Understanding Review Examinations

**WHAT ARE REVIEW EXAMINATIONS?**

Review examinations are requested by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to check the severity of your service-connected disability.

**WHY ARE REVIEW EXAMINATIONS REQUESTED?**

VA will request review exams when:
- We need to assess the severity of a disability, or
- Evidence indicates there has been an important and relevant (or “material”) change in a disability, or
- By law, we are required to conduct a periodic review.

VA will use this review exam, and any other relevant evidence, to assess the severity of your disability.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE VA REVIEW EXAM?**

A medical professional will conduct the VA review exams. Examiners and staff will not be able to answer specific questions about your benefits; their role is to assess your medical condition.

Note: You may be examined in-person, or you may be questioned by telephone if we decide an in-person exam is not necessary. Sometimes the VA examiner may be able to complete the exam report by reviewing your medical records without an in-person exam or call.

The time you will spend with the clinician varies from person to person based on your conditions.

The examiner may take various actions such as:
- Ask you questions.
- Perform a physical exam.
- Send you for X-rays or lab work.
- Observe your behavior.
- Review your file with you.

**WHAT IF THE SEVERITY OF MY DISABILITY HAS CHANGED?**

Based on a review of your disability, we will prepare a new decision and contact you by mail. One of three things will happen:
1. Your disability remains the same, or
2. Your disability has worsened and an increase in benefits may be appropriate, or
3. Your disability has improved and a reduction in benefits may be appropriate.

**WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON’T GO TO MY REVIEW EXAMINATION?**

If you miss your review exam, it may negatively affect your benefits. Please call us to reschedule if you cannot attend. If you do not attend your exam VA is required by law to propose a reduction or termination of your benefits.

**REMEMBER:** The examiner is only involved in performing the review exam. They do not make the rating decision. Only a VA regional office can answer questions regarding the review exam process.

For more information, visit [http://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/claimexam.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/claimexam.asp)