



**CHARLES D. HANKEY LAW OFFICE P.C.**

WITH 80 YEARS OF COMBINED EXPERIENCE, BOTH IN AND OUT OF THE COURTROOM, THE LEGAL PROFESSIONALS OF THE CHARLES D. HANKEY LAW OFFICE CAN RESOLVE CASES INVOLVING:

- PERSONAL INJURY
- CAR ACCIDENTS
- TRUCK ACCIDENTS
- MOTORCYCLE ACCIDENTS
- BICYCLE ACCIDENTS
- RAILROAD CROSSING/  
TRAIN ACCIDENTS
- AIRPLANE ACCIDENTS
- HIGHWAY DEFECTS
- WORKERS' COMPENSATION
- PREMISES LIABILITY
- PRODUCT LIABILITY
- BRAIN/HEAD INJURIES
- SPINAL INJURIES
- DOG BITES/ANIMAL ATTACKS
- CHILD INJURIES
- CONSTRUCTION ACCIDENTS
- BURN INJURIES
- DROWNING

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*Experience. Compassion. Justice.*

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# Legal Insider



**EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: Andrea**



Andrea graduated from Ball State University in 2009 with a major in Legal Studies. She has traveled to New Orleans and Haiti for service trips with groups of students and hopes to do so again in the future. At the office, Andrea is responsible for Personal Injury case upkeep as well as appealing Social Security Disability cases to the reconsideration level. She enjoys scrapbooking, going to the concerts, cooking, spending time with her family, and trying new things.



**FROM THE DESK OF CHARLES D. HANKEY**

**POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER**

In recent years, there has been an increase in cases of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Many of our clients have PTSD. Many more have symptoms of it, but have never been formally diagnosed.

PTSD can be caused by experiencing traumatic events such as natural disasters, war, domestic violence, sexual assault, and car crashes. PTSD can include physical symptoms such as insomnia, sleeping too much, headaches, stomach problems, and obesity. It can have cognitive symptoms such as difficulty concentrating, problems making decisions and solving problems, being easily distracted, and memory problems. It can also have emotional symptoms such as depression, anxiety, panic attacks, fear, guilt, anger, isolation, violent outbursts, and excessive worry. It can promote substance abuse, cause nightmares, intrusive thoughts, and flashbacks.

If you have PTSD you may have difficulty around loud noises or loud voices. You may be uncomfortable in crowds, you may withdraw from friends and family, and people may notice personality changes. Most people begin experiencing symptoms of PTSD shortly after the event that causes it, but sometimes it can take months or years to show itself. For many people a later event brings back the memories of the original event and triggers the onset of PTSD symptoms. Many people try to ignore and hide their symptoms because they are ashamed or embarrassed by them.

If this describes you, please seek treatment from a mental health practitioner. If you are diagnosed with PTSD or any other cognitive disorder, please let us know immediately, so that we can get records documenting it. The records will help support your disability case. If your mental health practitioner would be willing to fill out a form,

*continued on page 2*

**NEW DIGITAL MEDICAL RECORDS SPEEDS CLAIMS PROCESS**

**By: Attorney Sondra L. Burger**



The Fall start of electronic medical record gathering by the local Indianapolis Social Security Office could help cut the wait time and backlog of cases waiting for hearings. Long waits of two years or even more are not unusual.

But now the Indianapolis Social Security Office will tap into digital technology to speed up the claims process.

Indianapolis is one of 15 Social Security Offices around the country to start requesting and receiving med records electronically.

Medical records for people applying for disability in Indianapolis will be sent electronically to Social Security by the Indiana Network for Patient Care, which links more than 60 medical providers across the region and contains information on more than 6 million patients. Currently, the Social Security Administration requests applicants' paper files from their physicians.

The Doctors' offices then copy those records and mail them to the Social Security Office. The turn around time can be 6-8 weeks or more waiting for the records to be received. This new system should result in faster information gathering by Social Security Administration.

Past results afford no guarantee of future results. Every case is different and must be judged on its own merits. The contents of this newsletter do not constitute legal advice.

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PTSD (continued from page 1)

let us know. If you and your mental health practitioner agree that you are unable to carry out simple instructions, respond appropriately to supervision, and deal with changes in a routine work setting, those restrictions can substantially impact your ability to work, especially if they are combined with physical problems.

The addition of PTSD to your case, combined with records of treatment and a doctor's statement on how it impacts your ability to function, can often tip the balance between being awarded benefits and not. Please, it may be difficult for you, but if you are experiencing PTSD symptoms, seek treatment and notify us immediately.

## THE TREATING DOCTOR RULE

By Attorney Melissa A. Davidson



A treating physician can be the most valuable evidence in your Social Security Disability case. Under Social Security Ruling 96-2p, SSA (Social Security Administration) may adopt your doctor's opinion as its own if it is well supported by medically acceptable clinical and laboratory diagnostic techniques.

This means that SSA will look to see if your doctor's opinion is supported by x-rays, MRIs, exam findings and other notes your doctor makes about you. Finally, a treating doctor's opinion must be "not inconsistent with other substantial evidence" in the case record. 20 C.F.R. § 404.1527(d)(2). In other words, the greater weight of the evidence must support the doctor's conclusions. If an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) decides not to give the doctor's conclusions controlling weight, the decision maker must provide good reasons for the weight given to the doctor's opinion. See 20 C.F.R. § 404.1527(d)(2).

According to SSR 06-3p, opinions from other sources such as therapists, chiropractors, and nurse practitioners must be evaluated using the same factors used in weighing the opinion of your doctor - such as length of treatment, specialty of the provider, and consistency with other evidence.

Please talk to your doctors, therapists, nurse practitioners and other caregivers about your Social Security disability case. If she or he says that you are doing the right thing by seeking disability benefits, then ask if they would be willing to fill out a form to help your case. Simply call the office and request a form for your doctor to fill out. We have many forms that are specific for your particular illness, including but not limited to:

- |                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Crohn's Disease  | Multiple Sclerosis |
| Fibromyalgia     | Mental Disorders   |
| Heart Conditions | Seizure Disorders  |
| Headaches        |                    |

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS

By: Attorney Stacy J. Burton



When you are injured on the job, there is a good chance that you have a Workers' Compensation claim. It is very important that you promptly speak with an attorney after the date you are injured in order to avoid any statute of limitations issues. When selecting an attorney, keep in mind all of the other issues that could develop along the way. If our office manages your case, we can handle all of these issues in a proactive way, in

order to give you the maximum benefit and protection.

One issue we will address is your future medical expenses. When you are injured on the job, there are certain ways in which you can be compensated. One way is compensation for your projected future medical expenses. This can include future surgeries, physical therapy, or in the case of a more catastrophic injury, things like home modification with handicapped accessible equipment. Our office is in the unique position to handle your worker's compensation claim as well as the disability needs that might come along with that injury.

Through your employer you may have a short term or long term disability policy, and it is important to know that just because you have a workers' compensation claim, you may still be eligible for those benefits. We have specialists in these areas who can work with you to ensure that you are receiving everything for which you are eligible.

If you do not have a disability policy, you may qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance. If you are hurt on the job, you might be off of work temporarily. This does not automatically make you qualified for disability benefits, however. If the injury prevents you from working any job, permanently or for a prolonged period of time, then you may be eligible for social security disability insurance and our office can assist you in obtaining those benefits. When someone is granted disability benefits, they are often also eligible for Medicare. Medicare can impact your worker's compensation claim and any money you have received for future medical care.

Our office has the knowledge and expertise of how workers' compensation, long and short term disability policies, social security disability and Medicare all interact with one another. We are here to use that knowledge to get you and your family the protection needed when you are injured.

## REPRESENTATIVE ACCESS TO ELECTRONIC FOLDER

The Social Security Administration has given selected representatives access to Social Security's electronic files. The Charles D. Hankey Law Office has been selected as one of the first claimant representatives to have access to these files. This means that we will now have immediate access to the documents and records Social Security collects on you, rather than having to wait until your hearing to order a copy of Social Security's file.

## CHANGES IN PHONE SYSTEM SIMPLIFY COMMUNICATION

By: Sharon R. Roberts

You may have called our office and noticed that our phone options have changed. Now, if you are an existing Social Security client, it is even easier to reach your case administrator. You can still dial your administrator's direct number or their extension, but now if you don't know their extension, you can press 1 to indicate that you're an existing client, 1 to indicate you are a Social Security Disability client, and then a single button to reach your case administrator.

Below is a chart, showing the range that each case administrator covers, their name, direct extension, and which number to push from the phone menu to reach them:

Last 2 digits of SS#	Case Administrator	Extension	Phone Option
00-16	Ashley	232	1
17-34	Stephanie	236	2
35-51	Sharon	226	3
52-68	Anna	222	4
69-84	Martha	229	5
85-99	Cassie	249	6

If you are an existing Long Term or Short Term Disability client, Worker's Compensation client, or Personal Injury client, your calls now ring directly to paralegals who specialize in these cases. For your calls, first press 1 to indicate you are an existing client, then, for Personal Injury or Worker's Compensation press 2, and for Long Term or Short Term Disability press 3.

Likewise for new clients, press option 2 from the first menu to indicate that you are a new client, and then press 1 for Social Security Disability, 2 for Personal Injury or Worker's Compensation, and 3 for Long Term and Short Term Disability.

Lastly, if you just want our mailing address or fax numbers, you can press option 4 to hear them. We hope this makes things easier for our clients and staff alike. We welcome your feedback on this new system.

## RECIPE: CHICKEN DIVAN

By: Andrea Stone

### Ingredients:

- 2 10 oz. bags of frozen broccoli
- 6 chicken breasts, cooked
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 3 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 cup sour cream
- salt and pepper to taste
- buttered bread crumbs
- slivered almonds (optional)
- rice

### Instructions:

Cook broccoli according to directions. Place a layer of broccoli and cooked, bite-size chicken pieces in 9 x 13 casserole dish. Mix the cans of soup, mayonnaise, cheese, sour cream, salt, and pepper in a separate, large bowl. Pour mixture over the chicken and broccoli. Sprinkle buttered bread crumbs and almonds over top. Bake on 350 degrees for 45 min. Serve over rice.



## CLIP & SAVE: Helpful Contacts

### Charles D. Hankey Law Office P.C.

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### Contact us if:

- You moved to a new address or changed your phone number
- You received a denial letter
- You went to see a new doctor
- You have been admitted to the hospital
- Your doctor has diagnosed you with a new medical condition
- You had a new test/MRI/X-ray

### Additional Resources

Information Referral Network - 317-926-HELP

Crisis Line - 317-251-7575

Center Township Trustees (can assist with rent, utilities, takes applications for Food Stamps, TANF, and Medicaid)  
863 Massachusetts Avenue - 317-633-3610

**Healthy Indiana Plan:** low cost insurance for Indiana Families - 877-438-4479 | www.hip.in.gov

**RX for Indiana:** assistance with prescription drug cost - 877-793-0765 | www.rxforIndiana.org

**Advantage Program:** health care program for uninsured, low-income Marion County residents - 317-221-2000 | www.hhcorp.org/adv.htm

**Voc. Rehab. Services:** 317-254-6707 | www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/4938.htm

**Damien Center:** help for those afflicted by HIV/AIDS - 317-632-0123 | 800-213-1163 | www.damien.org

### Housing Help:

Indianapolis Resource Center for Independent Living - 317-926-1660

Colonial Park (chronic homeless program) - 317-353-6784

Indianapolis Public Housing Agency (section 8) - 317-261-7200

Barton Center (sleeping rooms - \$278, 2 bedrooms \$500-613) - 317-423-2575

You can apply for Social Security disability benefits by calling 1-800-772-1213, online at www.ssa.gov, or in person at your local office

### Indianapolis Area Local Social Security Office Addresses\*:

**West Side:** 4279 N. Lafayette Rd. - 317-290-3249

**Downtown:** 575 N. Pennsylvania, Suite 685 - 866-592-2812

**East Side:** 5515 N. Post Rd. - 866-220-7899

\*If you live outside of the Indianapolis area, please ask a Case Administrator for the address and phone number to your local social security office.

"Anger helps straighten out a problem like a fan helps straighten out a pile of papers."

- Susan Mancotte

With heartfelt thanks for your referrals!

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to relatives, friends, and neighbors. Thank you!