

# Social Security

---

## Accessibility Help

---

[Accessibility Help Home](#) | [Section 504 Overview](#)

### SSA Section 504 Overview

SSA is committed to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to access our programs, activities, and facilities, regardless of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Section 504's relevant implementing regulations, 45 C.F.R. Part 85 (Part 85). Section 504 prohibits Federal agencies and programs that receive Federal funding from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities. Part 85 specifies the actions we must take to ensure we do not discriminate against individuals with disabilities.

### Introducing the Center for Section 504 Compliance

Carolyn W. Colvin, the Social Security Administration's Acting Commissioner, is committed to maintaining and improving our service to individuals with disabilities. Accordingly, we are pleased to announce the establishment of our Center for Section 504 Compliance. The Center will serve as our focal point for Section 504 activities. It will implement new program enhancements and provide guidance to our offices to ensure that we provide meaningful access to our programs to otherwise qualified customers who have disabilities. Individuals with disabilities may request accommodations that will enable them to participate in or derive the benefits of our programs. The Center will oversee the accommodation request process.

In addition to assisting our offices, the Center is available to assist advocates, the public, and other agencies through our Toll-Free Number, 1-844-881-9061. Our business hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time (except Federal holidays).

### Laws and Regulations

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, As Amended  
[Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)

## Section 504 Regulation

[45 C.F.R. Part 85](#)

### **Section 504 Business Process Vision**

Part 85 requires SSA to evaluate our current policies and practices, including our programs, activities, and facilities, to ensure that we comply with Section 504 and 45 C.F.R. Part 85. The Section 504 Business Process Vision outlines the actions we are taking to implement many of the self-evaluation key findings and recommendations.

[Business Process Vision](#)

[Business Process Vision-Text only](#)

### **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

[Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)

### **Web Page and Document Accessibility Policy**

<http://www.ssa.gov/accessibility>

### **Special Notice Option**

<http://www.ssa.gov/notices/>

### **Reasonable Accommodation Procedures - Employment**

[http://www.ssa.gov/eeo/Reasonable Accommodation Procedures/](http://www.ssa.gov/eeo/Reasonable%20Accommodation%20Procedures/)

### **Notice of Rights**

If you believe that SSA, an SSA employee, an SSA contractor, or an agent of SSA discriminated against you, someone you know, or a class of people in connection with an SSA program or activity, **and** you believe that the discrimination was based on race, color, national origin (including English language ability), religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or in retaliation for your having participated in a proceeding under this complaint process, you may file a complaint or have a representative file a complaint on your behalf.

[SSA-437 \(English Version\) - Complaint Form for Allegations of Discrimination in Programs or Activities Conducted by the Social Security Administration](#)

SSA-437 (Spanish Version) - Complaint Form for Allegations of Discrimination in Programs or Activities Conducted by the Social Security Administration

## Requesting Assistance

---

### General Assistance

By calling **1-800-772-1213**, you can use our automated telephone services to get recorded information and conduct some business 24 hours a day. If you cannot handle your business through our automated services, you can speak to a Social Security representative between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. Generally, you'll have a shorter wait time if you call during the week after Tuesday. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, call our toll-free TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**, between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. See [Automated Services](#) for more details.

### Web Accessibility Problems

Please report website accessibility problems to the Social Security webmaster, [webmaster@ssa.gov](mailto:webmaster@ssa.gov). In your message, include the website address or URL and the specific problems you have encountered.

## Social Security

---

### Accessibility Help

---

[Accessibility Help Home](#) | FAQs for Federal Register Notice SSA 2010-0069

#### **What is Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973?**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Federal agencies and organizations that receive Federal financial assistance are required to ensure that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability is, solely because of disability, excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under the programs and activities they conduct.

#### **What does Section 504 require?**

Under Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973, qualified members of the public who have disabilities that prevent them from having meaningful access to a Social Security Administration (SSA) program, may request accommodations that will enable them to participate in or derive the benefits of that program.

We are required to provide accommodations that afford qualified individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to obtain the same result, gain the same benefit, or reach the same level of achievement in our programs and activities, as an individual without disabilities.

We are not required to provide accommodations needed to produce an identical result, benefit, or level of achievement for individuals who are disabled and nondisabled.

#### **What is the relationship between Section 504 and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA)?**

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is sometimes confused with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), passed in 1990. While there are many parallels between the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA, there are some fundamental differences. Both laws prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. However, the Rehabilitation Act covers Federal agencies and entities receiving Federal financial assistance. The ADA applies to:

- state and local governments,

- public accommodations,
- commercial facilities,
- transportation,
- telecommunications, and
- the U.S. Congress.

**NOTE:** A decision to provide a requested accommodation for an individual based on the individual's disability does not constitute an allowance for Social Security benefits or Supplemental Security Income payments, or acknowledgment of disability for administering Social Security programs.

### **What is the difference between Sections 504 and 508?**

Under Section 504, agencies must provide individuals with disabilities meaningful access to their programs, activities, and facilities. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act requires Federal agencies to make electronic and information technology they use, maintain, develop, or procure accessible to individuals with disabilities. If making the electronic and information technology accessible would impose an undue burden on us, we will provide individuals with disabilities the information and data in another way.

Section 508 is one method of ensuring Section 504 compliance. We conduct much of our business using technology, and our comprehensive Section 508 program helps us design and evaluate technology for accessibility.

### **How can I access 45 C.F.R. 85.11 so I can read it myself?**

You can find 45 C.F.R. 85.11 at this link: [45 C.F.R. Part 85](#)

### **How does a member of the public (who has a disability) conduct business with SSA?**

We presume that individuals with disabilities are capable of doing business with us without an accommodation unless they request an accommodation. When a member of the public has a disability that prevents or limits his or her ability to participate in an agency program or activity and requires an accommodation that will enable participation, we will make every effort to meet that need. Individuals may request one or more accommodations. To request an accommodation, individuals may:

- call our National 800 Number,
- visit their local field office or hearing office,

- call a field office or hearing office where they want to receive the accommodation, or
- write to a field office or hearing office where they want to receive the accommodation.

Individuals who are blind or visually impaired may also go online to ask us to send benefit notices in an alternate format through [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov) using the current internet Special Notice Options (SNO) process.

### **How has SSA responded to alleged violations of Section 504 by the agency?**

SSA established a discrimination complaint process to allow members of the public to file a complaint if they believe the agency has violated their rights under Section 504 (or discriminated against them based on race, sex, religion, color, national origin, age, or retaliation). The agency conducts an investigation into each complaint and issues a letter of findings to the complainant.

### **How can I submit a Civil Rights complaint on Section 504-related issues?**

Individuals have the right at any time to file a complaint of discrimination against SSA based on disability. Individuals may file a complaint using Form SSA-437 (Discrimination Complaint Form - link provided below) or by writing a letter that includes the information requested in the form. Individuals must mail the signed form or letter to:

Social Security Administration  
Civil Rights Complaint Adjudication Office  
6401 Security Boulevard  
Room 617 Altmeyer Building  
Baltimore, MD 21235

**NOTE:** Individuals may file a complaint using the [English version](#) or the [Spanish version](#) of the SSA-437.

### **How can I contact SSA about 504-related issues?**

In addition to assisting our offices, the Center is available to assist advocates, the public, and other agencies through our Toll-Free Number, 1-844-881-9061. Our business hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time (except Federal holidays).

## Requesting Assistance

---

### General Assistance

By calling **1-800-772-1213**, you can use our automated telephone services to get recorded information and conduct some business 24 hours a day. If you cannot handle your business through our automated services, you can speak to a Social Security representative between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. Generally, you'll have a shorter wait time if you call during the week after Tuesday. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, call our toll-free TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**, between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. See [Automated Services](#) for more details.

### Web Accessibility Problems

Please report website accessibility problems to the Social Security webmaster, [webmaster@ssa.gov](mailto:webmaster@ssa.gov). In your message, include the website address or URL and the specific problems you have encountered.