

Social Security office is on a mental vacation

Letter to the Editor

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Try calling the Social Security office in Port Richey and see how frustrated you get.

"Here's a thought. ..."

That's the lead-in to a recorded message that tells you about a Web site you can visit for general information about Social Security or to obtain forms to fill out. No claim or appeal assistance is available from this site.

When you call this number, this message plays four times with on-hold silence between and then it clicks and cuts off your call. No matter which selection you chose, the same thing happens.

Apparently, the next available person to help you is never available because after trying for 14 working days straight, eight to 10 times each day, there has been no way to get anyone to answer the phone. This is the response my friend has received while trying to obtain information regarding a Social Security disability claim appeal. The appeal was mailed return-receipt requested on May 10. There is a time limit of 60 days for filing an appeal of this nature, so time is of the essence.

Not being able to get an answer from the Port Richey office, my friend contacted the 800 phone number for Social Security to see if they could be of assistance. Their response was that nothing had been entered into the main computer files regarding this appeal and that her only recourse was to contact the Port Richey office.

My friend has subsequently learned from the Social Security office that claims are processed in the order in which they are received and that there is only one person assigned to process these claims. This person happens to be on vacation at this time, so not only are these claims being put into a pile, according to when they were received, but that pile is going unprocessed because of a vacation.