



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**  
Veterans Benefits Administration

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## **Individual Unemployability**

### **What is Individual Unemployability?**

Individual Unemployability (IU) is a unique part of VA's disability compensation program. It allows VA to pay certain Veterans compensation at the 100 percent rate, even though VA has not rated their service-connected disabilities at that level.

### **Who Is Eligible for Individual Unemployability?**

- You must be a Veteran.
- You must be unable to hold a job as a result of service-connected disabilities. This means maintaining substantially gainful employment. (VA considers odd jobs as marginal employment. They do not affect your eligibility for IU.)
- You must have either:
  - o One disability that is rated at 60 percent or more
  - o Multiple disabilities, with one disability rated at 40 percent or higher, and a total rating of 70 percent or more.

### **What Are the Evidence Requirements?**

- You must have evidence of at least one service-connected disability that meets the above scheduler requirements.
- You must prove the service-connected disability or disabilities alone prevent getting or keeping substantially gainful employment. This can be due to inability to perform either mental or physical tasks.

There are certain circumstances where this benefit may be granted with a lower disability rating than required. Evidence must show that applying the normal requirements is unreasonable. Examples that may be considered include major interference with employment and frequent hospitalizations. These are considered on a case by case bases.

## **How to Apply**

You can apply using any of the following options:

- Apply online using eBenefits at <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov>.
- Work with an accredited representative or agent. Locate one at <https://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp>.
- Submit VA Form 21-8940, “Veterans Application for Increased Compensation Based on Unemployability.” Print a copy of this form at <https://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-8940-ARE.pdf>.

o Mail it to:

Department of Veterans Affairs

Claims Intake Center

P.O. Box 4444

Janesville, Wisconsin 53547-4444

Or Fax:

Toll Free: 844-531-7818 & 248-524-4260 (if living overseas)

- Go to a VA regional office and have a VA employee help you. Visit our Facility Locator page at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/offices.asp>, or call 800-827-1000.

Visit the How to Apply page at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/apply.asp> for more information. You'll also find tips on making sure your claim is ready to be processed by VA.

Note: Veterans may have to complete an employment questionnaire once a year for VA to continue to pay the IU benefit. This questionnaire verifies continued IU eligibility.