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## Social Security: Time Required to Approve and Pay Attorney Fees Can Be Reduced: Hrd-89-7

By -

BiblioGov. Paperback. Book Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. Paperback. 40 pages. Dimensions: 9.7in. x 7.4in. x 0.1in. Pursuant to a legislative requirement and a congressional request, GAO reviewed the Social Security Administrations (SSA) fee payment procedures for attorneys representing claimants denied social security disability benefits, to: (1) identify obstacles to the timely payment of the fees; (2) provide information on claimants access to attorneys; and (3) provide information on attorney fees and charges in state compensation programs. GAO found that: (1) the SSA attorney fee approval and payment process involved four steps after the formal disability decision; (2) the overall median time between the hearing date and fee payment was 211 days; (3) the median time from hearing date until a written decision was 73 days; (4) the median time between submission of fee petitions and fee approvals was 42 days; and (5) claimants had very little difficulty finding attorneys to represent them. GAO also found that: (1) attorneys generally charged 25 percent of a claimants past-due benefits, contingent upon a successful appeal; (2) although attorneys received an approved hourly rate of 89 for cases decided before an administrative law judge, the effective hourly rate was 50 for...



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