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Social Security Expands Severe Medical Conditions that Qualify for 'Compassionate Allowance' Disability Benefits Program

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The U.S. Social Security Administration announced Monday twelve new "Compassionate Allowances" conditions. Compassionate Allowances is an initiative that quickly identifies severe medical conditions and diseases that meet Social Security's standards for disability benefits.

These conditions include: Charlevoix Saguenay Spastic Ataxia (ARSACS), Choroid Plexus Carcinoma, CIC-rearranged Sarcoma, Congenital Zika Syndrome, Desmoplastic Mesothelioma, Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy – Adult, Pericardial Mesothelioma, Refractory Hodgkin Lymphoma, Renpenning Syndrome, SCN8A Related Epilepsy with Encephalopathy, SYNGAP1-related NSID, and Taybi-Linder Syndrome.

“Everyone who is eligible for benefits under the programs we administer should receive them,” said SSA Acting Commissioner Kilolo Kijakazi. “Our Compassionate Allowances program helps us address barriers by helping accelerate the disability application process for people who are likely to get approved for benefits due to the severity of their medical condition.”

The Compassionate Allowances program quickly identifies claims where the applicant’s condition or disease clearly meets Social Security’s statutory standard for disability, SSA said. Due to the severe nature of many of these conditions, these claims are often allowed based on medical confirmation of the diagnosis alone; for example, certain cancers, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), and a number of rare disorders that affect children. To date, more than 700,000 people with severe disabilities have been approved through this accelerated, policy-compliant disability process, which has grown to a total of 254 conditions.

SSA said when a person applies for disability benefits, Social Security must obtain medical records in order to make an accurate determination. The agency incorporates leading technology to identify potential Compassionate Allowances cases and make quick decisions. Social Security’s Health IT brings the speed and efficiency of electronic medical records to the disability determination process. With electronic records transmission, Social Security is able to quickly obtain a claimant’s medical information, review it, and make a fast determination.

For more information about the program, including a list of all Compassionate Allowances conditions, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances.

To learn more about Social Security’s Health IT program, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/hit. People may apply online for disability benefits by visiting www.socialsecurity.gov.

To create a my Social Security account, please visit www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.