

disability claim

When you file a disability claim, we review all available evidence (supporting documents) to determine if you qualify for benefits. Find out what evidence we'll need—and what your options are for gathering documents to support your claim.

What evidence does VA need to support my disability claim?

We need evidence that shows that both of these descriptions are true:

- You have a current physical or mental disability (damage to your body or mind that makes you less able—or totally unable—to do everyday tasks, including meaningful work), **and**
- An event, injury, or illness happened while you were serving in the military to cause this disability

What documents will I need to support my claim?

We require certain documents to support all claims for disability benefits.

You'll need to submit or give us permission to gather these:

- Your DD214 or other separation documents
- Your service treatment records
- Any medical evidence related to your illness or injury (like doctor's reports, X-

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Note: In 1973, a fire at the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis destroyed records held for Veterans who were discharged from the Army and Air Force during certain periods of time. If your records were destroyed in this fire, you can get help reconstructing them.

[Find out how to reconstruct your records \(https://www.va.gov/records/get-military-service-records/reconstruct-records\)](https://www.va.gov/records/get-military-service-records/reconstruct-records)

If you're a service member filing a claim through the BDD program

If you're filing a claim through the Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) program, you must submit a Separation Health Assessment - Part A Self-Assessment form. If you already filed a claim but didn't submit this form yet, you can upload the form now.

[Find out how to upload your completed self-assessment form \(https://www.va.gov/resources/separation-health-assessment-for-service-members\)](https://www.va.gov/resources/separation-health-assessment-for-service-members)

What should the evidence show to support my disability claim?

This depends on the type of claim and on the issue or benefit you're filing a claim for. Find your claim type here to learn what evidence you'll need.

Notice to Veterans and service members of evidence needed: We're required by law to tell you what evidence you'll need to provide to support your disability claim.

The information on this page is a summary of evidence requirements (called "section 5103 notice"). You can review the official evidence requirements in VA Form 21-526EZ.

[Get VA Form 21-526EZ to download \(https://www.va.gov/find-forms/about-form-21-526ez\)](https://www.va.gov/find-forms/about-form-21-526ez)

Type of claim you're filing

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Original claim—the first claim you file for disability benefits

Increased claim—a claim for more compensation for a disability that we’ve already determined to be service connected and that’s gotten worse

New claim—a claim for added benefits or other benefit requests related to an existing service-connected disability

Secondary service-connected claim—a claim for a new disability that’s linked to a service-connected disability you already have

Supplemental claim—a claim to provide new evidence for a disability claim we denied in the past

Additional evidence for certain issues

Find out what evidence you can submit for a claim related to military sexual trauma (MST).

[Learn about evidence to support an MST claim](#)

<https://www.va.gov/resources/military-sexual-trauma-and-disability-compensation#evidence-well-need-for-your-cl>

Find out what additional evidence you’ll need if you’re filing a claim for any of these other issues:

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Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

Individual Unemployability

Temporary 100% disability rating

Presumptive condition

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VA Title 38 U.S.C. 1151 claims

Seriously disabled child

Additional evidence for certain benefits

Find out what additional evidence you'll need if you're filing a claim for any of these benefits:

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Aid and Attendance benefits and Housebound allowance

Automobile allowance and adaptive equipment

Specially Adapted Housing or Special Home Adaptation

Explore your options for gathering evidence

[Fully developed disability claims](https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/evidence-needed/fully-developed-claims)

[\(https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/evidence-needed/fully-developed-claims\)](https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/evidence-needed/fully-developed-claims)

With the Fully Developed Claims program, you send in all the evidence you have—or can easily get—when you file your claim. Find out how you can use this program to get a faster decision on your disability benefits claim.

[Standard disability claims](https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/evidence-needed/standard-claims)

[\(https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/evidence-needed/standard-claims\)](https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/evidence-needed/standard-claims)

With standard claims, we take more responsibility for gathering the evidence we need to make a decision on your claim. Find out how to file a standard disability claim.

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