

## How to Qualify for Social Security Disability Benefits with Breast Cancer

[Breast cancer](#) is the second most common type of cancer. It impacts nearly one in eight women during the course of their lives. Men can also get breast cancer, although women have a higher risk of developing breast cancer. Anyone who develops breast cancer and can't work can apply for Social Security disability benefits to help with living expenses while they are sick and can't work. The only requirement that must be met in order to file a claim for disability benefits is that you expect to be unable to work for at least 12 months because of your cancer.

### The Medical Requirements for Disability

After you have filed a claim you will need to provide medical documentation proving that your breast cancer makes it impossible to work. You will need to submit documentation of a diagnosis from a doctor as well as test results and any other documentation you have of your illness. In order for your claim for benefits to be approved your cancer must meet the requirements listed in the Social Security Administration's [Blue Book](#). The Blue Book is the official listing of illnesses that qualify for disability benefits. Each listing has a set of requirements that must be met for your claim to be approved. The [listing for breast cancer](#) is quite specific.

You will need to provide proof that your cancer meets one of these requirements:

- inflammatory carcinoma
- tumor with direct extension to the chest wall or skin
- distant metastases
- metastases to the supraclavicular or infraclavicular nodes
- metastases to ten or more axillary nodes
- metastases to the ipsilateral internal mammary nodes, or
- recurrent carcinoma

If you have stage IV breast cancer, then you may be able to receive disability benefits in under two weeks after applying due to the [Compassionate Allowance Program](#). If your cancer is early stage or has a good chance of responding to treatment but you won't be able to work because of the treatment you can ask for your claim to be approved under the Medical Vocational Allowance exception.

### Medical Vocational Allowance

The Medical Vocational Allowance exception means that your claim for benefits will be approved if the SSA finds that there isn't any kind of work that you can do while you are sick. To get this exception you will need to ask for a [Residual Functional Capacity](#) evaluation when you file your claim for disability benefits. There is a section on the claim form that you can fill out to ask for this. The SSA will perform the Residual Functional Capacity evaluation and if they find that there is no full-time work that you can do with the skill set you have and the illness that

you have then they may still approve your claim for benefits even though you don't meet the Blue Book listing requirements

### **Starting Your Disability Benefits Claim**

You can start your claim for disability benefits right now [online](#). If you have trouble with filling out forms or if you have questions about the claim paperwork you can make an appointment at your local SSA office. Bring copies of all of your medical documentation with you to your appointment and a staff member at the [SSA office](#) will help you fill out and file your claim.

### **Resources:**

Cary Medical Center: <https://www.carymedicalcenter.org/>

Blue Book: <https://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook>

Blue Book Breast Cancer: <https://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook/13.00-NeoplasticDiseases-Malignant-Adult.htm> - 13 10

Compassionate Allowances: <https://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org/compassionate-allowances/breast-cancer-social-security-disability>

Residual Functional Capacity Form: <https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/poms/images/SSA4/G-SSA-4734-U8-1.pdf>

Apply for Benefits: <https://secure.ssa.gov/iClaim/dib>

Local SSA Office: <https://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org/state-social-security-disability>