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### DO I NEED AN ATTORNEY?

You have the right to have an attorney represent you in your Social Security case. Statistics have shown that claimants represented by attorneys have been successful more often than those without attorney representation. Not all attorneys practice before the Social Security Administration. You will do best to find an attorney familiar with the maze of Social Security regulations and the unusual Social Security procedures. **The Law Offices of Donald D. Vanarelli provides services to clients as legal counsel in Social Security Disability Appeals and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) claims.**

### WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I'VE BEEN DENIED BENEFITS?

File an appeal. Many disabled people become disheartened after they receive a disability benefits denial notice and do not pursue their applications. This is often a mistake. Nationally, about 67% of all applicants are denied initially. But many of these people ultimately receive benefits. Therefore, if denied benefits, file for reconsideration. You may again be denied, but again don't get discouraged. Only about 15% of all reconsiderations result in awards of benefits. If you are denied at this stage in the appeals process, you should request a hearing. You will have the best chance of winning at the hearing. Slightly more than 50% of all hearings result in the claimant receiving benefits.

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## "What would the Law Offices of Donald D. Vanarelli do to represent me in my Social Security case?"

Every case is different. Your attorney's role depends on the particular facts of your case. However, a few of the things the **Law Offices of Donald D. Vanarelli** may do to improve your chances of winning are:

- Gather medical and other evidence.
- Analyze your case under Social Security Laws and Regulations.
- Contact your doctor and explain Social Security Regulations in order to obtain a report consistent with those regulations.
- Refer you to additional doctors (usually specialists) for further medical reports to answer questions raised by Social Security Regulations.
- Send you to a vocational expert for a report on your ability to work.
- Suggest that Social Security send you to a doctor for a conclusive examination.
- Obtain documents from your Social Security file.
- Review actions taken by the Social Security Administration.
- Ask that a prior application for benefits be reopened.
- Seek waiver of a time limit.
- Insure the presence of a crucial witness or documents at your hearing.
- Advise you how best to prepare yourself to testify at your hearing.
- Protect your right to a fair hearing by objecting to improper evidence.
- Cross-examine adverse witnesses at your hearing.
- Present an opening and closing statement at your hearing to help you obtain benefits.
- Submit a written summary of the evidence and legal argument in support of your claim to the Administrative Law Judge deciding the case.
- Review, suggest changes or make legal objections to written questions which are sometimes sent to a doctor by the Administrative Law Judge after a hearing requesting an additional medical opinion.
- If you win, make sure that Social Security correctly calculates your benefits.
- If you lose, request review of the hearing decision by the SSA Appeals Council.
- If necessary, represent you in a federal court review of your case.

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### FIRM PROFILE

The Law Firm of Donald D. Vanarelli is a unique law firm providing a broad range of legal services for the elderly and disabled.

### FORMER SOCIAL SECURITY CLAIMS REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. Vanarelli is a former Social Security Claims Representative. He has years of experience adjudicating claims for Social Security, SSI, Medicare and Medicaid benefits in New Jersey. In addition, Mr. Vanarelli is a member in good standing of the National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives. He is an experienced Social Security Attorney. Mr. Vanarelli has been helping claimants obtain disability benefits from the Social Security Administration for many years.

### CERTIFIED ELDER LAW ATTORNEY

Mr. Vanarelli is certified as an Elder Law Attorney. Elder Law is the legal practice of representing older or disabled persons and their representatives in financing long-term medical care, nursing home issues, qualifying for Medicare, Medicaid and other public benefits, estate planning, trust administration, probate, retirement benefit disputes and guardianships. Elder Law has been formally recognized by the New Jersey Supreme Court as a legal specialty through the American Bar Assn's accreditation program.

### REGISTERED GUARDIAN

Mr. Vanarelli is certified as a Registered Guardian (RG) by the National Guardianship Foundation. An RG serves as a private fiduciary by practicing as an agent under a power of attorney or guardian of the person or the estate of an incapacitated person. The RG certification has not been recognized by the New Jersey Supreme Court.

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## PRINCIPAL ATTORNEY

**Donald D. Vanarelli** has been a practicing attorney since 1983, admitted to practice law in New Jersey and New York. A graduate of Rutgers Law School, Don practices in areas of elder law, estate planning and probate administration. Before becoming an attorney, Don worked for the Social Security Administration adjudicating claims for benefits under the Social Security, SSI, Medicare and Medicaid programs. Immediately after graduating law school, Don served as Law Clerk to Hon. Herbert S. Alterman, J.S.C., Superior Court, Passaic County. Don is board-certified as an Elder Law Attorney. He is also certified as a Registered Guardian, and practices as a professional fiduciary. He is approved as a mediator by the New Jersey Supreme Court. Don is a past Chairman of the Somerset County Elder Law Committee, and past Secretary of the New Jersey Chapter of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys. In addition, Don is a member of the New Jersey Bar's Elder Law Section, the Union County Elder Law Committee and the National Guardianship Association. Don is an accredited member of the NJ Association of Professional Mediators.

Don maintains offices at 242 St. Paul Street, Westfield, NJ 07090 Tel: (908) 232-7400. Don also meets with clients at other conference locations.

## OUR COMMITMENT

- ◇ High Quality Legal Services
- ◇ Reasonable Rates
- ◇ Personal Attention to Each Client
- ◇ High Ethical Standards

## STAFF MEMBERS

Donald D. Vanarelli, Esq.  
Whitney W. Bremer, Esq.  
Chen Li, Esq.  
Marion Berkowitz, Office Mgr.  
Ginny Morrissey, Marketing Mgr.  
Kim Kennedy, Paralegal  
Loretta Ceres, Secretary  
Beth Thompson, Secretary

*Careful  
Planning  
Makes  
A  
Difference*

## FIRM MISSION

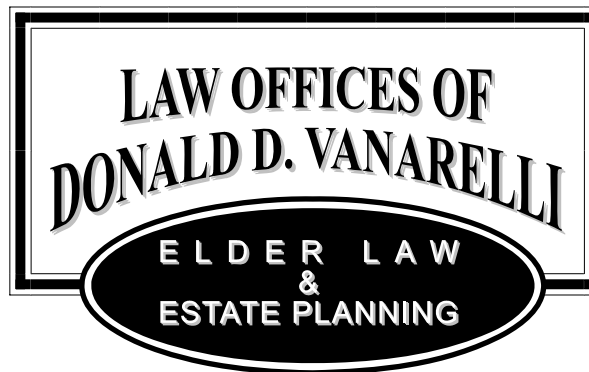
The Law Firm of Donald D. Vanarelli is devoted to helping seniors and the disabled find, get and pay for quality long term care, while preserving assets for family and others. We strive to provide elder law, estate planning and other legal services with the highest level of excellence in legal expertise, compassion and sensitivity. Through our publications and seminars, we educate other professionals and our client community about the legal needs of and resources available to seniors, the disabled and their families.

## LAW OFFICES OF DONALD D. VANARELLI

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*Other Conference Locations  
Available Throughout New Jersey*



*Social Security  
Disability Appeals  
and Supplemental  
Security Income  
(SSI) Claims*