**Administrative Law Judge Gerald Krafsur Placed on Leave**

Tennessee Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Gerald Krafsur has long been known as the ALJ you want handling your disability hearing. He is widely known for approving the majority of appeals that come before him.

Unfortunately for those currently appealing denials of Social Security benefits in Mid-Tennessee, Mr. Krafsur has recently been placed on administrative leave. The exact details of his leave are unclear, but reports suggest that it was due to an incident of driving under the influence rather than anything related to his functions as an administrative law judge.

The drunken driving incident, for which Mr. Krafsur was arrested, took place on May 2, 2102. There are some reports that Krafsur has resigned since being placed on administrative leave, but these are unconfirmed as of the time of this writing.

The Social Security Administration employs approximately 1,500 Administrative Law Judges around the country. Their main function is to oversee appeals hearings for disability claims. It is widely recognized that a claimant’s best opportunity to have a denial of benefits overturned is during their hearing before an administrative law judge.

This is largely because it is their one opportunity to present their case in person before a living, breathing human being. Administrative Law Judges have considerably more leeway in their decision making process than Social Security officials who oversee other steps of the claims and appeals process.

There is a wide disparity between administrative law judges. Because they have the authority to use their discretion on disability cases, there are some who are considerably more likely to approve disability benefits than others. Having your Social Security disability hearing assigned to an ALJ who is known for approving most of the cases before him, such as Judge Krafsur, is a godsend for most who are seeking disability benefits.

Regardless of which ALJ is assigned to your Social Security disability hearing, there are several things you should do for your hearing:

* **Get a Social Security lawyer**. A lawyer who regularly works with the Social Security disability system can help your chances of a successful hearing considerably. Your chances of an approval literally double when you are represented by a lawyer. Because Social Security disability lawyers receive their fees as a percentage of the back pay which is due to their clients, anyone can afford to be professionally represented for their appeals hearing.
* **Make sure your medical records are completely updated**. You will need to have current records for your hearing. Ideally, these records should show that you have been following all doctors’ orders and are still unable to continue working due to your disability.
* **Attend your hearing in person**. This isn’t required, but do it anyway. Your chances of having your claim approved plummet when you don’t bother to show up in person for the hearing.

While having an ALJ like Krafsur for your hearing is ideal, it isn’t necessary. If your claim is legitimate and is presented by a professional representative who is familiar with the workings of the SSA and knows what information they need to see before they can approve an SSDI or SSI claim, you are likely to be approved by any ALJ.