

**PONTIS COMMUNITY SERVICES**



**PCS eLearn**



# **EDPNA Exam**

## **Study Outline (2025 Edition)**

### **Format of the Exam:**

- **Time:** 4 hours
  - **Questions:** 60 multiple-choice questions
  - **Passing Score:** 70%
  - **Topics Covered:**
    1. SSA Law, Regulations, and Rulings
    2. Ethical and Professional Conduct
    3. Representation Procedures
    4. Evidence and Hearings
    5. Eligibility & Entitlement for Disability Programs
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## **I. SSA Disability Programs and Eligibility (20–25%)**

### **A. Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)**

- Title II of the Social Security Act
- Work credits and insured status
- Trial Work Period (TWP)
- Extended Period of Eligibility (EPE)
- Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA)

### **B. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**

- Title XVI of the Act
- Financial eligibility: income and resources
- Deeming rules
- Differences between SSI and SSDI

### **C. Childhood Disability Benefits**

- Disabled Adult Child (DAC) benefits
- Child SSI eligibility

## **D. Other Benefit Types**

- Widow(er)'s Disability Benefits
  - Concurrent benefits (SSDI + SSI)
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# **II. SSA Rules, Regulations, and Rulings (20–25%)**

## **A. Statutes and Regulations**

- Social Security Act
- 20 CFR Parts 404 and 416

## **B. Rulings**

- SSRs (Social Security Rulings)
- Acquiescence Rulings

## **C. POMS (Program Operations Manual System)**

- How SSA uses POMS to adjudicate claims

## **D. Case Law and Court Precedent**

- Role of federal court decisions in disability cases
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# **III. Representation and Advocacy Procedures (20–25%)**

## **A. Initial Application Process**

- Completing SSA-16 and SSA-8000
- Online applications and appeals

## **B. Appeals Process**

- Reconsideration
- ALJ Hearing
- Appeals Council
- Federal Court Review

### **C. Forms and Deadlines**

- SSA-1696, SSA-827
- Good cause for late filing

### **D. Communication with SSA**

- ERE (Electronic Records Express)
  - Using the Representative's Portal
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## **IV. Ethical and Professional Conduct (15–20%)**

### **A. SSA Rules of Conduct**

- 20 CFR §§ 404.1740 and 416.1540
- Duty of candor, diligence, and competence

### **B. Fee Agreements and Fee Petitions**

- SSA-1693 (Fee Agreement)
- SSA-1560 (Fee Petition)
- Max fees (currently \$7,200 cap as of 2024)

### **C. Misconduct and Sanctions**

- Suspensions, disqualifications, and reprimands
- Procedures for investigation

### **D. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality**

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## **V. Medical and Vocational Evidence (10–15%)**

### **A. Listings and Medical Criteria**

- Listing of Impairments (Blue Book)
- Meeting vs. Equaling a Listing

## **B. RFC (Residual Functional Capacity)**

- Physical vs. mental RFC
- SSR 96-8p

## **C. Vocational Factors**

- Age, education, work experience
- Grids (Medical-Vocational Guidelines)

## **D. Medical Sources**

- Acceptable Medical Sources (AMS)
  - Treating source vs. consultative examiner
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# **VI. Hearings and ALJ Proceedings (10–15%)**

## **A. Role of the ALJ**

- Duty to develop the record
- Conducting a fair hearing

## **B. Preparing Clients for Hearing**

- Submission of evidence (5-day rule)
- Witness preparation

## **C. Post-Hearing Procedures**

- OTR (on-the-record) decisions
  - Favorable vs. unfavorable decisions
  - Request for review by Appeals Council
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# **VII. Administrative Tools and Practice Resources**

- **SSA Forms Portal:** [ssa.gov/forms](https://ssa.gov/forms)
  - **POMS Access:** <https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/poms.nsf/home>
  - **Listings (Blue Book):** [ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook](https://ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook)
  - **Hearings Info:** [https://www.ssa.gov/appeals/hearing\\_process.html](https://www.ssa.gov/appeals/hearing_process.html)
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## **Suggested Study Materials**

- **SSA's Official Study Guide for EDPNA Exam**
- **NOSSCR Exam Prep Guides**
- **SSA POMS and CFR (especially Parts 404 & 416)**
- **NALA-style Ethics Review**
- **Case Scenarios and Flashcards**