Your VA Claim Exam

KNOW WHAT'S NEXT

If you've filed a claim for disability compensation or pension benefits with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), you may receive a phone call or a letter asking you to come to a claim exam, also called a compensation and pension (C&P) exam. This exam is a normal part of the VA claim process and helps VA determine the claim decision. The exam may be completed by a VA examiner or a VA partner. Make sure you know what to expect before going to your exam by reviewing the tips below.

Helpful Tips

TIPS SHEET | MARCH 2016

TIP #1: It's important to attend your VA claim exam.

Missing your exam could cause VA to delay its decision on your claim or rate your claim "as-is" (i.e. only using the information that is in your file).

TIP #2: If you need to reschedule your exam, do it as early as possible.

Make sure you contact VA immediately to reschedule your exam if you have a conflict with your exam time. Unless it's an emergency, try not to reschedule on the day before or day of the exam.

TIP #3: Make sure VA has your current contact information.

Make sure both your nearest VA regional office and VA medical center have your current address, phone number, and email information. It is important your contact information is accurate in both places so they know how to contact you about your exam.

TIP #4: Call and confirm your exam with VA.

Call and confirm your exam time and location at the number provided to make sure you and VA have the correct appointment information.

TIP #5: Submit all your medical evidence with your claim application or to a VA regional office before you go to your exam.

You may bring medical records or evidence with you to your exam, but the examiner cannot submit any new information to be added to your claim file on your behalf. Make sure you submit all evidence and treatment records to a VA regional office before your exam so the examiner can have a complete picture of your health status.

TIP #6: Be prepared to attend multiple claim exams if you are claiming more than one disability.

If necessary, VA may request more than one claim exam if you submit a claim for several disabilities. VA will do its best to schedule multiple exams for the same day to limit your time spent.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/

Reach out to your local Veterans Service Organization

Call 1-800-827-1000, Option 7 for assistance

HELPFUL TIPS

TIP #7: Get there early.

Plan to give yourself time to get to your exam location and arrive about 15 minutes early. Examiners may not agree to perform your exam if you are late.

TIP #8: Remember, physical contact may not be required as part of your exam.

The VA claim exam is not a treatment exam; it's an exam that allows VA to review the disabilities you are claiming. Depending on the information included in your claim application, the examiner may only need to ask a few questions to complete the exam.

TIP #9: Be truthful and honest when you answer questions during your exam.

When the examiner asks you questions during your exam, be truthful and honest: don't exaggerate your symptoms or pain, but don't downplay them either. The examiner is looking to capture information on the disabilities you have claimed. This will help you get the most accurate rating possible.

TIP #10: Do not ask the examiner about the status of your claim during your exam. They don't know.

The examiner performing your exam is only responsible for conducting the exam and providing the results to a VA claims processor. They do not make any claim rating decisions and often do not know the full claims process. If you have questions about your claim, call 1-800-827-1000, contact your accredited representative, such as a Veterans Service Organization, or check eBenefits to find out more about your claim status.

TIP #11: Remember, the length of your exam does not affect your claim decision.

Exams can range anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour or more. Each exam is different depending on the Veteran and the information that has been included in the claim application. Don't forget, the examiner will spend time before and/or after your appointment reviewing your medical records. Even if your visit is short, your claim is still being carefully reviewed.

! Disabilities determined by VA to be related to your military service can lead to monthly non-taxable compensation, enrollment in the VA health care system, a 10-point hiring preference for federal employment and other important benefits. Ask your VA representative or Veterans Service Organization representative about Disability Compensation, Pension, Health Care, Caregiver Program, Career Services, Educational Assistance, Home Loan Guaranty, Insurance and/or Dependents and Survivors' Benefits.