
Hughes Hubbard & Reed

Firm Secures Reversal of Decision Denying Client's Disability Benefits in Appellate Victory

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Hughes Hubbard won an appellate victory in federal court on behalf of a pro bono client whose application for Social Security disability benefits had been denied at three levels of administrative review.

The client initially filed an application for benefits in April 2011 citing several mental disorders. Such psychological impairments are often difficult to substantiate, and the Social Security Administration denied the client's application after finding that her claims were not credible and lacked objective support. Once she exhausted her options for administrative review, the client appealed to federal district court. At that point, Legal Services NYC introduced her to Hughes Hubbard.

On appeal, the firm argued that the administrative law judge who conducted the benefits hearing failed to fully develop the administrative record by not obtaining critical medical documents from the client's treating physician and mental healthcare providers. Among other things, the client's psychiatrist had made clinical findings that helped substantiate the severity of her mental impairments and warranted a disability finding.

Following oral argument on July 27, 2016, U.S. District Judge Nina Gershon ruled from the bench and reversed Social Security's decision to deny the client disability benefits. Largely adopting Hughes Hubbard's reasoning, Judge Gershon remanded the case for further proceedings based on the full administrative record, including the new medical documents, and to correct additional errors.

Charles Huberty briefed and argued the appeal, with supervision from Vilia Hayes and Shep DiCesare. George Davidson and Bill Maguire participated in the moot.

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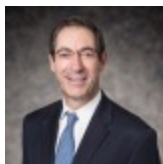
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