

Social Security Disability Application for Young Adults

Comprehensive Checklist

☒ 1. Application Preparation Checklist

A. Personal & Basic Information

- Full legal name, date of birth, Social Security number
- Current address and phone number
- Education history (schools, special education, IEPs, transition programs)
- Work history (part-time, volunteer, or sheltered employment)

B. Medical & Psychological Evidence

- Primary care doctor records
- Specialist reports (neurologist, psychiatrist, developmental pediatrician, etc.)
- Hospitalization and surgery records (past 12–24 months)
- Therapy notes (OT, PT, speech, behavioral)
- Psychological or neuropsychological evaluations
- Current medication list (include dosages and side effects)
- Documentation of assistive devices or adaptive equipment

C. Functional & Daily Living Documentation

- Written examples of how disability affects daily life (self-care, routines, attention, social skills)
- Daily logs or journals documenting fatigue, behaviors, or setbacks
- Transition/vocational assessments
- Reports from job coaches or support staff
- School IEPs, 504 plans, or progress reports

D. Financial Documentation

- Bank account statements (under \$2,000 for SSI eligibility)
- Pay stubs or proof of income (if applicable)
- ABLE account information (if applicable)
- Trust or benefits documentation

E. Supporting Statements

- Parent or caregiver statement describing daily functioning
- Teacher, therapist, or job coach letters about limitations and accommodations
- SSA Function Report – Adult (SSA-3373)
- SSA Work History Report (SSA-3369)

⌚ 2. Typical SSA Application Timeline

Stage	What Happens	Timeframe
<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Application Filed	Submit online, by phone, or in person	—
<input type="checkbox"/> SSA Review Begins	SSA gathers medical and school records, may request exams	3–6 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Decision	Approval or denial mailed	4–6 months total
<input type="checkbox"/> Reconsideration (if denied)	Must request within 60 days of denial	3–6 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Request (if denied again)	File appeal for Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) hearing	12–18 months
<input type="checkbox"/> ALJ Hearing Decision	Approval or denial after hearing	1–3 months post-hearing
<input type="checkbox"/> Further Appeals (if needed)	Appeals Council → Federal Court	Adds 6–12+ months

📁 3. Recommended 3-Ring Binder Setup

Front Pocket

- SSA claim number and contact list (local SSA, representative, caseworker)
- SSA appointment schedule or call notes

Divider Tabs

Tab	Include These Items
1. Application & SSA Correspondence	<input type="checkbox"/> Copies of application, SSA letters, notices
2. Medical Records	<input type="checkbox"/> Sorted by provider or date
3. Psychological & Educational Records	<input type="checkbox"/> IEPs, evaluations, transition plans

Tab	Include These Items
4. Daily Functioning & Logs	<input type="checkbox"/> Journals, caregiver notes
5. Financial Information	<input type="checkbox"/> Bank statements, ABLE info
6. Supporting Statements	<input type="checkbox"/> Letters from teachers, therapists, caregivers
7. Appeals / Hearing Prep	<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal forms, notices, attorney info
8. Communication Record	<input type="checkbox"/> Notes from SSA calls and follow-ups

Back Pocket

- Flash drive or digital copy of all documents
- Blank SSA forms (Function Report, Appeal Request, etc.)

4. Pro Tips

- Keep copies of **everything** you submit
- Date-stamp each submission and keep confirmation pages
- Follow up regularly with your SSA claims representative
- Use **specific examples** of limitations (“needs prompts,” “cannot manage money independently”)
- If denied, **appeal immediately** — most approvals occur at the hearing stage

5. Summary Timeline Snapshot

Month	Step
<input type="checkbox"/> Month 0	File SSI application
<input type="checkbox"/> Months 1–4	SSA gathers medical and school records
<input type="checkbox"/> Months 4–6	Receive initial decision
<input type="checkbox"/> Months 6–12	File reconsideration if denied
<input type="checkbox"/> Months 12–18	Reconsideration decision issued
<input type="checkbox"/> Months 18–30+	File for hearing if denied
<input type="checkbox"/> Months 30–36	Hearing decision issued