



# News Release

SOCIAL SECURITY

## **Social Security Expedites Survivors and Disability Applications for Military Service Members**

On Memorial Day a grateful nation remembers those who have made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our country and give people of other nations the same fundamental human rights we enjoy. The Social Security Administration honors the heroism and courage of America's military service members, and mourns the terrible losses incurred by war.

Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security, wants active duty personnel and their families to know that Social Security has procedures in place to expedite survivors applications and disability claims that apply to any injured military service member, regardless of where the injury occurred.

"I want to assure the brave men and women of our Armed Forces and their families that they will not have to wait for these needed benefits," said Commissioner Astrue. "The special process is just one way Social Security can show our military personnel how much we appreciate their service."

For people applying for survivors benefits using Social Security's toll-free 800 number -- **1-800-772-1213** -- there is a specially-dedicated immediate claims taking unit that processes an application at the time of contact. Those applications received in a local Social Security office also are expedited and given priority handling.

For Social Security disability applications, the agency's goal is to schedule an appointment within three working days of the initial telephone call, or to have the local office call the service member within two days to start the process. Disability claims filed online at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) also are expedited. Once the application for Social Security disability benefits is received, it is uniquely identified as a military service member claim, and it is expedited through all phases of processing, both in Social Security and the state Disability Determination Service, where the medical decision is made.

This direct and immediate assistance applies to military service members who become disabled in the line of duty on or after October 1, 2001. The expedited process is invoked regardless of where the disability occurred, whether in the United States, Iraq, Afghanistan, or on other foreign soil during active military service.

For more information about Social Security survivors and disability benefits, please go to [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) or call 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).