

# General Casework

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

I understand that by the time you contact my office for assistance on your issue, you have already tried to resolve the problem directly with the agency involved with little to no success. While we cannot guarantee you a favorable outcome, we will do our best to help you receive a fair and timely response to your problem. I encourage you to complete a [General Privacy Release Form](#) for non-immigration related matters and return it to the district office nearest you. If your issue involves the immigration process (i.e. issues involving the USCIS, National Visa Center or U.S. embassies and consulates, etc.), please use the [Immigration Privacy Release Form](#).

Before starting the casework process, review these most common questions my office staff are asked regarding federal agencies and casework.

**Q: The agency has denied my claim/application. Can you help me appeal the decision?**

A: While my office can make an inquiry on your behalf about the status of your pending case, or for clarification on the reasons for a denial, it would be inappropriate for me to compel any agency to decide an issue in your favor, or to overturn a decision that is final. My office does not have the power to mandate a particular action on a decision or to overturn a decision.

**Q: Can you help me expedite my claim or application with a federal agency?**

A: Each federal agency has set criteria for considering expedite requests. You should first contact the agency/office where your claim or application is being processed directly to determine what is required for the agency to consider expediting your case. If you have trouble contacting the agency, please send the request, along with evidence showing a need for expedited attention, to any of my district offices. You may locate the district office nearest to you [here](#). Please refer to the "[Tips for Requesting Casework Assistance](#)" on my website.

**Q: Can I request casework for a matter involving an agency under the jurisdiction of the State or county?**

A: As a U.S. Congressman, my staff has access to liaison offices for all U.S. federal agencies. For assistance with a state agency or department, you should contact your representatives in the [Alabama State Legislature](#), or contact the office of the [Governor](#). The staffers in these offices have more direct access to non-federal agencies and can better review your concerns and respond to your letter.

**Q: Can you help me with my legal case or court hearing?**

A: House rules prohibit my staff and I from giving legal advice or intervening in court proceedings. If you are seeking assistance with a case that involves a lawsuit or that is pending litigation and you need help finding an attorney, please refer to the contact information for local

legal aid [here](#). You may also wish to contact the [Lawyer Referral Service](#) of the Alabama State Bar.

**Q: Why do you need my complete Social Security number?**

A: When my staff contacts a federal agency on your behalf, our Congressional liaison at that agency will need to verify your identity and retrieve information connected to your case in order to address your concerns. In most cases, the best way to verify your identity and to look up your case history is with your Social Security number.

For cases involving immigration and visas, an alien registration number, receipt number, case number or passport numbers are preferred.

**Q: I need help filling out federal agency forms. Can your office assist me?**

A: Unfortunately, my staff and I are not able to assist constituents in completing paperwork with a number of federal agencies including the Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, among others.

**Q: Do I reside in the 5th Congressional District of Alabama?**

A: House ethic rules require that each Member of Congress be given the opportunity to serve his or her constituents. To determine if you reside in the 5th Congressional District of Alabama, please enter your address and zip code [here](#).

If you are still unsure whether I can assist you with your case, please contact one of my district offices (Huntsville, Decatur, and Florence). My staff will discuss your situation with you and work with you to determine the best course of action.

