Form526 Validation Rules

The form526 API validates JSON requests from VA.gov before claims are submitted to VBMS. The API has a separate endpoint that does validation without submitting the claim. Both endpoints use the same logic. However, WARN messages only appear in the validation endpoint and not during submit. There are also errors at VBMS that EVSS cannot predict. This document describes all the EVSS validation rules and the common VBMS issues that cause claims to fail.

**EVSS Field Validation Rules**

1. VAAFI header requirements
   1. va\_eauth\_birlsfilenumber
      1. Cannot be Null
      2. Must have 8 or 9 digits
   2. va\_eauth\_firstName
      1. Cannot be Null
      2. Must have <= 30 characters, no quotes
   3. va\_eauth\_middleName
      1. Must have <= 20 characters, no quotes
   4. va\_eauth\_lastName
      1. Cannot be Null
      2. Must have <= 30 characters, no quotes
   5. va\_eauth\_suffix
      1. Must have <= 3 characters
   6. va\_eauth\_pnid
      1. Cannot be Null
   7. va\_eauth\_pnid
      1. Must have 9 digits
   8. va\_eauth\_birthdate
      1. Cannot be Null
   9. va\_eauth\_pid
      1. Cannot be Null
   10. va\_eauth\_dodedipnid
       1. Cannot be Null
   11. va\_eauth\_gender
       1. Must be MALE, FEMALE, or UNKNOWN
2. JSON field requirements
   1. Required fields, max/min length, and the regex validation rules are available in the Swagger Model.
   2. See <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/wss-form526-services-web-v2/swagger-ui/index.html?url=https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/wss-form526-services-web-v2/rest/swagger.yaml>

**EVSS Business Rules for JSON elements in form526 request**

**Errors that prevent submission**

1. claimDate
   1. Not required and currently not used by VA.gov. However, if this field is in the JSON request for a Veteran, it must be equal or prior to the current date.
   2. Error msg: Claim Date must be equal to or earlier than today's date
2. claimantCertification
   1. Must be “true”
      1. Error msg: The claimant did not accept the certification
3. applicationExpirationDate
   1. Must be after the current date
      1. Error msg: The submitted application has already expired
4. serviceInformation
   1. separationLocationCode
      1. Required if there is an activeDutyEndDate in servicePeriods that is in the future.
         1. Error msg: The separation location code for the claimant with a future released from active duty date is missing
      2. Must match an intake site code in the wss-referencedata-services
         1. Error msg: The separation location code for the claimant is not a valid value
      3. BGS returned an error when the referencedata service tried to get the list of intake sites.
         1. Error msg: The Reference Data Service was unable to verify the separation location code for the claimant returned an error response
      4. The referencedata service could not contact BGS to get the list of intake sites.
         1. Error msg: The Reference Data Service is unavailable to verify the separation location code for the claimant
   2. servicePeriods
      1. JSON must contain the servicePeriods element.
         1. Error msg: size must be between 1 and 100
      2. Start and end dates must be in chronological order.
         1. Error msg: The activeDutyBeginDate must be before the activeDutyEndDate
      3. A service period is on or after September 11, 2001
         1. **Not used**: This rule is not currently active in the form526 API.
      4. All activeDutyEndDate cannot be more than 180 days in the future.
         1. Error msg: Service members cannot submit a claim until they are within 180 days of their separation date
         2. **New for July 2021**: EVSS does not check for any RAD date exceeding 180-days if there is a RAD date in the past.
      5. An activeDutyEndDate can occur in less than 90 days.
         1. **Not used**: This rule stopped being used when BDD was implemented because active duty service members can submit BDD-excluded claims.
      6. activeDutyBeginDate cannot occur before age 13
         1. Error msg: The active duty start date cannot be prior to the claimants 13th birthday
         2. **Proposed change in 2021:** Is the VA trying to catch people who lied about their age when they enlisted? Why not change the age limit in the API to match federal law?
      7. serviceBranch must match one of the names in the BGS findBranchOfServiceTypes web service.
         1. Error msg: The branch of service for the claimant's period of service is not a valid value
      8. BGS returned an error when the referencedata service tried to get the list of service branches.
         1. Error msg: The Reference Data Service was unable to verify the branch of service for the claimant returned an error response
      9. The referencedata service could not contact BGS to get the list of service branches.
         1. Error msg: The Reference Data Service is unavailable to verify the branch of service for the claimant
   3. reservesNationalGuardService
      1. Requires obligationTermOfServiceFromDate and obligationTermOfServiceToDate
         1. Error msg: Obligation dates missing
      2. title10Activation requires anticipatedSeparationDate
         1. Error msg: AnticipatedSeparationDate missing
      3. title10Activation requires title10ActivationDate that is after the earliest activeDutyEndDate and on or before the current date
         1. Error msg: The Title 10 Activation Date for a claimant currently activated in the Reserves or National Guard is a future date
   4. alternateNames
      1. All names in this list must be unique
         1. Error msg: Names that you served under cannot be entered more than once
   5. confinements
      1. Each confinement period must fall within one of the servicePeriod dates
         1. Error msg: Your period of confinement must be within a single period of service
      2. All confinementBeginDates must be after the earliest servicePeriod activeDutyBeginDate
         1. Error msg: The confinement start date is too far in the past
      3. If there are more than 2 confinements, they can’t overlap
         1. Error msg: Begin and end dates for a period of confinement overlap with the dates for another period of confinement
5. veteran
   1. homelessness
      1. otherLivingSituation
         1. When "OTHER" is selected for Living Situation, a value needs to be specified.
      2. currentlyHomeless or homelessnessRisk
         1. The request may contain either a response to being "Currently Homeless" or a response for being "At Risk of Becoming Homeless" but not both
      3. pointOfContact must be null if currentlyHomeless and homelessnessRisk are null
         1. Error msg: Point of Contact information can only be provided if the user is currently homeless or at the risk of becoming homeless
   2. changeOfAddress
      1. endingDate is required if addressChangeType is TEMPORARY
         1. Error msg: The Ending Date must be provided for a temporary address
      2. endingDate must be null if addressChangeType is PERMANENT
         1. Error msg: The Ending Date cannot be provided for a permanent address
      3. beginningDate must be in the future if addressChangeType is TEMPORARY
         1. Error msg: The Beginning Date can not be in the past for a temporary address
   3. currentMailingAddress
      1. JSON must contain the currentMailingAddress element.
         1. Error msg: may not be nul
      2. city, state and zipCode are required if type=DOMESTIC
         1. Error Msg: City, state and zipCode may not be null
      3. city and country are required if type=INTERNATIONAL
         1. Error msg: City and country may not be null
      4. MilitaryStateCode, militaryPostOfficeTypeCode and zipFirstFive if type=MILITARY
         1. Error msg: MilitaryStateCode, militaryPostOfficeTypeCode and zipFirstFive may not be null
      5. internationalPostalCode is required if type=INTERNATIONAL
         1. Error msg: International Postal Code may not be null
      6. country must be in the list provided by the referenceDataService
         1. Error msg: The mailing address country for the claimant is not a valid value
      7. BGS returned an error when the referencedata service tried to get the list of countries.
         1. Error msg: The Reference Data Service was unable to verify the mailing address country for the claimant returned an error response
      8. The referencedata service could not contact BGS to get the list of intake sites.
         1. Error msg: The Reference Data Service is unavailable to verify the mailing address country for the claimant
   4. changeOfAddress - Not required, but the following rules apply if changeOfAddress is included in request
      1. city, state and zipCode are required if type=DOMESTIC
         1. Error Msg: City, state and zipCode may not be null
      2. city and country are required if type=INTERNATIONAL
         1. Error msg: City and country may not be null
      3. MilitaryStateCode, militaryPostOfficeTypeCode and zipFirstFive if type=MILITARY
         1. Error msg: MilitaryStateCode, militaryPostOfficeTypeCode and zipFirstFive may not be null
      4. internationalPostalCode is required if type=INTERNATIONAL
         1. Error msg: International Postal Code may not be null
      5. country must be in the list provided by the referenceDataService
         1. Error msg: The change of address country for the claimant is not a valid value
      6. BGS returned an error when the referencedata service tried to get the list of countries.
         1. Error msg: The Reference Data Service was unable to verify the change of address country for the claimant returned an error response
      7. The referencedata service could not contact BGS to get the list of intake sites.
         1. Error msg: The Reference Data Service is unavailable to verify the change of address country for the claimant
6. militaryRetiredPay
   1. receiving and willReceiveInfuture cannot have the same value if they are not null
   2. Error msg: For "Currently receiving military retired pay" and "Will receive military retired pay in the future" fields, the only valid combinations are "True/False" or "False/True"
7. disabilities
   1. The diagnosticCode is required if disabilityActionType is INCREASE.
      1. Error msg: The diagnostic code for a disability being claimed for increase is missing
   2. The ratedDisabilityId is required if disabilityActionType is INCREASE.
      1. Error msg: The identifier for a rated disability being claimed for increase is missing
   3. The diagnosticCode is required if disabilityActionType is NONE and there are secondary disabilities included with the primary.
      1. Error msg: The diagnostic code for the existing rated disability is missing. The diagnostic code is required to create a supplemental Secondary disability
   4. The diagnosticCode must match an existing rated disability in corporate if disabilityActionType is INCREASE.
      1. Error msg: The rated disability being claimed for increase was not found for Disability
   5. The diagnosticCode must match an existing rated disability in corporate if disabilityActionType is NONE and there are secondary disabilities included with the primary.
      1. Error msg: An attempt was made to add a secondary disability to an existing rated Disability. The rated Disability could not be found
   6. BGS returned an error when the referencedata service tried to get the list of disabilities.
      1. Error msg: The Reference Data Service was unable to verify the classification code for the disability returned an error response
   7. The referencedata service could not contact BGS to get the list of disabilities.
      1. Error msg: The Reference Data Service is unavailable to verify the classification code for the disability
   8. BGS returned an error in the rating information service while getting the disabilities by filenumber
      1. Error msg: Error calling external service to load claimant's current disabilities during Validate
   9. classificationCode (if present) must match a value in the BGS referencedata list of disabilities.
      1. Error msg: The classification code for a claimants primary disability is not a valid value
   10. classificationCode (if present) must match the name in the BGS referencedata list of disabilities.
       1. Error msg: The classification code and name for a claimants primary disability do not match
   11. name must match regex pattern if classificationCode is missing for a disability with disabilityActionType=NEW
       1. Error msg: must match ([a-zA-Z0-9\\-'.,/\\(\\)]([a-zA-Z0-9\\-',. ])?)+$
   12. name cannot be over 255 characters if classificationCode is missing for a disability with disabilityActionType=NEW
       1. Error msg: must be between 1 and 255 characters
   13. disabilityActionType cannot be REOPEN
       1. Error msg: The disability Action Type of "REOPEN" is not currently supported. REOPEN will be supported in a future release
   14. disabilityActionType cannot be SECONDARY for a primary
       1. Error msg: Primary Disabilities cannot have an Action Type of "SECONDARY"
   15. approximateBeginDate (if present) must have month between 1-12
       1. Error msg: The month is not a valid value
   16. approximateBeginDate (if present) doesn’t need to have the day but it must be valid if present.
       1. Error msg: The day is not a valid value
   17. approximateBeginDate (if present) cannot have a day and year without a month.
       1. Error msg: Day and Year is not a valid combination. Accepted combinations are: Year/Month/Day, Year/Month, Or Year
   18. approximateBeginDate (if present) must be in the past
       1. Error msg: The ApproximateBeginDate in primary disability must be in the past
   19. specialIssues must be null if disabilityActionType=REOPEN
       1. Error msg: A Special Issue cannot be added to a primary disability after the disability has been rated
   20. specialIssues cannot contain “HEPC” unless primary disability name is Hepatitis.
       1. Error msg: A Special Issue of "Hepatitis" can only exist for the Disability "Hepatitis"
   21. specialIssues cannot be POW unless the JSON request also has a valid confinements element.
       1. Error msg: A prisoner of war must have at least one period of confinement record
   22. secondaryDisabilities – optional but the following rules apply if present.
       1. classificationCode (if present) must be valid if disabilityActionType=SECONDARY
          1. Error msg: The classification code for a claimants secondary disability is not a valid value
       2. classificationCode (if present) must match the name if disabilityActionType=SECONDARY
          1. Error msg: The classification code and name for a claimants secondary disability do not match
       3. name must match regex pattern if classificationCode is missing for a SECONDARY disability.
          1. Error msg: must match ([a-zA-Z0-9\\-'.,/\\(\\)]([a-zA-Z0-9\\-',. ])?)+$
       4. secondaryDisabilities required if primary has disabilityActionType=NONE
          1. Error msg: A Primary Disability with an action type of "NONE" must have at least one Secondary disability
       5. name cannot be over 255 characters if classificationCode is missing for a secondary disability.
          1. Error msg: must be between 1 and 255 characters
       6. disabilityActionType must be SECONDARY
          1. Error msg: Secondary Disabilities can only have an Action Type of "SECONDARY"
       7. specialIssues must be null
          1. Error msg: A Special Issue cannot be added to a secondary disability
       8. approximateBeginDate – date format must obey the same rules as primary disability date. This field has the same error messages too, except if the date is not in the past.
          1. Error msg: The ApproximateBeginDate in secondary disability must be in the past
8. treatments
   1. startDate and endDate must be a valid approximate date. A day and year without a month are not acceptable.
      1. Error msg: Day and Year is not a valid combination. Accepted combinations are: Year/Month/Day, Year/Month, Or Year
   2. startDate cannot be null
      1. Error msg: may not be null
         1. This validation rule will be removed when the 21-526EZ PDF for 2019 is released because it has a “Don’t have date” checkbox.
   3. startDate must be after earliest period of service
      1. Error msg: The start date for a treatment record cannot be prior to the earliest period of service
   4. startDate must be a valid approximate date. A day and year without a month are not acceptable.
      1. Error msg: Day and Year is not a valid combination. Accepted combinations are: Year/Month/Day, Year/Month, Or Year
   5. endDate (if provided) must be after the start date
      1. Error msg: The startDate must be before the endDate
         1. End date is not used on the 2019 version of 21-526EZ and should be removed from the VA.gov questionnaire when this PDF is implemented in the EVSS API.
   6. endDate (if provided) must be a valid approximate date. A day and year without a month are not acceptable.
      1. Error msg: Day and Year is not a valid combination. Accepted combinations are: Year/Month/Day, Year/Month, Or Year
   7. treatedDisabilityNames
      1. The value must match one of the disabilities
         1. Error msg: The disability name [insert\_name\_here] does not match any disability name from your list of disabilities
9. directDeposit
   1. Not required but if submitted must include accountType, accountNumber, and routingNumber.
      1. Error msg: may not be null
10. specialCircumstances must not be in the JSON request.
    1. Error msg: Special Circumstances are not currently supported in this release
11. servicePay – optional
    1. receivedDate must be a valid approximate date in the past. A day and year without a month are not acceptable.
       1. Error msg: Day and Year is not a valid combination. Accepted combinations are: Year/Month/Day, Year/Month, Or Year
       2. Error msg: The receivedDate must be in the past
    2. futurePayExplanation in militaryRetiredPay cannot be null if willReceiveInfuture=true.
       1. Error msg: may not be null
    3. payment in militaryRetiredPay and separationPay must be between 0 and 1,000,000.
       1. Error msg: Invalid value: Must be greater than or equal to 0 and less than or equal to 1000000.00

**Warnings that do not prevent submission**

1. disabilities
   1. The same name must appear only once in the list of disabilities.
      1. Warn msg: Claimant has added a duplicate disability

*ADD FOR: Confinement, Change of Address, Service Period, and Treatments*

*The {startDate} must be before the {endDate}*

*The activeDutyBeginDate must be before the activeDutyEndDate*

**VBMS validation rules not implemented by EVSS**

*These errors are not caught by EVSS validation rules but will trigger an error when VBMS does not accept the claim.*

1. Invalid first or last name
   1. Cannot contain special characters. An error occurs if the claimant’s name contains a quote, e.g. O’Reilly. EVSS obtains these names from the VAAFI headers in the API request which cannot be changed by EVSS.
      1. EVSS API and VBMS message: Claim not established. System error with BGS.
      2. VBMS exception: An error occurred while establishing the claim: Unable to establish claim: insertBenefitClaim: LastName has invalid character(s)
2. Bad EP code sent by EVSS.
   1. The PIFInUse error occurs when a previous claim with the same EP code has a status in BDN that’s not set to clear when it’s cleared in corp.
      1. VBMS exception: Claim could not be established. Contact the BDN team and have them run the WIPP process to delete Cancelled/Cleared PIFs.
   2. The “maximum number of EP codes have been reached” error occurs when the same claim has been submitted too many times.