



Why are mental health Social Security disability cases so difficult to win?



Mental health impairment cases for [Social Security Disability Insurance \(SSDI\)](#) can indeed be challenging to win. Several factors contribute to the difficulty involved in obtaining SSDI benefits for mental health impairments:

1. **Subjectivity and Lack of Objective Evidence:** Unlike physical impairments, mental health conditions are often difficult to quantify with objective medical tests or imaging. Diagnosis and evaluation of mental health impairments rely heavily on subjective assessments, such as self-reported symptoms and the opinion of mental health professionals. This

subjectivity can make it challenging to establish the severity and impact of the condition in a way that meets the SSDI requirements.

2. **Lack of Visible Symptoms:** Mental health impairments are often invisible to others, making it harder for evaluators to assess the impact of the condition. Without visible symptoms, it can be more difficult to prove the severity of limitations and the extent to which they interfere with daily functioning and work-related activities.
3. **Stigma and Misunderstanding:** Despite progress in reducing stigma around mental health, there can still be misconceptions and biases when it comes to assessing the impact of mental health conditions. Some decision-makers may underestimate the seriousness of mental health impairments or dismiss their impact on an individual's ability to work.
4. **Inconsistent Medical Documentation:** The quality and consistency of medical documentation play a crucial role in SSDI cases. However, mental health impairments often involve ongoing treatment with various healthcare providers, making it challenging to maintain a consistent medical record. Additionally, some individuals may face barriers in accessing consistent mental health care due to financial limitations or limited availability of mental health services.
5. **Functional Assessments:** SSDI claims require demonstrating that the mental health condition significantly impairs an individual's ability to engage in substantial gainful activity (SGA). This often involves assessing the individual's functional limitations and how they impact their ability to perform work-related tasks. However, functional assessments can be subjective and open to interpretation, making it difficult to prove the limitations in a way that satisfies the SSDI requirements.
6. **Long Wait Times and Appeals Process:** The SSDI application and appeals process can be lengthy, often lasting several months or even years. For individuals already dealing with mental health impairments, the prolonged process can exacerbate financial stress and emotional strain.

While mental health impairment cases can be challenging, it's important to note that SSDI benefits are available for individuals with qualifying mental health conditions. Building a strong case supported by comprehensive medical documentation, consistent treatment, and expert opinions can increase the chances of a successful claim. Seeking assistance from an experienced attorney who specializes in SSDI cases can also provide valuable guidance and advocacy throughout the process.