

Kim Hildred, Chair
Henry J. Aaron
Nancy J. Altman
Jagadeesh Gokhale
Bob Joondeph



400 Virginia Ave, SW
Suite 625
Washington, DC 20024
(202) 475-7700

ssab.gov
@ssabgov

Claire Green, Staff Director

Social Security Advisory Board Releases Summary of Disability Process Improvement Ideas

Washington, DC – Today, the Social Security Advisory Board (“Board”) released **“[Summary of Disability Process Improvement Roundtables](#)”** aimed to improve the process for how people apply for disability benefits and how the Social Security Administration (SSA) determines their eligibility. The Board assembled these ideas in response to a bipartisan request from the leadership of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security (see Appendix A). The Board was asked to examine SSA’s decision to reinstate its reconsideration process and recommend improvements for initial- and reconsideration-level disability determinations. In response to the first request, in April 2020, the Board issued a **[brief](#)** examining the reinstatement of reconsideration in prototype states.

The ideas in the summary represent the views of advocates, Social Security management and employee associations, claimant representative organizations, former Social Security executives, researchers, and the disability application experience of a beneficiary. Five roundtables held over the past two years addressed:

1. Stakeholder ideas to improve the determination process
2. The need for evidence and experts in the adult determination process
3. Performance metrics and data analytics in the quality review process
4. The claimant experience in the application process
5. Testing and evaluating potential process improvements

Board Chair Kim Hildred said:

Those applying for disability benefits face a complex and lengthy process. Expanding ways to communicate with disability applicants and developing ways to use data and technology to streamline the process will improve public service. We offer this comprehensive list of ideas to help make possible improvements and are grateful to our many participants for sharing their hands-on experiences and expertise.

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The Board's mission is to advise the President, Congress, and Commissioner of Social Security on the Social Security and Supplemental Security Income programs. The Board is comprised of Presidential and Congressional appointees and a professional staff.