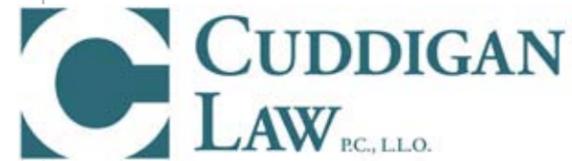




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Your Social Security

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News and Information for SSDI and SSI Recipients

Volume 5 | Issue 4

April | 2017

We Are Moving To Better Serve You

At Cuddigan Law we are pleased to announce that we are moving our offices and, in a way, going back home. To accommodate our growing practice of Social Security and VA disability law we are rejoining our old partners at the Brodkey, Peebles, Belmont and Line LLP law firm. This move will give us access to more resources to support our clients in their efforts to obtain the disability benefits they have earned. But what isn't changing is that our clients will still get the personalized, professional attention they have always been able to rely on from lead attorneys Tim and Sean Cuddigan and their dedicated team of disability professionals.

"We are very excited about this strategic move," said Tim Cuddigan, President of Cuddigan Law. "Now more than ever we will be able to focus our expertise on serving our clients with top-notch legal advice to assist in their disability claims. As we have done for more than 20 years, disability law is all we do."

We will be moving on April 28, 2017, and we appreciate your patience as we get our computers and phones set up. We should be set up by May 1 and ready to serve you. Our new address will be 10855 W Dodge Rd # 100, Omaha, NE 68154. Our new office is located near the Social Security district office in the Old Mill area in Omaha, right off of Dodge Street. Our phone numbers and email addresses are unchanged.

If you (or a person you care about) are disabled due to an accident, illness, or military service and need someone in your corner who understands the system and will fight for your rights, call Cuddigan Law for a free evaluation of your situation.



Directions to our new office:

- Take West Dodge Road (the street not the expressway) to 114th Street.
- Go south on 114th Street about 2 blocks to Davenport Street.
- Turn left (east) on Davenport Street.
- Follow Davenport Street which will merge into the West Dodge Frontage Road.
- Follow the West Dodge Frontage Road to 108th Avenue.
- Turn right on 108th Avenue and you have arrived at our office building at 10855 West Dodge Road (at the corner of West Dodge Frontage Road and 108th Avenue).
- The entrance to our office is on the west side of the building on the ground floor

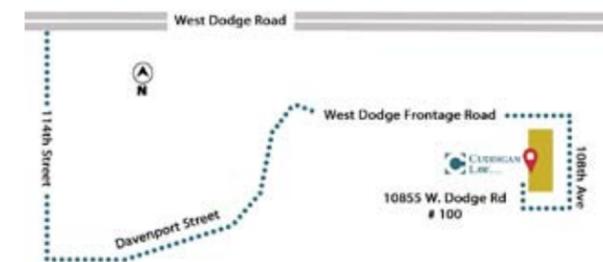
We Are Moving To Better Serve You



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Trump's Budget Director Paints a Target on Social Security Disability

During the heated 2016 presidential campaign candidate Donald Trump pledged that he would leave Social Security alone; that he would ensure that seniors and disabled Americans get the benefits they have earned despite projected future shortfalls in the Social Security Trust Fund. He positioned himself as the only candidate to make such a promise. However, now it seems that cuts to the Social Security disability programs—Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI)—have crept into the administration's future fiscal plans for the country.

DICKERSON: Entitlements, that's the big — where the big money is. The president has said he didn't want to touch Medicare, but he seems to be revising his thinking on that.

MULVANEY: Well, I think the promise was he wasn't going to affect anybody and we haven't with this budget. Keep in mind what this budget is. This is just the discretionary spending part of the budget, which was a necessary first step.

DICKERSON: But he might look at —at future retirement—future Medicare recipients?

MULVANEY: Let me ask you a question, do you really think that Social Security disability insurance is part of what people think of when they think of Social Security? I don't think so. It's the fastest growing program. It was— it grew tremendously under President Obama. It's a very wasteful program and we want to try and fix that.

But Mulvaney is wrong when he says disability insurance is "the fastest growing program". In fact, a *Los Angeles Times* investigation reported that disability insurance rolls have actually been shrinking for years. "In 2014, disability enrollment peaked at 8.95 million disabled workers (plus another 1.98 million of their spouses and children)," the *Times* said. "By last December, they had fallen to 8.81 million disabled workers, plus another 1.8 million family members."



Budget Director Mick Mulvaney
Photo: Gage Skidmore, Peoria, AZ

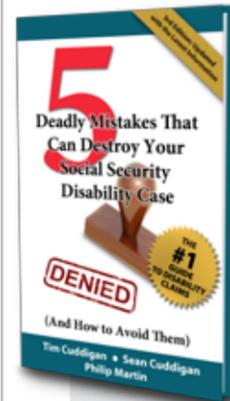
It also worth noting that in 2016 disabled workers received an average benefit of \$1,165.39 per month for an annual income of \$13,984.68, barely above the poverty line.

The *Times* characterized Mulvaney's budget plans as "engag[ing] in a drive-by shooting of some the nation's neediest and most defenseless people: the disabled."

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Appearing on the CBS Sunday morning news show, *Face the Nation*, Budget Director Mick Mulvaney singled out disability insurance as an expenditure the administration is examining. Here, from cbsnews.com, is the exact exchange between *Face the Nation* host John Dickerson and Mulvaney:



"5 Deadly Mistakes That Can Destroy Your Social Security Disability Case" is the #1 guide to improving the odds of winning a disability case.

For a FREE copy for you or someone you care about call Cuddigan Law at 402.933.5318 or email us at lawteam@cuddiganlaw.com

Backlog of VA Disability Claims is Climbing...Again

Since last November there has been a 30,000-case increase in the backlog of VA disability claims, says the *Military Times*. After VA critics and Congress focused their attention on the backlog problem, the number of first time cases that took more than four months to process dropped from a high of 610,000 cases in early 2013 to about 70,000 cases in October 2015 where it stabilized for about a year. Now that number has crept back up to more than 100,000 cases.



The Department of Veterans Affairs Building in Washington, DC.

VA officials say this is only a temporary blip. They are confident, they say, that the backlog can be reduced again. "But to do that," the *Military Times* says, "they're...instituting mandatory overtime for claims processors for the fourth year in a row, a practice that in the past has raised questions about whether VA officials have enough capacity to handle the ever-increasing number of benefits cases." Willie Clark, deputy under secretary for the Veterans Benefits Administration explained, "It's a tough decision, and it is just a stopgap measure. We've tried for a more balanced approach in processing all claims, and that lead to an increase in the backlog."

But concerns about this issue remain. The government watchdog agency, the Government Accountability Office, stated in a March report that the backlog is likely to get worse unless the VA beefs up its staffing. Advocates for veterans have been worried that a federal hiring freeze imposed by the Trump administration would make the backlog problem worse. But, the *Times* reports that "VA leaders have also asked for (and received) an exemption to the federal hiring freeze for disability claims examiners and other staff to address the issue."

We're in your corner.

We value the confidence and trust you have placed with us in the past.

If you or a family member or a friend could use our help now or in the future, please pass along our name.

Cuddigan Law.

Disability law is all we do.



Tim & Sean Cuddigan

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Sudoku
(Easy)

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	7	4		6	
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For the puzzle solution go to cuddiganlaw.com/library/newsletter

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Are you a disabled veteran?

Before you apply for VA disability benefits call Cuddigan Law at 402.933.5318 or email us at lawteam@cuddiganlaw.com for your FREE copy of our book *The Essential Guide to VA Disability Claims*.

