




Tips of the Month


Apply:

If you don't know the answer to a question on the application, try to find it. If the answer is "I don't know" or "none," write that down.

Don't leave an answer space blank or SSA staff may think that you refuse to answer that question. 

Appeal:


When completing the Function Report, answer Question Six (about Daily Activities) *after* you answer the rest of the questions.

Later questions ask about personal care, meals, yard work, etc. To keep from repeating yourself, add "See my answers to other questions" at the end of your answer for Question Six. 

Hearing:

Be prepared to answer these questions at your hearing:

"Why did you stop working at your previous job?"

"Why can't you do that same type of work now?" 

The Function Report

What is a function report?

SSA sends a Function Report form to claimants who are applying for SSDI and/or SSI. The purpose of this form is to help the SSA staff determine how your impairments have affected your daily life. The form includes questions about your limitations and daily activities. You will know the answers to these questions better than anyone else.

It is okay to have misspelled words and errors in grammar, as long as you are honest and genuine. A function report that you have completed yourself will be far more compelling than if someone else answered the questions for you.

Describe what you do from the time you wake up until going to bed...

Yes, SSA really does want to know what you do all day, from when you wake up in the morning until you go to bed at night.

What do daily activities have to do with being disabled?

The SSA staff is trying to see whether your daily activities are truly too limited for you to work. For example, caring for children or elderly parents is often more physically demanding than an easy job where you sit all day.

Most disabled people have changed their daily routine to accommodate their disabilities.

For example, before you were disabled "running errands" might have meant hours of driving around town to drop off kids, do the grocery shopping, pick up the dry cleaning, and pay the

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water bill.

Now, "running errands" might mean going to a nearby pharmacy with a drive-thru to pick up prescriptions, or a grocery store with "pick up" services where they meet you in the parking lot and load the groceries into your car. Describe how your daily routine has changed.

"I don't do anything during the day" really isn't an answer.

You are always doing something. Watching TV, reading, playing solitaire, staring at the wall, sleeping... It is important to fully explain if you spend your day in bed, in the recliner, on the sofa, in the bathroom, or taking naps.

Do you take care of anyone else?

When answering this question, ask yourself whether you *really* take care of this person. Living with someone and giving occasional help is not the same as taking care of someone. Taking care of someone might mean that you dress, bathe, or feed the person. **Taking care of others can be very physically and mentally demanding.**

Do not say you are taking care of someone if you

are actually just living with them but they can do most things for themselves. If you only help this person occasionally by reading their mail to them, bringing them something to drink, or picking up their prescriptions from the pharmacy, then do not say that you are taking care of them.



**Community Resource:
BrightStar Care**

BrightStar Care of North Little Rock offers transportation services, accompanied by a fully screened and trained caregiver, to safely get you to and from:

- doctor or therapy appointments,
- hospital or outpatient facility,
- prescription pick-up,
- grocery shopping, and
- other errands.

Call for more information:
501-450-7828

Please note: we have not investigated this resource, are not affiliated with them, and do not necessarily endorse this resource. We are just sharing information that we hope will be helpful to you. We welcome all feedback regarding any featured resource. 🌻

Caring for children

Are your children able to feed, bathe, and dress themselves? Many older children may tend to their own basic needs, and to the needs of younger siblings, when a parent is disabled.

A disabled parent might be able to care for the children on "good days" while having to rely on help from other people to care for the children on "bad days" or during flare-ups.

Details matter. Explain how much care you actually provide to this person.

Personal Care

Are you able to attend to your own personal care? Keep in mind that personal care can mean many different things. Read and consider the types of personal care described in these questions:

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Visit our online Support Group

Open to:

- Arkansas SSDI/SSI Claimants
- Friends and Family Members
- Other disability advocates

Questions always welcome!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/hardindisability/> 🌻

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- Do you have difficulty cleaning your ENTIRE body, so you just do the best you can?

Do you have difficulty with buttons and zippers, so you only wear pull-on clothes?

- Do you have difficulty bending over to put on socks and shoes, so you only wear slip-on shoes?

- Is it hard for you to reach back and brush/fix your hair, so you keep it in a messy ponytail, or keep it cut short?

Even if you can physically complete each task but **need reminders** to do so, then your conditions DO affect your ability to attend to your own personal care.

But my answers don't fit in these tiny spaces!

The Function Report does not give you much room to answer these questions; so most claimants give very short answers. Short answers are usually not sufficient. You should give as much information as is necessary so the SSA staff can understand what your life is like.

If you need more space for your answers (and you will), you can continue your answers in the "Remarks" section on the last page. If you need even more space, add your own pages to the end of the report. **Take as much space as you need to give a complete answer to each question.**

For more information about function reports, visit our website at www.hardindisability.com 🌻

More Information

To learn more about the SSDI/SSI application or appeals process, visit our website at:

www.hardindisability.com 🌻

🐞 **Best wishes for a blessed June!** 🐞

*From attorney Deborah L. Hardin
and the rest of your disability team at
The Hardin Law Firm, PLC.* 🌻

We are listening!

If you have requests, suggestions, or submissions for a future issue of the Hardin Disability newsletter, please email: newsletter@thehardinlawfirm.com



We'd love to hear from you! 🌻

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