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How we assign SMC levels L through O

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Go to your SMC letter below to learn more about the specific situations and combinations of situations that fall within that designation. We assign special monthly compensation (SMC) levels based on very specific combinations of situations like:

- Amputation of one or more limbs, hands, or feet
- Loss of sight or total blindness in one or both eyes
- Needing daily help with basic needs like eating, dressing, and bathing
- And others

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SMC-L

You may receive an SMC-L designation if any of the below situations are true for you.

You have:

- Had both feet amputated, **or**
- Had one foot amputated, and have lost the use of the other foot, **or**
- Had one hand and one foot amputated, **or**
- Had one foot amputated, and have lost the use of one hand, **or**
- Had one hand amputated, and have lost the use of one foot

Or you have:

- Lost the use of both feet, **or**
- Lost the use of one hand and one foot

Or you:

- Have lost sight in both eyes (blindness), **or**
- Are permanently bedridden, **or**
- Need daily help with basic needs (like eating, dressing, and bathing)

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SMC-L 1/2

You may receive an SMC-L 1/2 designation if any of the below situations are true for you.

You have:

- Had one foot and the other knee amputated, **or**
- Had one foot amputated, and have lost the use of the other knee, **or**
- Had one foot and one elbow amputated, **or**
- Had one foot amputated, and have lost the use of one elbow, **or**
- Had one knee and one hand amputated, **or**
- Had one knee amputated, and have lost the use of one hand

Or you have:

- Lost the use of one foot, and have had the other knee amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one foot, and have had one elbow amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one foot and one elbow, **or**
- Lost the use of one knee, and have had one hand amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one knee and one hand

Or you have:

- Blindness in one eye and total blindness in the other eye with only the ability to perceive light, **or**
- Blindness in both eyes, and have lost the use of one foot (rated as less than 50% disabling)

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SMC-M

You may receive an SMC-M designation if any of the below situations are true for you.

You have:

- Had one knee amputated, and have had one leg amputated so close to the hip that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Had one knee amputated, and have had one arm amputated so close to the shoulder that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Had one elbow amputated, and have had one leg amputated so close to the hip that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Had one hand and one elbow amputated, **or**
- Had one hand amputated, and have lost the use of one elbow

Or you have:

- Lost the use of one knee, and have had one leg amputated so close to the hip that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Lost the use of one knee, and have had one arm amputated so close to the shoulder that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Lost the use of one elbow, and have had one leg amputated so close to the hip that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Lost of use of one hand, and have had one elbow amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one hand and of one elbow

Or you have total blindness with only the ability to perceive light:

- In one eye, and have physically lost the other eye, **or**
- In one eye, and have total blindness without the ability to perceive light in the other eye, **or**
- In both eyes, and have lost the use of one foot (rated as less than 50% disabling)

Or you have blindness in one eye, and you have:

- Physically lost the other eye, and have total deafness in one ear, **or**
- Total blindness without the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have total deafness in one ear, **or**
- Total blindness with only the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have deafness in both ears (rated as 30% or more disabling), **or**
- Total blindness with only the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have had one foot amputated, **or**
- Total blindness with only the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have lost the use of one foot (rated as 50% or more disabling), **or**
- Total blindness with only the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have had one hand amputated, **or**
- Total blindness with the only ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have lost the use of one hand

Or you have blindness in both eyes:

- And total deafness in one ear, **or**
- That requires you to have daily help with basic needs (like eating, bathing, and dressing), and have lost the use of one foot (rated as less than 50% disabling)

Or you have blindness in both eyes, and you have:

- Deafness in both (rated as 30% or more disabling), **or**
- Had one hand amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one hand, **or**
- Had one foot amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one foot (rated as 50% or more disabling)

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SMC-M 1/2

You may receive an SMC-M 1/2 designation if any of the below situations are true for you.

You have:

- Had one knee amputated, and have had one leg amputated so close to the hip that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Had one knee amputated, and have had one arm amputated so close to the shoulder that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Had one elbow amputated, and have had one leg amputated so close to the hip that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Had one hand and one elbow amputated, **or**
- Had one hand amputated, and have lost the use of one elbow

Or you have:

- Lost the use of one knee, and have had one leg amputated so close to the hip that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Lost the use of one knee, and have had one arm amputated so close to the shoulder that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Lost the use of one elbow, and have had one leg amputated so close to the hip that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Lost of use of one hand, and have had one elbow amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one hand and of one elbow

Or you have total blindness with only the ability to perceive light:

- In one eye, and have physically lost the other eye, **or**
- In one eye, and have total blindness without the ability to perceive light in the other eye, **or**
- In both eyes, and have lost the use of one foot (rated as less than 50% disabling)

Or you have blindness in one eye, and you have:

- Physically lost the other eye, and have total deafness in one ear, **or**
- Total blindness without the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have total deafness in one ear, **or**
- Total blindness with only the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have deafness in both ears (rated as 30% or more disabling), **or**
- Total blindness with only the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have had one foot amputated, **or**
- Total blindness with only the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have lost the use of one foot (rated as 50% or more disabling), **or**
- Total blindness with only the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have had one hand amputated, **or**
- Total blindness with the only ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have lost the use of one hand

Or you have blindness in both eyes:

- And total deafness in one ear, **or**
- That requires you to have daily help with basic needs (like eating, bathing, and dressing), and have lost the use of one foot (rated as less than 50% disabling)

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SMC-N

You may receive an SMC-N designation if any of the below situations are true for you.

You have:

- Had both elbows amputated, **or**
- Had both legs amputated so close to the hip that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Had one arm and one leg amputated so close to the shoulder and hip that you can't wear a prosthesis on either, **or**
- Had one hand amputated and one arm amputated so close to the shoulder that you can't wear a prosthesis

Or you have:

- Lost the use of both elbows, **or**
- Lost the use of one hand, and have had one arm amputated so close to the shoulder that you can't wear a prosthesis

Or you have:

- Physically lost both eyes, **or**
- Have total blindness without the ability to perceive light

Or you have total blindness with only the ability to perceive light in one eye, and you have:

- Physically lost the other eye, and have deafness in both ears (rated as 10% or 20% disabling), **or**
- Total blindness without the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have deafness in both ears (rated as 10% or 20% disabling), **or**
- Physically lost the other eye, and have lost the use of one foot (rated as less than 50% disabling), **or**
- Total blindness without the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have lost the use of one foot (rated as less than 50% disabling)

Or you have total blindness with only the ability to perceive light in both eyes, and you have:

- Deafness in both ears (rated as 30% or more disabling), **or**
- Had one hand amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one foot, **or**
- Lost the use of one hand, **or**
- Had one foot amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one foot (rated as 50% or more disabling)

Or you have blindness in one eye, and you have:

- Physically lost the other eye, and have deafness in both ears (rated as 30% or more disabling), **or**
- Total blindness without the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and have deafness in both ears (rated as 30% or more disabling)

Or you have blindness in both eyes that requires you to have daily help with basic needs (like dressing, eating, or bathing), and you have:

- Deafness in both ears (rated as 30% or more disabling), **or**
- Had one hand amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one hand, **or**
- Had one foot amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one foot (rated as 50% disabling)

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SMC-N 1/2

You may receive an SMC-N 1/2 designation if any of the below situations are true for you.

You have:

- Had one elbow amputated, and have had one arm amputated so close to the shoulder that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Lost the use of one elbow, and have had one arm amputated so close to the shoulder that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Physically lost both eyes, and have lost the use of one foot (rated as less than 50% disabling), **or**
- Total blindness without the ability to see light, and have lost the use of one foot (rated as less than 50%)

Or you have total blindness with only the ability to perceive light in one eye, have physically lost the other eye, and you have:

- Deafness in both ears (rated as 30% or more disabling), **or**
- Had one foot amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one foot (rated as 50% or more disabling), **or**
- Had one hand amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one hand

Or you have total blindness with only the ability to perceive light in one eye and total blindness without the ability to perceive light in the other eye, and you have:

- Deafness in both ears (rated as 30% or more disabling), **or**
- Had one foot amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one foot (rated as 50% or more disabling), **or**
- Had one hand amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one hand

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SMC-O

You may receive an SMC-O designation if any of the below situations are true for you..

You have:

- Had both arms amputated so close to the shoulder that you can't wear a prosthesis, **or**
- Complete paralysis of both legs that's resulted in being unable to control your bladder or bowels

Or you have:

- Hearing loss in both ears (with at least one ear's deafness caused by military service) that's rated as 60% or more disabling, and you have blindness in both eyes, **or**
- Hearing loss in both ears (with at least one ear's deafness caused by military service) that's rated as 40% or more disabling, and you have blindness in both eyes with only the ability to perceive light, **or**
- Total blindness in one ear as well as blindness in both eyes with only the ability to perceive light

Or you have total blindness without the ability to see light, and you have:

- Deafness in both ears (rated as 30% or more disabling), **or**
- Had one foot amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one foot (rated as 50% or more disabling), **or**
- Had one hand amputated, **or**
- Lost the use of one hand

Or you have physically lost both eyes, and you have:

- Deafness in both ears (rated as 30% or more disabling), or
- Had one foot amputated, or
- Lost the use of one foot (rated as 50% or more disabling), or
- Had one hand amputated, or
- Lost the use of one hand

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Need more help?

VA benefits hotline: [800-827-1000](tel:800-827-1000)

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