

SOAR Succession Planning

A CHECKLIST FOR TRANSFERRING OR CLOSING OUT CASES

Staff turnover while there are pending disability applications can confuse and concern the applicant, the Social Security Administration (SSA), and Disability Determination Services (DDS). This checklist helps agencies effectively transfer applications to a new SOAR case worker, resulting in a frustration-free experience for all.

Communicating with the Applicant

Explain to the applicant that you must withdraw your representation and that someone else in your, or another agency will assist them with completing their application with SSA.

- Meet with or call the applicant, letting them know of the need for a new representative.
- Provide a letter that explains the change and includes the new representative's contact information.
- Have the applicant sign a new SSA-1696 to appoint the new representative.
- Help the applicant schedule their next appointment with the new case worker.
- Request that the applicant sign new release forms, as applicable.

Transitioning Case Materials and Status

Fully brief the new case worker about the status of the application, what is still pending, and what needs further development and follow-up.

- Check the status of all medical records requests.
- Review the SOAR [quality review checklist](#) to indicate what has been completed and what needs follow-up.
- Provide all files, notes, and records.
- Introduce the new case worker to contacts for the applicant with whom you have been communicating.

Updating SSA and DDS

Ensure application continuity by communicating all changes to the SSA and DDS contacts for each pending application.

- Send a [letter to SSA](#) withdrawing representation from the original case worker
 - Complete the [SSA-1696-SUP2](#) (Representative's Withdrawal of Acceptance of an Appointment) to officially withdraw your representation.
- Submit the new [SSA-1696](#) appointing the claimant's new representative.
- Call DDS to inform the examiner of new representation and introduce the new case worker.

Transferring Cases in OAT

For cases that have already been entered into OAT and are currently pending, there are two ways that the applications can be transferred to another case worker.

New Case Worker in the Same Agency

- [Email](#) the OAT Coordinator and your SAMHSA SOAR TA Center Liaison to inform them about the transfer. Include:
 - Applicant Identification number(s) (ApID#)
 - Name of original SOAR case worker
 - Name of case worker to whom the case will be transferred (they must be registered in the same agency)

New Case Worker in Different Agency

- Close out the ApID# in the original agency by indicating that there was no decision received.
 - The case will be closed and archived.
- Create a new ApID# in the new agency.

Implementing Agency Best Practices

Agencies can be prepared for unexpected staff turnover by implementing ongoing procedures to help with case continuity.

- Maintain a shared [SOAR Referral Tracking Worksheet](#).
- Hold weekly case status reporting with leadership.
- Keep case files organized and up to date with detailed progress notes.