SOFTWARE & TECH

Work History Report Social Security

Published: November 20, 2026 | Index ID: #-

Understanding the Work History Report for Social Security Disability Benefits

When you apply for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) based on a disability, one of the most critical documents you will encounter is the **Work History Report Social Security**form. Officially known as Form SSA-3369-BK, this report is used by the Social Security Administration (SSA) to evaluate how your medical condition affects your ability to perform the tasks you carried out in previous jobs. A well-prepared work history report can significantly strengthen your claim, while a poorly completed one can lead to unnecessary delays or even a denial.

In this article, we will walk you through every aspect of the work history report, from its purpose to step-by-step instructions for completing it accurately. Whether you are applying on your own or working with a disability advocate, this guide will help you submit a compelling and clear account of your past employment.

What Is a Work History Report for Social Security?

The **Work History Report Social Security**(SSA-3369-BK) is a form that collects detailed information about the jobs you held during the 15 years before you became disabled. The SSA uses this information to determine if you can perform any of your past relevant work despite your impairments. If the agency finds that you cannot return to any job you previously held, it then considers whether you can adjust to other types of work that exist in the national economy.

The form asks for a job title, dates of employment, a description of the duties performed, the physical and mental demands of each job, and the tools, equipment, or machines you used. It also inquires about the amount of walking, standing, sitting, lifting, carrying, and reaching required. Why is this so important? Because the SSA's disability determination process relies heavily on the concept of "residual functional capacity" (RFC) and how it compares to the demands of your past work.

Why the Work History Report Matters for Your Claim

Many applicants underestimate the significance of the work history report. However, this single document often determines whether you are approved or denied at the initial and reconsideration levels. Here are the main reasons why the SSA scrutinizes your work history so closely:

- Past Relevant Work Classification: The SSA defines past relevant work as any job you performed within the last 15 years that lasted long enough for you to learn the tasks and was performed at substantial gainful activity (SGA) levels. Your work history report must clearly show each job's start and end date, average earnings, and hours per week.
- Functional Capacity Comparison: Disability examiners and administrative law judges compare your current RFC—what you can still do despite your disability—against the physical and mental demands of your past jobs. If your RFC meets or exceeds those demands, you will likely be found not disabled.
- Transferable Skills Assessment: Even if you cannot return to your past work, the SSA may find that you have skills from previous jobs that can be used in other, less demanding occupations. A thorough work history report helps the agency identify these skills correctly.

Because the stakes are high, it is essential to provide accurate, detailed, and honest information about every job you have held. Vague or incomplete answers can lead the SSA to assume you could still perform the work, which may result in a denial.

How to Obtain the Work History Report Form

You do not need to search far to get the **Work History Report Social Security**form. The SSA typically mails it to you shortly after you file a disability application. However, if you have not received it or want to start preparing early, you can:

1. Download from the SSA website – The official Form SSA-3369-BK is available as a fillable PDF on the Social Security Administration's site under the "Disability" section.
2. Visit a local SSA office – You can request a paper copy in person. Many offices also offer help with completing the form.
3. Work with a disability attorney – Most attorneys and advocates provide clients with a comprehensive work history questionnaire that mirrors the SSA form, ensuring nothing is missed before submission.

Once you receive the form, read all instructions carefully. The SSA allows you to complete it online, by mail, or in person during an appointment. If you choose to fill it out electronically, save your progress frequently to avoid losing data.

Step-by-Step Guide to Completing the Work History Report

Filling out the work history report can be time-consuming, but attention to detail pays off. Below we break down each section of the form and offer tips for crafting effective answers.

The first part asks for your name, Social Security number, contact information, and the date you became disabled. Double-check that your name and SSN match the information on your application. The disability onset date is especially important because the SSA uses it to determine the period under consideration.

You must list every job you held during the 15 years before your disability began, even if the job only lasted a few months. For each job, provide:

- Employer name and address
- Job title (use the most accurate title, not a generic one)
- Dates of employment (month and year)
- Average hours worked per week
- Highest earnings per week or month (before taxes)

Tip: If you had multiple jobs at the same time, list them separately. If you worked in the military, include that as well. Do not omit self-employment or volunteer work if it was substantial and sustained.

This is the core of the report. For each job, describe in your own words what you actually did on a typical day. Avoid copying generic job descriptions from the internet. Instead, focus on physical activities like lifting, standing, walking, climbing, or bending. Also note mental demands such as reading, writing, calculating, remembering instructions, or dealing with customers.

The SSA uses these descriptions to evaluate the exertional level of each job—sedentary, light, medium, heavy, or very heavy. For example, if you frequently lifted more than 50 pounds, your job would be classified as heavy. Be honest; exaggeration may harm your credibility if the SSA obtains contradictory evidence.

List any machinery, tools, or equipment you operated, including computers, cash registers, forklifts, power tools, or medical devices. Also note any protective gear you wore (e.g., hard hat, gloves, respirator). This helps the SSA

understand cognitive and physical coordination requirements.

The form includes checkboxes or ratings for various demands. For each job, indicate how many hours per day you spent:

- Sitting
- Standing
- Walking
- Lifting (light, medium, heavy weights)
- Carrying
- Pushing/pulling
- Climbing, balancing, stooping, kneeling, crouching, crawling
- Using hands for grasping, handling, or fingering

Similarly, rate mental demands like memory, problem-solving, and concentration. If your condition makes it hard to sit or stand for long periods, be sure to note that it affects all jobs you previously held.

If your duties changed because of your medical condition—for example, your employer reduced your lifting requirements or you stopped doing certain tasks—describe those changes. This shows the SSA that your disability forced you to modify your work.

Common Mistakes to Avoid on the Work History Report

Even a small error on the work history report can lead to a negative decision. Watch out for these frequent pitfalls:

- Leaving sections blank – An incomplete form will be returned to you, delaying the process. Answer every question; if a section does not apply, write “N/A.”
- Using vague descriptions – Phrases like “did paperwork” or “general office duties” are too broad. Instead, specify: “Prepared reports, entered data into spreadsheet software, answered telephones, filed documents.”
- Understating or overstating physical demands – If you say a job was “light” but the employer’s records show you routinely lifted 75 pounds, the SSA may question your credibility. Base your answers on what you actually did, not what you think the SSA wants to hear.
- Failing to list all jobs – Some applicants skip short-term jobs or seasonal work, but the SSA considers all work within the past 15 years. Omissions can lead to the agency assuming you could do a job you actually left for health reasons.
- Not updating the report after a denial – If you appeal, you may need to submit an updated work history report. Always review and revise if your condition has worsened or if new information comes to light.

How the SSA Uses Your Work History Report

Once you submit the **Work History Report Social Security**, a disability examiner at your state’s Disability Determination Services (DDS) reviews it alongside medical records and other evidence. The examiner will:

1. Classify each job according to the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT), which assigns a specific code, skill level, and exertional level.
2. Compare your RFC (as determined by medical evidence) against the DOT demands of your past relevant work.
3. Determine if you can perform any past job as you actually performed it or as it is generally performed in the national economy.
4. Decide whether you have transferable skills that could be used in other jobs matching your RFC, age, education, and work experience.

If the examiner finds that you cannot perform any past relevant work, the burden shifts to the SSA to show there

are other jobs you can do. That is why a detailed and accurate work history report is your best tool for establishing that your disability prevents you from returning to any occupation you have held.

Tips for a Strong Work History Report

To maximize your chances of approval, follow these best practices when completing the work history report:

- Write in the past tense – Describe what you did at the time of employment, not what you could do now.
- Use simple language – Avoid jargon or overly technical terms. The examiner may not be familiar with industry-specific vocabulary.
- Include duration and frequency – For example, “lifted boxes weighing 40–50 pounds approximately 10 times per hour for 6 hours of an 8-hour shift.”
- Be consistent – Ensure your descriptions align with any other statements you give during the application process, such as in your function report or during a hearing.
- Review before submission – Read every page twice for typos or missing information. If possible, have a friend or family member review the form.
- Keep a copy – Make a photocopy or digital scan of the completed form for your records. You may need to reference it during a hearing or appeal.

What Happens If You Cannot Complete the Work History Report Yourself?

Some applicants find the work history report challenging due to cognitive limitations, low literacy, or the effects of their disability. In such cases, you have several options:

- Ask a family member or friend to help you write descriptions based on your recollections.
- Contact a disability advocacy group or legal aid organization for assistance.
- Hire a disability attorney who can guide you through the entire process, including gathering work history records from employers if needed.

Remember, the SSA also accepts third-party statements from former employers, coworkers, or supervisors that confirm the demands of your past jobs. If you cannot remember specific details, those statements can serve as valuable supporting evidence.

Conclusion

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