



HARDIN DISABILITY



The Newsletter for Claimants, Support Persons, and Disability Advocates.

Tips of the Month

❄️ Application:

Some local SSA offices are no longer taking initial applications in person because they are so understaffed.

Your best bet is to apply online or call SSA and apply over the phone.

❄️ Appeals:

In most cases, claimants only have 60 days to appeal a denial. Be sure to read your denial letter carefully, and appeal before the deadline.

If you miss the deadline, you may have to start the process all over again.

❄️ Hearing:

Bring a list of all of your prescription and over-the-counter medications to your hearing. You will be asked what medicine you take, and it is easy to forget when you are nervous.

Witness Letters

Why do I need witness letters to prove my claim?

First hand witness accounts can help explain how your disability really does affect your life and keep you from working.



What about my medical records?

Medical records are very important, and you must have them. In some cases, your medical file *may be enough* proof for the judge to measure your disability.

However, witness letters help the judge picture how the symptoms and impairments discussed in your medical reports actually impact your daily life.

We want to make it easy for the judge to make his or her decision by removing any doubt or question about whether you are “really too disabled to work.”

Who should write a witness letter?

A witness letter is written by someone who knows you and has seen the struggles caused by your disability. This letter may describe activities that are difficult for you, or talk about how your daily life or relationships have changed because of your disability.

These can be written by ANYONE who is familiar with the problems that your disabilities cause you in your daily life. Common choices are a spouse, friend, neighbor, or a former co-worker.

Sample Witness Letter:

To Whom it May Concern,

I have been asked to write a witness letter for John Smith, my neighbor. John and I have lived next door to each other for 8 years, and our families are good friends.

Before John's car accident, we used to have cookouts for our families during the summer. John and I had competitions to see who could make the tastiest ribs and the best hamburgers. We were also competitive with our yards and gardens. We each tried to outdo the other by having the greenest grass, the biggest tomatoes, and so forth. We also watched football games together.

Since John's car accident, he can no longer do any of these things with me. He is in so much pain all the time. He cannot stand long enough to grill burgers, and cannot sit long enough to watch football. He is constantly having to change positions, to try and get comfortable. He just sits, stands, sits, lies down. He can never get comfortable.

John is no longer able to mow his own lawn because he cannot stand long enough or push the weight of the mower. I have been cutting his grass for him. John's garden is a mess. It is full of weeds, and no vegetables at all. He cannot squat or bend to plant and pull weeds. When he tried to plant some tomatoes, he ended up being in so much pain that he gave up, took a pain pill, and spent the rest of the day in bed.

John seems to be depressed now, too. He gets angry easily, and rarely smiles or laughs. He seems to be in pain, every time I visit with him. We use to talk sports and make jokes, but he no longer has any interest in these things.

If I can answer any questions, please feel free to contact me. I am happy to help.

Thank you, Danny Jones

Claimant Support Group on Facebook

For Claimants, Family Members, and Advocates.

Visit this group at:
[facebook.com/
groups/
hardindisability/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/hardindisability/)

Community Resource:

The Helping Hand of Greater Little Rock offers a food pantry and thrift shop. They also provide limited financial assistance, serving thousands of families in Central Arkansas. For more info, visit: <http://www.lrhelphinghand.com/>



Best wishes for a safe and happy New Year!

From, your disability team at The Hardin Law Firm, PLC.