## Section A. Examination Requests

#### Overview

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| In this Section | This section contains the following topics: |

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#### 1. General Information on Examination Requests

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| Introduction | This topic contains general information about examination requests, including* who may request an examination
* requesting examinations at a proper facility
* when an examination or opinion is necessary
* disability benefit questionnaires (DBQs)
* use and acceptance of DBQs for VA examinations and opinions
* reporting requirement for insufficient DBQs
* DBQs approved for public use
* requirements for acceptance of DBQs from treatment providers
* authenticity and validation of DBQs from treatment providers
* definition: general medical examination, specialty examination, and specialist examination
* when to send the claims folders with an examination request
* Veteran’s legal rights at an examination
* jurisdiction for examination requests for foreign resident beneficiaries, and
* handling field investigations and examination requests for foreign resident beneficiaries, and
* jurisdiction for examination requests for reserve component participants in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES).
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| Change Date | July 31, 2012 |

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| a. Who May Request an Examination | Veterans Service Representatives (VSRs) in the development activity have primary responsibility for requesting examinations of claimants. A Rating Veterans Service Representative (RVSR) or Decision Review Officer (DRO) may provide guidance as necessary and also have authority to request examinations. In addition, a Veterans Service Center Manager (VSCM) may authorize an examination in any case in which he/she believes it is warranted. |

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| b. Requesting Examinationsat a Proper Facility  | Request Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) examinations from ~~the~~* the VA Medical Center (VAMC) in whose primary service area the examinee resides
* another VAMC that is able to conduct the type of examination requested, or
* a designated contracted provider.

***Notes***: * Because not all VAMCs are able to conduct certain types of specialist examinations, it may be necessary to schedule the examination outside the primary service area in which the examinee resides.
* A listing of the counties and zip codes each VAMC serves *must* be maintained at each regional office (RO).

***References***: For more information on* specialist examinations, see
* M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.1.j
* M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.8
* jurisdiction for examinations of foreign resident beneficiaries, see M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.1.m, and
* jurisdiction for examinations of reserve component participants in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES), see M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.1.o.
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| c. When an Examination or Opinion is Necessary | ***References***: For more information on when a medical examination or opinion is necessary, see* M21-1MR, Part I, 1.C.7.b
* [38 CFR 3.326](http://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/docs/regs/38CFR/BOOKB/PART3/S3_326.DOC), and
* [38 CFR 3.159(c)(4)](http://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/docs/regs/38CFR/BOOKB/PART3/S3_159.DOC).
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1. General Information on Examination Requests, Continued

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| d. DBQs  | Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs) are documents used to* elicit medical information needed to make decisions on claims, and
* provide a standardized report format for medical examinations and opinions.

DBQs are designed for use by both the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and contract examiners as well as private providers. ***References***: For more information on * DBQs, see
* VA’s [Forms website](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/), and
* VA’s [DBQ switchboard](http://vbacodmoint1.vba.va.gov/bl/21/DBQ/default.asp).
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| e. Use and Acceptance of DBQs for VA Examinations and Opinions | Use of DBQs to record the results of VA examinations and medical opinions is required. However, if there is not a DBQ appropriate for a particular type of examination, or examination results or an opinion are submitted in another format, ***do not*** return the report as insufficient for rating purposes ***on that basis alone***. Whether or not examination results are reported using a DBQ, it is the responsibility of the decision maker to determine whether an examination includes the findings and conclusions necessary to make the needed regulatory determinations on the issues. See, [38 CFR 3.326](http://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/docs/regs/38CFR/BOOKB/PART3/S3_326.DOC); [38 CFR 4.2](http://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/docs/regs/38CFR/BOOKC/PART4/S4_2.DOC).***References***: For more information on* examination requirements and insufficient exams, see M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.D.18
* returning examination reports as insufficient for rating purposes in Compensation and Pension Records Interchange (CAPRI), see
* M21-1MR Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.12.f, and
* the [CAPRI User’s Guide](http://www.va.gov/vdl/application.asp?appid=133)
* evaluating evidence generally, see M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 5, and
* VA’s authority to develop for all evidence sufficient to render an informed decision, see [*Douglas v. Shinseki*](http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/21/Advisory/CAVCDAD.htm#bmd)*,* 23 Vet. App. 19, 24, 25-26 (2009).
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| f. Reporting Requirement for Insufficient DBQs | If a DBQ completed for a VA examination is insufficient for rating purposes, send a scan of the DBQ and an explanation for the finding of inadequacy via encrypted email to: VAVBAWAS/CO/DBQCOMMENTS. |

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| g. DBQs Approved for Public Use | Any DBQ listed by VA as approved by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for public use and assigned a VA Form number may be completed by a claimant’s treatment provider as a substitute for a VA examination. ***Important***: A DBQ not approved for public use that is completed by a treatment provider and submitted by, or on behalf of, a claimant is evidence and its admissibility and value must be analyzed as such. ***Do not summarily reject or return the DBQ***. Consider whether the report is fully adequate for rating purposes in lieu of a VA examination, or whether a VA examination is necessary. ***References***: For more information on * physician statements as acceptable evidence, see [38 CFR 3.326](http://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/docs/regs/38CFR/BOOKB/PART3/S3_326.DOC); M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 5.5.h
* DBQs approved for public use, see VA’s [DBQ Switchboard](http://vbacodmoint1.vba.va.gov/bl/21/DBQ/default.asp)
* requirements for acceptance of DBQs from treatment providers, see M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.1.h, and
* authenticity and validation of DBQs from treatment providers, see M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.1.i.
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| h. Requirements for Acceptance of DBQs from Treatment Providers | In order for a treatment provider to complete a DBQ on behalf of a claimant, the provider must have:* an active medical license, and
* expertise and qualifications appropriate to the type of examination at issue.

The physician must also sign and date the DBQ and provide his/her:* printed name
* medical license number
* address, and
* phone and fax numbers.

***Reference***: For more information on examiner qualifications, see M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.D.18. |

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| i. Authenticity and Validation of DBQs from Treatment Providers | In general DBQs from treatment providers should be taken at face value. However, all DBQs completed by treatment providers are subject to validation to confirm the authenticity of the information provided.DBQs released for public use inform the provider:* that the patient is applying for VA benefits and VA will consider the information provided in processing the claim
* that the physician’s signature constitutes a certification that the information provided on the form is accurate, complete and current, and
* that VA may request medical information, including additional examinations, if necessary to complete VA’s review of a claimants’ application.

Where a review of the DBQ raises questions of authenticity or improper alteration, an RVSR or DRO should determine whether additional development is necessary. This may include: * validation of results by the treatment provider,
* obtaining medical records, and/or
* a VA examination.

Informal contact with the Office of Inspector General or a fraud referral may also be appropriate. ***Reference***: For more information on handling fraudulent cases, see M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart vi, 5.A.  |

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| j. Definition: General Medical Examination, Specialty Examination, and Specialist Examination | Three terms are commonly used to distinguish basic categories of examinations for VBA benefits purposes:* general medical examination
* specialty examination, and
* specialist examination.

***General Medical Examination***The main purpose of a general medical examination is to screen all body systems and either* document normal findings, or
* identify disabilities that are found or suspected.

***Note***: The examiner must fully evaluate any disability that is found or suspected according to the applicable DBQ.***References***: For more information on* general medical examinations, see [M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.3](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt03_sp04_ch03_secA.xml#III.iv.3.A.3), and
* general medical examination DBQs, see VA’s [DBQ switchboard](http://vbacodmoint1.vba.va.gov/bl/21/DBQ/default.asp).

***Specialty Examination***A specialty examination focuses on the disabilities that are specifically at issue in the Veteran’s claim. For example, if a Veteran claims that service-connected hypertension has worsened, an examination using the hypertension DBQ should be requested. ***Notes***:* Specialty examinations generally do not address disorders that are not at issue in the claim, even if the disorders are found or suspected during the examination.
* Specialty examinations may be (and usually are) performed by non-specialist clinicians, but in unusual cases, or as requested by a Board of Veterans’ Appeals (BVA) remand, it may be necessary for the specialty examination to be performed by a specialist.
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| j. Definition: General Medical Examination, Specialty Examination, and Specialist Examination (continued) | ***Specialist Examination***A specialist examination is any examination that is conducted by a clinician who specializes in a particular field. Notes:* All vision, hearing, dental, and psychiatric examinations *must* be conducted by a specialist. In unusual cases, or as requested by a BVA remand, it may be necessary to request a specialist examination for other types of disabilities.
* When requesting a mental disorders examination, specify that if possible, the Veteran’s treating mental health professional should not perform the examination.

***Reference***: For more information on specialist examinations, see M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.8. |

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| k. When to Send the Claims Folder With an Examination Request | Send the claims folder to VA examining facilities in connection with the examination request when review of the claims folder material is necessary for the examiner’s findings and conclusions to be adequately informed.In general the claims folder will be necessary and should be sent for the examiner’s review in any case involving* request for a mental disorders examination
* a traumatic brain injury
* service connection under [38 CFR 3.317](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/regs/38cfr/bookb/part3/s3_317.doc)
* initial examination of former prisoners of war (FPOWs)
* a formal medical opinion, or
* a BVA remand.

***References***: For more information on* requesting medical opinions, see [M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.9](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt03_sp04_ch03_secA.xml#III.iv.3.A.9)
* handling examinations in claims for service connection for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), see [M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 4.H.31](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt03_sp04_ch04_secH.xml#III.iv.4.D.31)
* requesting examinations in claims for service connection under [38 CFR 3.317](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/regs/38cfr/bookb/part3/s3_317.doc), see M21-1MR, Part IV, Subpart ii, 1.E.19.f, and
* ordering initial FPOW protocol examinations, see M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.6.d
* sending the claims folder in connection with a VA examination or opinion and informed findings/conclusions, see [VAOPGCPREC 20-95](http://www.va.gov/ogc/docs/1995/Prc20-95.doc).
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| l. Veteran’s Legal Rights at an Examination | A Veteran has no legal right to* be accompanied by counsel during an examination, or
* record an examination.
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| m. Jurisdiction for Examination Requests for Foreign Resident Beneficiaries | The Pittsburgh RO handles requests for field and medical examinations to be performed by the Department of State for foreign beneficiaries except for those handled by the* White River Junction VAM&ROC (Canada), and
* Houston RO (Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean).
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| n. Handling Field Investigations and Examination Requests for Foreign Resident Beneficiaries | Use the table below for information on how to handle field investigations and medical examination requests for foreign beneficiaries.***Reference***: For more information on the appropriate RO to which requests must be sent, see* M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.1.m, and
* [M21-1MR, Part XI, 2.B.5](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt11_ch02_secB.xml#XI.2.B.5).
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| If requesting a … | Then send the request to the … |
| field investigation | fiduciary and field examination unit of the RO having jurisdiction over the area where development is required. |
| medical examination on a foreign beneficiary | the Houston, White River Junction, or Pittsburgh RO by submitting the request on *VA Form 21-2507,* *Request for Physical Examination*.***Note***: Upon receipt of the *VA Form 21-2507,* the RO * mails a copy of the document to the U.S. embassy in the country where the beneficiary resides, and
* electronically loads the document into the VHA shared drive, “C&P 2507.”

***Reference***: For more information on *VA Form 21-2507*, see [M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.13](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt03_sp04_ch03_secA.xml#III.iv.3.A.13). |

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| o. Jurisdiction for Examination Requests for Reserve Component Participants in IDES | Reserve Component participants in Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) should be referred for a VA examination* at a VHA facility able to complete the requested exam(s), and
* close to the service member’s location

Use the following steps to identify the closest facility:

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| Step | Action |
| 1 | Find the VHA exam facility closest to the claimant’s current address by using the [VA Facility Locator by Zip Code](http://www2.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp?isFlash=1) tool.* Select *Hospitals* as the facility.
* Specify *Within 50 Miles.*
* Enter the claimant’s zip code.
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| 2 | CAPRI will list the clinics under the hospital’s jurisdiction. * Ensure that the closest facility to the claimant’s current address can perform all needed examinations.
* If it cannot, select the next closest facility.
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Do not request an examination if none of the identified facilities is capable of performing all required examinations. Notify the IDES Team with an encrypted email to: VAVBAWAS/CO/DES.  ***Important***: Examinations for geographically dispersed Reserve Component IDES participants may not be scheduled with VBA-contracted examination providers. ***References***: For more information on* Entering a new patient in CAPRI and other CAPRI functionality, see the
* [CAPRI User’s Guide](http://www.va.gov/vdl/application.asp?appid=133)
* Compensation Service [Business Management Staff CAPRI page](http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/21/Systems/capamie.htm), and
* IDES, see the [IDES Implementation Guide](http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/21/products/docs/DESImplement.doc).
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#### 2. General Information on Social Surveys

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| Introduction | This topic contains general information about social surveys, including* description of a social survey
* when social surveys can be used to evaluate social and industrial impairment
* when social surveys should be used to evaluate physical or mental disability
* who conducts a social survey
* considerations when requesting a social survey, and
* returning social surveys for clarification.
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| Change Date | July 31, 2012 |

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| a. Description of a Social Survey | A social survey is an interview with the Veteran to assess the impact of disability on the capacity to interact with others and function in an industrial setting. This type of information may be used in conjunction with objective clinical findings when, for example, evaluating psychiatric disabilities, examining FPOWs, or considering individual unemployability (IU).  |

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| b. When Social Surveys Can be Used to Evaluate Social and Industrial Impairment | A social survey is an acceptable type of evaluation of social or industrial impairment if * the rating issue pertains to the evaluation of disability, and
* a VA examination has established the diagnosis.

***Reference***: For information on social surveys for FPOWs, see [M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.7](http://10.220.1.4/bl/21/M21-1MR/index.asp?id=pt03_sp04_ch03_secA.xml#III.iv.3.A.7). |

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| c. When Social Surveys Should Be Used to Evaluate Physical or Mental Disability | When a clinical examination alone would not provide sufficient information to assess the impact of physical and/or mental disability on the Veteran’s capacity to interact with others and function in an industrial setting, request a social survey. A social survey may be especially useful in cases concerning Veterans with* psychiatric illness
* arrested tuberculosis
* loss of limbs, sight, or hearing
* physical disfigurement resulting in feelings of inferiority, or
* epilepsy.

***Important***: Do not request a social survey in a case involving epilepsy without first obtaining the consent of the claimant. |

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| d. Who Conducts a Social Survey | Social workers are responsible for conducting comprehensive social surveys for medical and rating purposes. |

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| e. Considerations When Requesting a Social Survey | A DBQ does not exist for social surveys. Include ample information on the Automated Medical Information Exchange (AMIE)/CAPRI examination request or *VA Form 21-2507* concerning the* purpose of the examination, and
* evidence required for rating purposes to assist the social worker conducting the survey.
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| f. Returning Social Surveys for Clarification | If the rating activity determines that the social survey report is inadequate for rating purposes, it must return the report for clarification. |

#### 3. General Medical Examinations

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| Introduction | This topic contains information about general medical examinations, including* when to request a general medical examination
* when a general medical examination is not necessary
* conducting a general medical examination, and
* citing medical conditions to be examined.
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| Change Date | July 31, 2012 |

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| a. When to Request a General Medical Examination | A general medical examination containing a full report of complaints and functional impairments is the preferred type of examination in cases concerning original compensation claims (if received within one year of discharge).It may also be appropriate to request a general medical examination to obtain evidence in claims for IU, service connection under [38 CFR 3.317](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/regs/38cfr/bookb/part3/s3_317.doc), or pension.***Important***: * A well-performed general medical examination is usually of greater value than a number of specialist examinations that are not correlated.
* When requesting a general medical examination to evaluate an original compensation claim received within one year of discharge, do not specify that the examiner also complete specialty examinations for each claimed disability. However, consider whether specialist examinations are required by virtue of the specific claims. This policy applies to examinations requested from VHA as well as from private providers under VA contract.

***References***: For more information on specialist examinations, see* M21-1 Part III, subpart iv, 3.A.1.j, and
* M21-1, Part III, subpart iv, 3.A.8.
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| b. When a General Medical Examination is Not Necessary | It is ordinarily not necessary to request a general medical examination if an original claim for compensation is being rated many years after separation from service.***Exception***: in claims for IU, service connection under [38 CFR 3.317](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/regs/38cfr/bookb/part3/s3_317.doc), or pension filed more than one year after service, a general medical examination may be appropriate. General Medical DBQs exist for compensation, pension, and Gulf War claims.  |

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| c. Conducting a General Medical Examination | When the medical examiner conducts the examination, he/she should confirm the existence of and evaluate* all disabilities listed on the examination request form, and
* any other disabilities the Veteran identifies during the examination.

***Reference***: For more information on DBQs used for general medical examinations, see VA’s [DBQ switchboard](http://vbacodmoint1.vba.va.gov/bl/21/DBQ/default.asp). |

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| d. Citing Medical Conditions to Be Examined | The examination request for a general medical examination should clearly cite the conditions or particular diagnoses that require attention. |

#### 4. Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) Examinations

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| Introduction | This topic contains information about BDD examinations, including* who is eligible for the BDD examination, and
* what the BDD examination covers.
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| a. Who Is Eligible for the BDD Examination | The Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) examination program is available at specifically designated outprocessing sites to service members with no more than 180 days remaining until discharge. ***Exception***: The following are currently precluded from participation in the program:* those with Gulf War undiagnosed illness or Gulf War environmental hazard issues, or
* complex rating issues requiring extensive development.
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| b. What the BDD Examination Covers | At a BDD examination, the claimant is provided a general medical examination, any specialty exams deemed necessary, and full lab analyses, using VA’s examination protocols. |

#### 5. BDD Examinations for Pregnant Servicewomen

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| Introduction | This topic contains information about BDD examinations for pregnant servicewomen, including* general information on BDD examinations for pregnant servicewomen
* ancillary conditions of pregnancy
* tests not recommended for pregnant servicewomen
* how pregnancy affects participation in the BDD program
* options for processing BDD claims for pregnant servicewomen
* assisting and providing information to pregnant servicewomen
* providing information to the claimant, and
* the process when all or part of the case is rated at discharge.
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| Change Date | December 29, 2007 |

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| a. General Information on BDD Examinations for Pregnant Servicewomen | Many pregnant servicewomen claim conditions that are either* directly related to pregnancy, or
* acute and transitory and expected to resolve upon delivery.

Some physical examinations and routine tests required to accurately rate the disabilities identified in claims are complicated and not recommended or normally performed on pregnant women since they may pose a significant health risk to the woman or baby. ***Important***: The information in this topic also applies to pregnant Veterans undergoing examination. |

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| b. Ancillary Conditions of Pregnancy | Some ancillary conditions common to pregnancy are* anemia
* back pain
* edema in the legs
* gestational diabetes
* hypertension
* shortness of breath, and
* urinary tract infections.
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| c. Tests Not Recommended for Pregnant Servicewomen | Tests and procedures that are not recommended for pregnant servicewomen include* x-rays
* pulmonary function tests (PFT), and
* range of motion examinations.
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| d. How Pregnancy Affects Participation in the BDD Program | Pregnant servicewomen are allowed to participate in the BDD program; however, the claims should not be transferred to the BDD Rating Activity Site. Such cases will remain at the RO of jurisdiction. Without diagnostic tests and procedures, the examiner may be unable to accurately assess the claimant’s medical condition. This would preclude completion of the examination of pregnancy-related conditions and the rating process until after delivery.  |

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| e. Options for Processing BDD Claims for Pregnant Servicewomen | There are three options for processing BDD claims for pregnant servicewomen:* defer the entire examination until after delivery
* rate the entire claim based on existing service treatment records (STRs) and evidence, or
* rate any claimed conditions that may be granted based on existing STRs and evidence. Defer consideration of any additional disabilities that may not be examined until after delivery. For example, a claim for an amputated finger could be granted but the rest of the claim might be deferred until the pregnancy terminates.
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| f. Assisting and Providing Information to Pregnant Servicewomen | The table below describes the process followed by the Military Services Coordinator (or VSR) at the BDD Intake Site to assist and provide the necessary information to pregnant servicewomen. |

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| Stage | Description |
| 1 | * Using the Claim Establishment (CEST) command, establishes End Product (EP) 684 to control the claims development process, and
* enters the claim into Modern Award Processing-Development (MAP-D) tracking.
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| 2 | Assists pregnant servicewomen in preparing *VA Form 21-526*, *Veteran’s Application for Compensation and/or Pension*,documenting all personal and necessary information to facilitate future contacts.  |
| 3 | Provides a fact sheet to the pregnant servicewomen explaining that* the disability examination is deferred because of her pregnancy
* the claim is not adversely affected by the deferral
* she must advise VA of any changes in address or telephone number
* the claim and STRs will be forwarded to the RO of jurisdiction
* the RO of jurisdiction will notify the Veteran of the scheduled examination approximately 90 days after the projected delivery date, and
* the claimant should contact VA via the toll free telephone number if this contact does not happen.
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| Stage | Description |
| 4 | * Forwards *VA Form 21-526* and STRs to the RO of jurisdiction after separation, and
* clears (PCLR) EP 684.

***Reference***: For more information on the process followed by the RO of jurisdiction, see M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.5.g. |

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| g. Providing Information to the Claimant | The table below describes the process followed by the RO of jurisdiction upon receiving *VA Form 21-526* and STRs from the BDD Intake Site. |

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| Stage | Description |
| 1 | Using the CEST command, establishes EP 930 with a suspense date of 90 days after the expected delivery date, as reported by the claimant. |
| 2 | Schedules the examination when the 90-day suspense period has matured and the claim is located via EP 930. ***Important***: A high degree of coordination is required between the BDD Intake Site coordinator and the RO of jurisdiction to ensure the claim is complete and the EP taken accordingly. |
| 3 | Establishes EP 111/011, with a date of claim 90 days after the expected delivery date. |

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| h. Process When All or Part of the Case Is Rated at Discharge | The table below describes the process when all or part of the case is rated at discharge. |

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| Stage | Description |
| 1 | The BDD Intake Site coordinator or examining physician identifies cases with* significant, non-pregnancy related disability(ies), and
* STRs or medical board records sufficient for rating purposes.
 |
| 2 | The BDD Intake Site coordinator * uses locally established BDD processing procedures, and
* forwards the claim to the RO of jurisdiction.
 |
| 3 | The RO of jurisdiction* establishes a 111/011 EP with the date of discharge as the date of claim, and
* schedules a future examination to
* validate the rating evaluation, and
* address any new or deferred issues.

***Note***: EP 111/011 remains pending if there are any deferred issues. |

#### 6. Former Prisoner of War (FPOW) Protocol Examinations

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| Introduction | This topic contains information about FPOW protocol examinations, including* reviewing FPOW claims
* considerations when requesting an FPOW protocol examination
* when to order initial FPOW protocol examinations
* how to order initial FPOW protocol examinations, and
* when to order reexaminations in FPOW claims.
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| Change Date | July 31, 2012 |

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| a. Reviewing FPOW Claims | Review all FPOW claims, including original claims, reopened claims, and claims for an increased evaluation, to determine if the* record confirms that the Veteran was a FPOW, and
* Veteran was examined under the FPOW protocol, including a social survey.
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| b. Considerations When Requesting an FPOW Protocol Examination | If the FPOW was not examined under the FPOW protocol, request an examination utilizing the FPOW Protocol DBQ unless it* would be inadvisable in light of the Veteran’s medical condition, or
* is specifically declined by the Veteran or the Veteran’s representative.
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| c. When to Order Initial FPOW Protocol Examinations | Order an initial FPOW protocol DBQ even if medical evidence to support the claim is not of record but FPOW status is established. |

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| d. How to Order Initial FPOW Protocol Examinations | On the examination request for an initial FPOW protocol examination* clearly note that an examination under the FPOW protocol is required, and
* request an examination of all claimed and noted disabilities, as well as all other conditions characteristically associated with confinement as a POW.

***Note***: Provide the claims folder for the examiner to review on all original claims and as needed on reopened claims or claims for increased evaluations. |

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| e. When to Order Reexaminations in FPOW Cases | If the Veteran expresses dissatisfaction with either the initial examination or the rating decision based on the initial examination, order a reexamination.***Reference***: For more information on requesting additional information from the Veteran, see [M21-1MR, Part IV, Subpart ii, 1.G.24](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt04_sp02_ch01_secG.xml#IV.ii.1.G.24). |

#### 7. FPOW Social Surveys

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| Introduction | This topic contains information about FPOW social surveys, including* participation in FPOW social surveys
* handling examinations that do not include an FPOW social survey
* automatic scheduling of FPOW social surveys, and
* specific scheduling of FPOW social surveys.
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| Change Date | August 3, 2011 |

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| a. Participation in FPOW Social Surveys | As social surveys are a voluntary examination for FPOWs, no claim should be prejudiced by the failure of an FPOW to cooperate in accomplishing the survey. |

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| b. Handling Examinations That Do Not Include an FPOW Social Survey | If a social survey was to be conducted for an FPOW but was not, then return the examination as inadequate for rating purposes *unless* it is indicated that the FPOW declined to participate in the social survey |

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| c. Automatic Scheduling of FPOW Social Surveys | VHA automatically schedules a social survey after receiving an examination request for a special FPOW protocol examination. |

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| d. Specific Scheduling of FPOW Social Surveys | In cases where a special FPOW examination is already of record and an additional examination for psychiatric disability is necessary, for which a social survey is advisable, specifically request a social survey in the Remarks section of the examination request.Use the table below to determine whether to specifically schedule an FPOW social survey in such cases.***Important***: Honor all specific requests for a social survey from FPOWs or their representatives. |

|  |  |
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| If a social survey … | Then … |
| was not conducted within the one year period before receipt of the claim | request a social survey. |
| was conducted within the one year period before receipt of the claim | do not request another social survey unless there is an indication that the social/employment situation has changed. |
| is needed prior to other appellate procedures in cases where* a notice of disagreement (NOD) has been filed
* the issue on appeal is either service connection or evaluation of a psychiatric disability, and
* upon review of the claims folder, prior to pre-certification of the appeal, it is found that a social survey was not considered in the denial
 | request a social survey. |

#### 8. Specialist Examinations

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| Introduction | This topic contains information about specialist examinations, including* examinations routinely performed by specialists
* who may request other types of specialist examinations
* when to request a specialist examination, and
* who determines the choice of examiner.
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| Change Date | August 1, 2006 |

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| a. Examinations Routinely Performed by Specialists | Some examinations are routinely performed by specialists. These examinations include* hearing
* vision
* dental, and
* psychiatric.
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| b. Who May Request Other Types of Specialist Examinations | In certain circumstances, specialist examinations for other conditions can be requested by * the VSR or RVSR
* the medical examiner, or
* BVA.
 |

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| c. When to Request a Specialist Examination | Request a specialist examination only if it is considered essential for rating purposes.***Example***: A specialist examination may be requested * if an issue is unusually complex
* if there are conflicting opinions or diagnoses that must be reconciled, or
* based on a BVA remand.
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| d. Who Determines the Choice of Examiner | The choice of examiners is up to the VA medical facility conducting the examination, unless the BVA remand specifies that the examination must be conducted by a * “*Board-certified specialist in …*,” or
* “specialist who is Board qualified.”

***Note***: In the absence of a BVA remand, ROs may not designate qualification requirements for a specialist examination. |

#### 9. Medical Opinions

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| Introduction | This topic contains information about medical opinions, including* who may request a medical opinion
* completing the medical opinion DBQ
* completing the medical opinion DBQ – conflicting medical evidence
* identifying the evidence to be reviewed in a medical opinion request
* maintaining objectivity in medical opinion requests
* medical opinions required for remands
* examiner statements that an opinion would be speculative
* instructions for providing medical opinions – claims under [38 U.S.C. 1151](http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/1151)
* medical opinions in the hearing loss and tinnitus DBQ
* avoiding asking for legal conclusions in medical opinion requests
* when to obtain an independent medical opinion
* initiating a request for an independent medical opinion
* submitting a request for an independent medical opinion, and
* processing requests for an independent medical opinion.
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| Change Date | July 31, 2012 |

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| a. Who May Request a Medical Opinion | A VSR assigned to the development activity may request a basic or straight-forward medical opinion if he/she has completed the Advanced Development Course. However, an RVSR or DRO must review and approve any medical opinion request initiated by a VSR. RVSRs and DROs have the sole authority to initiate complex medical opinion requests. ***Notes***: * A VSCM may authorize a medical opinion in any case in which he/she believes it is warranted.
* A medical opinion request should be signed by the RVSR, DRO or VSCM who reviewed and approved it.
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| b. Completing the Medical Opinion DBQ | When requesting a medical opinion, complete the Medical Opinion DBQ in CAPRI. Follow the steps below to complete the DBQ for any medical opinion involving direct service connection, secondary service connection, aggravation of a preexisting condition or aggravation of a nonservice-connected disability.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Step | Action |
| 1 | Check the box(es) corresponding to the type of medical opinion(s) requested in Item 1, “Type of medical opinion(s) requested.  |
| 2 | Specify the claimed condition and complete the free text area(s) corresponding to the type of medical opinion(s) requested in Item 2, “Contention.” |
| 3 | Complete the free text area(s) corresponding to the type of opinion(s) requested in Item 3, “Opinion request.” |
| 4 | Identify and tab all potentially relevant evidence in Item 5. |
| Option | Insert additional instructions to the clinician to include any hierarchy of contingent opinions that may be needed in Item 6.  |

***References***: For more information on* use of the Medical Opinion DBQ, see the [instructions](http://vbacodmoint1.vba.va.gov/bl/21/DBQ/docs/MO%20DBQ%20Request%20Instructions.doc) on the [DBQ Switchboard](http://vbacodmoint1.vba.va.gov/bl/21/DBQ/default.asp)
* the medical opinion template see the [full opinion template](http://vbacodmoint1.vba.va.gov/bl/21/DBQ/docs/DBQs/COMPLETE%20VERSION%20-%20Medical%20Opinion%20DBQ%20-%206-16-11.doc) on the [DBQ Switchboard](http://vbacodmoint1.vba.va.gov/bl/21/DBQ/default.asp),
* completing a medical opinion DBQ for the purpose of reconciliation of conflicting medical evidence, see M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.9.c, and
* identifying the evidence to be reviewed in a medical opinion request, see M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A9.d.
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| c. Completing the Medical Opinion DBQ – Conflicting Medical Evidence | Follow the steps below to complete a medical opinion DBQ seeking reconciliation of conflicting medical evidence.

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| Step | Action |
| 1 | Check the box specifying that an opinion is needed for the purpose of reconciliation of conflicting medical evidence in Item 1, “Type of medical opinion(s) requested. |
| 2 | Add free text under Item 4, “Opinion regarding conflicting medical evidence.”  |
| 3 | Identify and tab all potentially relevant evidence in Item 5. |
| Option | Insert additional instructions to the clinician to include any hierarchy of contingent opinions that may be needed in Item 6.  |

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| d. Identifying the Evidence to be Reviewed in a Medical Opinion Request | For each tabbed item of evidence, state the* source of the evidence (provider or facility)
* subject matter involved, and
* approximate dates covered by the evidence.
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| e. Maintaining Objectivity in Medical Opinion Requests | Maintain objectivity when preparing medical opinion requests. * Use a neutral and unbiased tone
* Do not slant the facts, and
* Do *not* communicate that VA prefers one answer or outcome over another.

***Reference***: For more information on obtaining evidence in an impartial manner, see [*Douglas v. Shinseki*](http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/21/Advisory/CAVCDAD.htm#bmd)*,* 23 Vet. App. 19, 24, 25-26 (2009).  |

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| **f. Medical Opinions Required For Remands** | When requesting an opinion in compliance with BVA remand instructions, explain specifically what is needed. Quoting the instructions from BVA on the medical opinion request may be helpful, but try to avoid legal jargon. Do not simply refer the examiner to the claims folder containing the remand instructions. |

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| **g. Examiner Statements that an Opinion Would be Speculative** | Pay careful attention to any conclusion by the examiner that an opinion could not be provided without resorting to mere speculation (or any similar language to that effect). Per [*Jones (M.) v. Shinseki*](http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/21/Advisory/CAVCDAD.htm#bmj)*,* 23 Vet.App. 382 (2010), VA may only accept a medical examiner’s conclusion that an opinion would be speculative if * the examiner has explained the basis for such an opinion, identifying what facts cannot be determined, or
* the basis for the opinion is otherwise apparent in VA’s review of the evidence.

If an examiner’s conclusion is not adequately justified, the report may be insufficient for rating purposes. Seek clarification of the conclusion. |

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9. Medical Opinions, Continued

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| h. Instructions for Providing Medical Opinions – Claims Under 38 U.S.C. 1151  | When requesting a medical opinion for a claim involving benefits under [38 U.S.C. 1151](http://assembler.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode38/usc_sec_38_00001151----000-.html), ask the provider to* identify the specific evidence reviewed and considered in forming the opinion
* provide a rationale (explanation/basis) for the opinion presented, and
* state whether it is at least as likely as not that
* the claimed disability was caused by or became worse as a result of the VA treatment at issue
* the additional disability resulted from carelessness, negligence, lack of skill, or similar incidence of fault on the part of the attending VA personnel
* the additional disability resulted from an event that could not have reasonably been foreseen by a reasonable healthcare provider, and/or
* failure on the part of VA to timely diagnose and/or properly treat the claimed disease or disability allowed the disease or disability to continue to progress.

***Note***: Do *not* request an examiner under VA’s contract examination program to provide an examination or medical opinion on a claim involving benefits under [38 U.S.C. 1151](http://assembler.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode38/usc_sec_38_00001151----000-.html). |

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| i. Medical Opinions in theHearing Loss and Tinnitus DBQ | The DBQ for hearing loss and tinnitus contains specific sections for etiology opinions. However, examiners generally are not expected to provide unsolicited medical opinions and in some types of hearing loss and tinnitus claims (such as claims for an increased evaluation) an opinion may not be routinely required. In any case involving service connection for hearing loss or tinnitus where an etiology opinion is required, include the request for the opinion in the general remarks section of the exam request. ***Exception***: if tinnitus is not claimed, but reported during the conduct of the exam, examiners will provide this etiology opinion even when not solicited. ***Important***: * Do not submit a separate medical opinion DBQ unless a medical opinion is needed that is not included on the DBQ.
* The claims folder should be sent when an etiology opinion or other opinion is required.

***Reference***: For more information see the [Hearing Loss and Tinnitus DBQ](http://vbacodmoint1.vba.va.gov/bl/21/DBQ/docs/DBQs/AUDIO%20-%20Hearing%20Loss%20and%20Tinnitus%20DBQ%20-%206-9-11.doc). |

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| j. Avoiding Asking for Legal Conclusions in Medical Opinion Requests | Do *not* request a medical authority to make conclusions of law, which is a responsibility inherent to the rating activity. To prevent confusion, avoid using the word “opinion” when asking the examiner a question about any issue that does not require a formal medical opinion.***Examples***: * Do *not* request the medical authority to determine if there is loss of use of an extremity; ask for a description of the remaining function of the extremity.
* Do *not* ask the medical authority to determine if a particular disability is “service-connected” or “SC.” Instead, identify the in-service injury, event, or illness, as well as current disability, and ask the examiner to provide an opinion as to whether or not the current disability was caused by or the result of the identified in-service injury, event, or illness.
* Do *not* ask the medical authority to provide an opinion as to whether a Veteran is “unemployable” or “entitled to individual unemployability.” Instead, in the Remarks section of the examination request, ask the examiner to comment on the Veteran’s ability to function in an occupational environment and to describe functional limitations.
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| k. When to Obtain an Independent Medical Opinion | If warranted by the medical complexity or the controversy of a pending claim, an independent medical opinion under [38 CFR 3.328](http://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/docs/regs/38CFR/BOOKB/PART3/S3_328.DOC) may be obtained from medical experts who are not VA employees.***Note***: Under VA’s contract examination program, the term “independent medical opinion” refers to an opinion request requiring a contract examiner to review medical records contained in a Veteran’s claims folder.  |

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| l. Initiating a Request for an Independent Medical Opinion | A request for an independent medical opinion under [38 CFR 3.328](http://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/docs/regs/38CFR/BOOKB/PART3/S3_328.DOC), in conjunction with a pending claim, may be initiated by the * RO
* claimant, or
* claimant’s representative.
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| m. Submitting a Request for an Independent Medical Opinion | Submit a request for an independent medical opinion under [38 CFR 3.328](http://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/docs/regs/38CFR/BOOKB/PART3/S3_328.DOC) * in writing
* through the VSCM
* by stating, in detail,
* the reasons why the opinion is necessary, and
* the specific information or opinion required.
 |

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| n. Processing Requests for an Independent Medical Opinion | The table below describes how to process a request for an independent medical opinion under [38 CFR 3.328](http://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/docs/regs/38CFR/BOOKB/PART3/S3_328.DOC) and identifies the responsible parties. |

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| Stage  | Who is Responsible | Description |
| 1 | * RVSR
* DRO, or
* service organization representative
 | Brings the request for an independent medical opinion to the attention of the VSCM. |
| 2 | VSCM | Decides whether the request has merit |
| 3 | VSCM | Does the request have merit?* If *yes*, refers the request to Compensation Service (211) for review.
* If *no*, denies the request without the need for referral to Compensation Service.

***Important***: This determination may be contested as part of an appeal on the primary issue under consideration. |
| 4 | Central Office (CO) Compensation Service | Decides whether the request has merit. |

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|  (continued) |

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| Stage  | Who is Responsible | Description |
| 5 | CO Compensation Service | Does the request have merit?* If *yes*
* notifies the claimant that the request has been approved
* obtains the opinion, and
* sends a copy of the opinion when it is available.
* If *no*, denies the request.

***Important***: This determination may be contested as part of an appeal on the primary issue under consideration. |

#### 10. Aid and Attendance (A&A) and Housebound Examinations

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| Introduction | This topic contains information about A&A and Housebound examinations, including* purpose of an A&A and Housebound examination
* when an A&A and Housebound examination may be useful
* requesting an A&A and Housebound examination, and
* locally devised checklists.
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| Change Date | July 31, 2012 |

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| a. Purpose of an A&A and Housebound Examination | The Aid and Attendance (A&A) and Housebound examination is designed to* pinpoint findings relevant to Aid and Attendance determinations under [38 CFR 3.351](http://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/docs/regs/38CFR/BOOKB/PART3/S3_351.DOC) and [38 CFR 3.352](http://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/docs/regs/38CFR/BOOKB/PART3/S3_352.DOC), and
* provide a basis for determining if the Housebound benefit may be paid if need for A&A is not shown.
 |

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| b. When an A&A and Housebound Examination May Be Useful | It may be useful to request an A&A and Housebound examination before a final determination is made, especially if the evidence of record demonstrates a reasonable probability of entitlement to A&A or Housebound benefits but is not sufficient to allow the benefit. |

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| c. Requesting an A&A and Housebound Examination | Use the table below for information on how to request an A&A and Housebound examination. |

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| --- | --- |
| If using … | Then check the … |
| an AMIE/CAPRI examination request | A&A and Housebound examination field.***Note***: A DBQ does not exist at this time for A&A and Housebound examinations. |
| *VA Form 21-2507* | appropriate block in the item *require medical examination of*.**Note**: Since VHA maintains its own stock of forms, do not attach *VA Form 21-2680, Examination for Housebound Status or Permanent Need for Regular Aid and Attendance*. |

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| d. Locally Devised Checklists | ROs are not authorized to create local checklists for A&A and/or Housebound Examinations. Checklists created and submitted by individual treatment providers should be evaluated as any other item of evidence. However, *Yes* or *No* blocks do not provide sufficient descriptive information to assess the extent of a claimant’s incapacitation. |

#### 11. Other Types of Examination Requests

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| Introduction | This topic contains information about other types of examination requests, including* examinations of non-Veteran claimants and beneficiaries
* hospital observation
* field examinations
* examinations of incarcerated Veterans
* board examinations, and
* reexaminations by a different examiner.
 |

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| Change Date | June 5, 2012 |

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| a. Examinations of Non-Veteran Claimants and Beneficiaries | Schedule examinations of non-Veteran claimants and beneficiaries* only after approval by the VSCM, or
* to determine whether a
* claimant is entitled to A&A or Housebound benefits
* claimant was insane at the time he/she caused the death of the Veteran
* child claimant is helpless and/or incompetent, and/or
* beneficiary is competent to handle his/her funds.

***Reference***: For more information on the facts to be considered in a wrongful and intentional death, see [M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart v, 1.F.23](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt03_sp05_ch01_secF.xml#III.v.1.F.23). |

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| b. Hospital Observation | To properly visualize and evaluate complex disability issues the rating activity may request a period of hospitalization for observation and examination. |

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| c. Field Examinations | Request a field examination when it is not possible, through the routine examination process, to* determine the competency of the beneficiary
* assess employment and social adjustment, or
* substantiate items of evidence regarding the existence of disease or injury prior to enlistment.

***Reference***: For more information on requests for field examinations, see [M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart vi, 8.8](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt03_sp06_ch08.xml#III.vi.8.8). |

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| d. Examinations of Incarcerated Veterans | An incarcerated Veteran is entitled to a VA compensation examination as part of the duty to assist even if a claimed benefit, such as a total rating based on IU, cannot be granted during the incarceration. When examination of an incarcerated Veteran is required, the RO and/or the local VHA Medical Examination Coordinator must confer with prison authorities to determine whether the Veteran should be* escorted to a VA medical facility for examination by VHA personnel, or
* examined at the prison by
* VHA personnel
* prison medical providers at VA expense, or
* fee-basis providers contracted by VHA.

***Important***: Because some State laws restrict the movement of and access to prison inmates, neither of the above options may be possible. In such cases, documentation of substantial efforts to schedule and conduct the examination must be added to the claim folder. VSRs must document all efforts made to schedule an examination including identifying and requesting the assistance of the appropriate prison officials. VHA compensation clinics are required to provide documentation that they have made multiple attempts to schedule and conduct the examination and that they have exhausted all possible avenues for obtaining access to the incarcerated Veteran for the examination. ***Note***: If a problem cannot be resolved at the local level, contact the Compensation Service Program Review Staff (214A) for assistance.***References***: For more information on* VA’s duty to examine incarcerated Veterans, see [*Bolton v. Brown*](http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/21/Advisory/CAVCDAD.htm), 8 Vet. App. 185 (1995), and
* VHA Medical Examination Coordinators, see [M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.E](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt03_sp04_ch03_secE.xml#III.iv.3.E).
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| e. Board Examinations | There should be at least two physicians, preferably three, on “board examinations” and at least one, preferably all, should be a recognized specialists in the particular field involved.The rating activity has the authority to request board examinations to * reconcile differing diagnoses, or
* resolve particularly complex issues concerning
* grants of Special Monthly Compensation (SMC), or
* entitlement to specially adapted housing (SAH).
 |

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| f. Reexaminations by a Different Examiner | The rating activity may request that the claimant be reexamined by another medical examiner if compelling reasons exist.To request a reexamination* prepare another examination request
* annotate it to show that reexamination is necessary
* identify any specific information needed in the examination report, and
* include the name and the facility of the medical examiner who conducted the prior examination.

***Reference***: For more information on preparing examination requests, see [M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.13](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt03_sp04_ch03_secA.xml#III.iv.3.A.13). |

#### 12. Inputting Examination Requests

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| --- | --- |
| Introduction | This topic contains information about inputting examination requests, including* the features of the AMIE/CAPRI and VERISapplications
* when to complete an AMIE/CAPRI examination request
* requesting VHA examinations in the geographic jurisdiction of another RO
* the responsibilities of ROs in reviewing examination requests
* generating examination requests
* the information required to complete an AMIE/CAPRI examination request, and
* handling the folder copy of the examination request.
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| a. Features of the AMIE/CAPRI and VERIS Applications. | The AMIE/CAPRI and VERIS applications allow* ROs to electronically transmit examination requests to medical centers, examining facilities, and private examination contractors, as appropriate
* ROs to add, cancel, or modify examination requests instantly
* ROs to use inquiry capabilities for information on the status of examination requests
* medical centers and examination contractors to print
* examination requests, and
* standardized examination protocols after the specific examinations have been scheduled, and
* medical centers and examination contractors to electronically transmit results of examinations back to the ROs.

***Notes***: * Most, but not all, examination types use DBQs for the examination protocol and report format.
* The VERIS application is used only at ROs that participate in the contract examination program.
* Use an AMIE/CAPRI or VERIS examination request rather than a hardcopy *VA* *Form 21-2507* whenever possible.

***References***: For more information on * *VA* *Form 21-2507*, see [M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.13](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt03_sp04_ch03_secA.xml#III.iv.3.A.13) and
* DBQs, see VA’s [DBQ switchboard](http://vbacodmoint1.vba.va.gov/bl/21/DBQ/default.asp).
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| b. When to Complete an AMIE/CAPRI or VERIS Examination Request | Use AMIE/CAPRI or VERIS to request* examinations
* medical opinions
* social surveys, and
* periods of hospitalization for observation and examination.

***Exception***: Do *not* make requests for observation and examination or social surveys in VERIS, because VA’s contract for medical services does not include these types of examinations. ***Reference***: For more information on requesting examinations or opinions and the duty to assist, see [M21-1MR, Part I, 1.C.7](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt01_ch01_secC.xml#I.1.C.7).  |

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| c. Requesting VHA Examinations in the Geographic Jurisdiction of Another RO | Use the table below for requesting VHA examinations that are in the geographic jurisdiction of another RO.***Note***: Requests for non-VHA examinations scheduled through a designated contractor are limited to the geographic area specified by the contractual agreement. |

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| If you want to request the examination of … | Then the person making the examination request must … |
| * a Veteran living within the geographic jurisdiction of another RO, or
* an employee-Veteran who must be examined elsewhere
 | either* complete *VA* *Form 21-2507*, or
* request that an RO linked by AMIE/CAPRI to the examining facility prepare an AMIE/CAPRI examination request.
 |
| a Veteran residing in a foreign country other than the Philippines | complete *VA Form 21-2507*.***Reference***: For more information on *VA Form 21-2507*, see [M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.13](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt03_sp04_ch03_secA.xml#III.iv.3.A.13). |

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| d. Responsibilities of ROs in Reviewing Examination Requests | ROs must ensure that the types of examinations requested are pertinent to the Veteran’s claim and that the request is clear and complete. |

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| e. Generating Examination Protocols | The medical center clerk uses AMIE/CAPRI to generate standardized DBQs or, other applicable examination protocols, for each type of examination requested and scheduled. The private examination contractor uses VERIS for the same purposes. |

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| f. Information Required to Complete an AMIE/CAPRI Examination Request | The table below shows the information required to complete an AMIE/CAPRI examination request. ***References***: For more information on* completing an AMIE/CAPRI examination request, see the
* [CAPRI User’s Guide](http://www.va.gov/vdl/application.asp?appid=133)
* [AMIE User’s Guide](http://www.va.gov/vdl/application.asp?appid=31),
* Compensation Service, [Business Management Staff, AMIE/CAPRI page](http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/21/Systems/capamie.htm), and
* completing a request for an examination using VERIS, see the [VERIS User’s Guide](http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/21/publicat/Users/Index.htm#bmv).
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| Item | Entry | Explanation |
| 1 | Veteran’s* First Name
* Middle Initial, and
* Last Name
 | If the person being examined * is not a Veteran, enter the person’s name followed by their relationship to the Veteran (for example, enter Tony Smith, child, or Mary Jones, spouse.).
* is not a Veteran, in Remarks, enter the Veteran’s name and VA claim number.
* is rated incompetent, indicate this by adding “*incompetent”* after the name.
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| Item | Entry | Explanation |
| 2 | VAMC Where Examination Is Requested | The VAMC selected should be the * closest VAMC to the claimant’s residence unless the VAMC is unable to conduct that particular exam, or
* the closest VAMC able to conduct all requested examinations.
 |
| 3 | VA Claims File Number | Enter the claims folder number. |
| 4 | Social Security Number (SSN) | Enter the SSN if it is different than the file number.***Note***: Enter the SSN of the person being examined if the person is *not* a Veteran. |
| 5 | Telephone Number  | Enter the telephone number of the person being examined. |
| 6 | Power of Attorney | Enter the power of attorney of the person being examined. |
| 7 | Date Ordered | Enter the date on which the examination is requested. |
| 8 | By | Enter the VSR’s/RVSR’s name or initials and Correspondence Symbol. |
| 9 | Type of Examination | Be sure to use the designated code to indicate the examination type.Applicable codes are* “*E*” for Insufficient **E**xam
* “*I*” for Claim **I**ncrease
* “*ON*” for **O**riginal **N**onservice-Connected
* “*OS*” for **O**riginal **S**ervice-Connected
* “*OTH*” for **Oth**er
* “*P*” for former **P**OW
* “*R*” for **R**eview Examination, and
* “*T*” for **T**erminal.
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| Item | Entry | Explanation |
| 10 | Insufficient Examination | If the request is for additional information because a previous examination was insufficient, enter the following in the Remarks section:* the date of the inadequate examination, and
* a complete explanation of the necessary corrective action.
 |
| 11 | General Medical Examinations | Indicate any known diagnoses or complaints. |
| 12 | Body System | Check the specific examination within the affected body system to be performed. Do not check if also requesting a general medical examination. |
| 13 | Remarks | * If known, provide the diagnosis of each disability to be examined.
* As appropriate, state whether service connection has been established for the disability or if it is being sought.
* Restrict other entries to
* any necessary clarifying remarks regarding the issues to be resolved, and/or
* the type of examination requested.
* Provide the name and telephone number of the requestor, in the event clarification is required.

***Note***: Do not use manual, regulation, or code citations. |
| 14 | Specialist Examinations | Explain the nature of the specialist examination requested and the reason for its request in Remarks. |
| 15 | Last Exam Date | Enter the date of the last pertinent examination or “N/A” if there has been no prior examination. |

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| g. Handling the Folder Copy of the Examination Request | Where a paper claims folder is being used, reverse file the claims folder copy of the AMIE/CAPRI examination request pending receipt of the completed examination report.***Reference***: For more information on electronic claims folders in Virtual VA (eFolders), see M21-1MR, Part III, subpart ii, 3.C.8.g. |

#### 13. VA Form 21-2507, Request for Physical Examination

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| Introduction | This topic contains information about *VA Form 21-2507,* *Request for Physical Examination*, including * when to use *VA Form 21-2507*
* entries of special interest on *VA Form 21-2507*
* forwarding examination requests to the appropriate medical center, and
* handling the file copy of the examination request.
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| Change Date | August 3, 2011 |

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| a. When to Use VA Form 21-2507 | When AMIE/CAPRI cannot be used because the RO is not linked electronically to the VA medical center, complete *VA Form 21-2507*, *Request for Physical Examination,* to request * examinations
* medical opinions
* social surveys, and/or
* periods of hospitalization for observation and examination.
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| b. Entries of Special Interest on VA Form 21-2507  | Complete all appropriate entries on *VA Form 21-2507*.The table below describes the entries of special interest. |

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| Entry | Description |
| Social Security Number (SSN) | Enter the SSN if it is different than the claims folder number. |
| Period of Service | Enter the * earliest entitling period of service in a pension claim, or
* latest period of service in a compensation claim.
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| Entry | Description |
| Veteran’s* first name
* middle name, and
* last name.
 | If the person being examined is* not a Veteran
* draw a line through the word *Veteran*, and
* substitute the appropriate designation, such as *spouse* for a Veteran’s widow, or
* rated incompetent, indicate this by adding the word *incompetent* after the name.
 |
| Address of Veteran or Claimant | Review correspondence from the Veteran or claimant to confirm the current address. Include the current telephone number.***Reference***: For more information on corresponding with incompetent Veterans, see [M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart v, 9.B.4](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt03_sp05_ch09_secB.xml#III.v.9.B.4). |
| Please Conduct | Check* block “A” if a general medical examination is requested (see [M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart iv, 3.A.3](http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/docs/admin21/m21_1/mr/part3/subptiv/ch03/pt03_sp04_ch03_secA.xml#III.iv.3.A.3)), and
* block “B” in all other cases, indicating the particular disabilities for examination.
 |
| Service-Connected Disabilities | * List the diagnostic codes for each of the service-connected disabilities shown on the latest rating decision.
* Verify the correctness of the diagnostic code printed on *VA Form 21-2507a.*
* List the descriptive terminology for each disability as stated on the latest rating decision.
* Indicate by check mark those disabilities to be examined.
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| Entry | Description |
| Other Disabilities | Provide an adequate description of the nature of the other disabilities to be examined. |
| Specialist Examinations | * Check this box to request a specialist examination.
* Attach a copy of any Board of Veterans’ Appeals (BVA) remand if the examination is required in connection with a remand.

***Note***: Explain the nature of the examination and the reason for the request in the Remarks section. |
| Remarks | Restrict entries to clarifying remarks concerning the issue or issues to be resolved and/or the type of examination requested.***Note***: Do not use manual, regulation, or code citations. |
| Claimant Represented By | Indicate by an appropriate check or annotation, the current accredited service organization of record.***Note***: If the person being examined is represented by a person or organization that does *not* have an office located at the RO* check the “Other” block in Item 19 ,and
* enter the complete name and address of the person or organization.
 |
| * Date
* Signature of Authorizing Official, and
* Correspondence Symbol
 | Enter the* date the form is signed
* name of the authorizing official (must be legible), and
* correspondence symbol and telephone number of the authorizing official.
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| c. Forwarding Examination Requests to the Appropriate Medical Center | Forward the examination request to the clinic or medical center nearest the Veteran’s residence that is able to conduct the type of examination requested.  |

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| d. Handling the File Copy of the Examination Request | Reverse file a copy of the examination request in the claims folder pending receipt of the examination report.  |