

# **Social Security Opens National Hearing Center**

In an effort to control the amount of backlogged cases and reduce the waiting time for a disability decision, the Social Security Administration has opened numerous National Hearing Centers. These National Hearing Centers allow for Administrative Law Judges (ALJ) to hold hearings through video conference. The hope for these new Hearing Centers is to decrease the amount of backlogged cases in various urban areas, as well as making it easier for people living in rural areas of the country.

Since the hearing centers opened in 2007 the processing time for decisions has reduced by 154 days and the overall amount of decisions made annually have increased by 45%. In addition to the opening of National Hearing Centers, the Social Security Administration has implemented the use of Attorney Advisors who can issue decisions on certain cases, rather than going through the entire appeal process with an ALJ.