Applicant files claim at local Social Security Office.

Field Office sends claim to DDS where it is assigned to a Disability Examiner.

Disability Examiner analyzes application and relevant medical and employment records to determine whether disability criteria as established by the Social Security Administration (SSA) are met. Disability Examiner may received advice from in-house medical and mental health consultants.

If additional medical/mental health evidence is needed...

DDS schedules and sends applicant for a Consultative Examination (CE). CE report is completed by independent consultant and returned to the DDS for review.

If there is sufficient medical/mental health evidence to make a determination...

Disability Examiner makes determination based on Federal regulations. Disability then notifies SSA of the determination.

SSA notifies individual of final determination.

**Disability Examiner:** DDS employee who reviews SSA Disability application and may contact applicant for more information about disability.

**Medical/Mental Health Consultant:** Licensed doctor, contracted by DDS, who helps assess the applicant’s physical or mental disability.

**Consultative Examination (CE):** Exam that may be ordered and paid for by DDS to gather more information about the applicant’s disability.