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Many Conn Victims Will Benefit from SSA Policy Changes

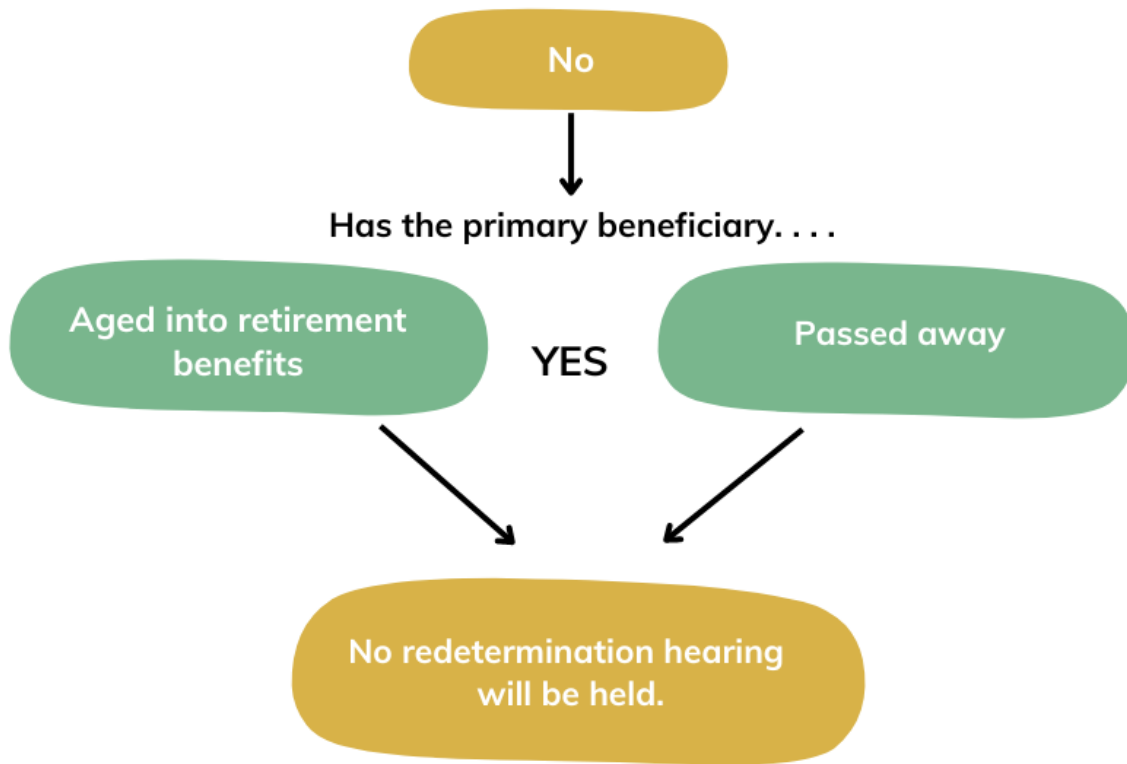


On Monday, July 29, 2024, AppalReD Legal Aid's Advocacy Director Evan Smith and Attorney Ned Pillersdorf announced positive policy changes from the Social Security Administration that will impact and provide relief to many, though not all, Conn survivors.

These changes include:

- The agency will no longer demand or collect overpayments stemming from redeterminations of former clients of Conn.
- Cases that have not had a hearing will be reviewed by the SSA and some will be determined that they do not require a hearing.

Have I had a Conn redetermination hearing?



This policy change is anticipated to affect 700-1000 clients.

7/29/24

"We are optimistic about the policy changes from the Social Security Administration. Potentially, about 1000 clients will no longer have a hearing, and the stakes are lowered for those who must have hearings. The Conn crisis has terrified low-income people for nearly a decade, including the young children of primary beneficiaries who have passed away. These children can now live their life without a cloud hanging over them. This is welcome relief," said Advocacy Director Evan Smith. "Though, unfortunately, the SSA is not changing its policies for cases that already had a hearing."

Smith reminded Conn victims who still must face a redetermination hearing that the cases are "tough but some are winnable," citing a recent AppalReD Legal Aid client who won their case and will now receive back benefits.

"There's a national network advocating for you, your friends and neighbors. I know it's easy to feel powerless in the mountains, but you are not alone. This really is an example of how a small group of committed citizens can make a difference."

Hundreds of pro bono attorneys from across Kentucky and the nation have volunteered to help Conn victims. Affected Conn clients can call AppalReD Legal Aid at 1-866-277-5733 if they receive a hearing notice or have questions on their status.

The Social Security Administration asks that potentially affected people update their contact information with Social Security at their local field office or by calling (800) 772-1213. This will help the SSA notify folks faster. Smith said people should not expect to receive a letter quickly. "The SSA is a bureaucracy so these notices may take several months."

Last updated on July 30, 2024.

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