence, the decisionmaker(s) will make an initial determination based on the evidence in your file, including the additional evidence you submit or the evidence obtained as a result of the predecision notice or interview, or both.

(4) In the reconsideration elimination model, we will modify the disability determination process by eliminating the reconsideration step of the administrative review process. If you receive an initial determination on your claim for benefits based on disability, and you are dissatisfied with the determination, we will notify you that you may request a hearing before an administrative law judge.

[60 FR 20026, Apr. 24, 1995, as amended at 73 FR 2415, Jan. 15, 2008; 76 FR 24806, May 3, 2011; 82 FR 5863, Jan. 18, 2017]

### RECONSIDERATION

#### § 404.907 Reconsideration—general.

If you are dissatisfied with the initial determination, reconsideration is the first step in the administrative review process that we provide, except that we provide the opportunity for a hearing before an administrative law judge as the first step for those situations described in §§ 404.930 (a)(6) and (a)(7), where you appeal an initial determination denying your request for waiver of adjustment or recovery of an overpayment (see § 404.506). If you are dissatisfied

with our reconsidered determination, you may request a hearing before an administrative law judge.

[61 FR 56132, Oct. 31, 1996]

#### § 404.908 Parties to a reconsideration.

(a) *Who may request a reconsideration.* If you are dissatisfied with the initial determination, you may request that we reconsider it. In addition, a person who shows in writing that his or her rights may be adversely affected by the initial determination may request a reconsideration.

(b) *Who are parties to a reconsideration.* After a request for the reconsideration, you and any person who shows in writing that his or her rights are adversely affected by the initial determination will be parties to the reconsideration.

#### § 404.909 How to request reconsideration.

(a) We shall reconsider an initial determination if you or any other party to the reconsideration files a written request—

(1) Within 60 days after the date you receive notice of the initial determination (or within the extended time period if we extend the time as provided in paragraph (b) of this section);

(2) At one of our offices, the Veterans Administration Regional Office in the Philippines, or an office of the Railroad Retirement Board if you have 10 or more years of service in the railroad industry.

(b) *Extension of time to request a reconsideration.* If you want a reconsideration of the initial determination but do not request one in time, you may ask us for more time to request a reconsideration. Your request for an extension of time must be in writing and must give the reasons why the request for reconsideration was not filed within the stated time period. If you show us that you had good cause for missing the deadline, we will extend the time period. To determine whether good cause exists, we use the standards explained in § 404.911.

#### § 404.911 Good cause for missing the deadline to request review.

(a) In determining whether you have shown that you had good cause for