

# How to Prepare for Your Child's SSI Hearing

## 1 Review Your Child's Social Security Office of Hearings (OHO) File

OHO should send you a CD that contains all medical and disability-related records in your child's file. If you have an email address, you may also ask to get the records in your child's file through a password-protected email. If you have not received the records by the time your child is assigned a hearing date, call OHO and ask for them: (866) 414-6259.

## 2 Ask Your Child's Doctors and School for Records

You should request recent (past 2-3 years) records from your child's doctors, therapist, case worker, and school.

- Ask your child's past and current treatment providers (including hospitals) for medical and mental health records. This includes lab test results (such as blood tests) and imaging test results (like X-rays and MRIs). You should also ask for letters or reports that state your child's diagnosis, symptoms, medications, and difficulties in functioning.
- Ask your child's school for education records, such as IEPs, attendance records, and any test results.

You can also call OHO to ask for help getting records: (866) 414-6259.

## 3 Give Medical and Educational Records to OHO At Least 5 Business Days Before the Hearing

Make a copy of all records for yourself and then send or hand-deliver them to OHO. OHO must receive all records at least 5 business days before the hearing. If you cannot get records in time, then you must notify the judge at least 5 days before the hearing to explain that you tried but were unable to get important records. You can ask for the judge's help getting records before or at the hearing, but the judge may deny your request.

## 4 Prepare to Talk About Your Child's Physical and/or Mental Conditions

If your child is able to explain their condition themselves, they will likely be expected to testify. At the hearing, you (and your child, if they can testify) should explain how often and how bad their physical and/or mental conditions are on a daily basis, including any pain. Also explain specifics about how your child's condition affects their ability to:

- |                                          |                                                    |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Concentrate and learn new information | 4. Move around and pick up objects                 |
| 2. Focus on and complete tasks           | 5. Take care of their emotional and physical needs |
| 3. Talk and get along with others        | 6. Maintain overall health                         |

If your child has a history of substance abuse, be prepared to explain that their substance abuse began after their physical or mental health condition did.

*Updated August 2026*