

Apply for a Disability Rating



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

ChooseVA

This guide will help you submit a disability claim and obtain a disability rating, which is based on how much your service-connected disability impacts your capacity to earn a living. This rating is between 0%–100%. Your rating may give you access to certain VA benefits, such as compensation and on-going health care.

A checklist to help you file your disability claim and get your disability rating:

GET HELP

You can receive free help with preparing your claim from a VA accredited representative or an employee at a local VA Office. Refer to back for more information.

WHERE CAN I FIND MY DISCHARGE PAPERS?

Visit eBenefits.va.gov to request a copy of your DD214 records.

WHAT ARE DBQS?

DBQs are **filled out by your private doctor to provide medical evidence to support your claim**. They may allow VA to grant your claim without the need for a medical examination

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

The length of time it takes to process a claim depends on:

- The type of claim filed
- How many injuries/disabilities you claimed
- How long it takes for VA to gather supporting evidence
- How many claims were in line when yours was filed

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PREPARATION

- ☐ Learn about different **types of claims** you can file (refer to back)
- ☐ **Collect the documents** necessary to file a claim:
 - ☐ **Discharge papers** (DD214 member-4 or equivalent)
 - ☐ **Military medical records**
 - ☐ **VA medical records/hospital reports** related to your disability
 - ☐ **Private medical records/hospital reports** related to your disability
- ☐ Submit **Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs)** if desired

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APPLICATION

- ☐ Apply by submitting all documents in **one** of these ways:
 - Submit a claim **online** using eBenefits: eBenefits.va.gov
 - Complete a claim form **in person** at a VA Regional Office

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REVIEW AND DECISION

- ☐ Visit us **online** at eBenefits.va.gov or VA.gov to **track the status** of your claim
- ☐ **Provide more information/documentation** if requested by VA
- ☐ Attend VA medical examination(s) if requested by VA

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NEXT STEPS

If approved, take steps to access the benefits you are eligible for:

- ☐ **Review your award letter** to understand your rating
- ☐ **Review the VA benefits handbook** that is sent to you