

Social Security Advocacy Services Newsletter

July/August 2024

Social Security Advocacy Services (SSAS) is dedicated to assisting Minnesotans with the Social Security disability benefits process so they can secure stable housing, live in dignity, and achieve their highest potential.



"Keep your face always toward the sunshine, and shadows will fall behind you."
~ Walt Whitman

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Grantee spotlight

This section of our newsletter spotlights a Department of Human Services-contracted Social Security Advocacy Services grantee in hopes of fostering partnerships and open communication among all grantees.

Agency Name: Anishinabe Legal Services

Contact information: 218-335-2223 or 800-422-1335

Website: www.alslegal.org

Service provided:

Anishinabe Legal Services is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that provides free legal services to low-income community members residing on or near the Leech Lake, Red Lake, and White Earth Reservations in Northern Minnesota. They provide free legal services in a wide variety of case-types, including family law, housing, child protection, consumer law, elder law, and more.

Services provided for Social Security Advocacy include advice or initial consultations, assistance with filing initial applications and understanding forms, filing appeals for



reconsideration and hearings, representation at administrative hearings for disability, overpayment assistance, cessation cases, childhood disability cases, outreach services and referrals.

Anishinabe Legal Services has been a contracted grantee with DHS for over 15 years. With this collaboration they have been able to assist people in their community without charging their clients for Social Security Advocacy Services.

Contract spotlight: Record retention

All Social Security Advocacy Services grantees are required to implement and maintain a record retention policy.



All client files, records, and documentation associated with the DHS contract must be securely retained by the grantee for a period of six years from the date of expiration or termination of the contract, or longer if required by applicable law, after which the documentation must be properly disposed of. This DHS contractual obligation can be found in Attachment A - Data Sharing and Business Associate Agreement, section 2.2.H, and subsection 2.6.

Grantees are also subject to the accounting of disclosure requirement as described in [45 CFR 164.528](#), "Accounting of disclosures of protected health information". When requested, grantees shall provide to the state such documentation.

For further information, please read both section 2.2H, and subsection 2.6 in your contract. If you have any questions regarding record retention, please email contract manager, Nou Vang, at Nou.Vang@state.mn.us.

Report your agency changes immediately

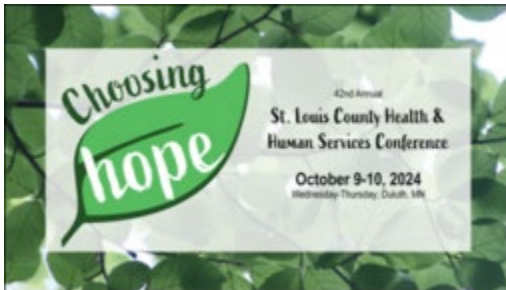
SSAS grantees are responsible for reporting any address or bank account changes to Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) immediately. Delays in reporting information to MMB will result in DHS payment delays for your Social Security

approvals. You must also report all address and employee changes immediately to your assigned coordinator so that we can update our online directory and the SSAS payment system.

To report changes, you must log on to the [Minnesota supplier portal](#).

If you have not contacted MMB to set up your agency to receive payments by DHS, you must go to MMB's webpage to start this process.

St. Louis County Health & Human Service conference



This year's conference will be held Oct 9 and Oct 10 at the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center. The theme for this year is *Choosing Hope*.

The exhibit hall will be open both days for you to network and learn more about other agencies and the services they provide. If you are planning on attending the conference stop by the Social Security Advocacy Services booth to visit with Tony Reynero and Jennifer Youngstrom.

For further information, including registration, times, workshop schedules, and keynote speakers, visit the [conference webpage](#).

SSAS invoice approval summary

June 2024

A total of 59 invoices submitted by 13 grantees were approved.

Initial application/reconsiderations	43
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ALJ hearing level	12
Appeals Council level	2
Continuing Disability Review (CDR)	2
CDR at ALJ hearing level	0

July 2024

A total of 83 invoices submitted by 15 grantees were approved.

Initial application/reconsiderations	56
ALJ hearing level	26
Appeals Council level	1
Continuing Disability Review (CDR)	0
CDR at ALJ hearing level	0

Social Security Advocacy Services team trainings



Technical Assistance (TA) bi-monthly sessions

On the third **THURSDAY** in odd months from 1:30 to 3 p.m., the Social Security Advocacy Services team offers trainings and opportunities for Q&A to our contracted Social Security advocates.

Our next technical assistance training will be **Thursday, Sept 19, 2024**. Tanya Heitzinger and Sarah Dicks from the Disability Determination Services will be

presenting on *Social Security disability - completing the necessary forms*. You can register for this technical assistance session at this [link](#).

If you are interested in presenting at an upcoming TA session on any topic related to Social Security advocacy services, please contact Tony Reynero at antonio.reynero@state.mn.us.

New conditions added to Compassionate Allowance List

Effective 8/12/2024, Social Security has added or updated the following conditions to their Compassionate Allowance List:

- Adult heart transplant wait list - Status levels 1-4
- Bainbridge-Ropers syndrome
- Plasmablastic lymphoma
- Costello syndrome
- Histiocytic malignancies
- Neonatal Marfan syndrome
- Snijders Blok-Campeau syndrome
- Child heart transplant wait list - status levels 1A/1B
- Histiocytosis syndromes
- PACS1 syndrome
- Renal Medullary carcinoma



If you are currently working with a client who has any of these conditions, be sure to flag the case as Compassionate Allowance to the relevant Social Security office or the Disability Determination Services. For further information, review POMS [DI 23022 TN73](#), summary of changes.

Social Security Administration updates



Disability collateral estoppel policy

Effective 7/13/2024, Social Security has updated their collateral estoppel policy to adopt prior favorable finding of disability in a subsequent claim by the same individual for a different disability benefit or SSI payments, as long as certain criteria are met. Read emergency message [EM-24033](#) for further information.

Changes to accessing Social Security's online services

Social Security has announced that they are making changes to how you and your clients access their online services. For further information and instruction, read this [dear colleague advocates notice](#).

Program Operations Manual (POMS) updates

[DI 11055 TN90](#), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability cases.

[DI 23020 TN19](#), Updated definition and identification of dire need.

[GN 00502 TN93](#), Determining the need for, developing, and selecting a representative payee.

Social Security Advocacy Services resources

Additional resources can be found at the Minnesota Department of Human Services webpage [Social Security Advocacy Services: Policies and procedures for contracted grantees](#).
