



Your VA Claim Exam

KNOW WHAT'S NEXT

If you've filed a claim with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for compensation or pension benefits, VA may ask you to go to an examination as part of the claim process. This is known as a VA claim exam or a compensation & pension (C&P) exam.

Your VA Claim Exam: Know What's Next

FACT SHEET | JANUARY 2021

VA Claim Exams or C&P Exams

The VA claim exam, also called a C&P exam, is different from a regular medical appointment because the examiner won't prescribe any medicine or treat you for your disability. This exam occurs only if you file a compensation or pension claim. It is a part of the claim review process and helps VA determine if your disability is service connected, the level of your disability, or if your condition should receive an increased rating due to it worsening.

The amount of time the examiner spends with you during your exam depends on what conditions you claimed and if VA needs more information to make a decision. The length of your visit could be very short, or last an hour or more. However, a mental-health evaluation typically lasts two to four hours.

THE EXAMINER MAY:

- ✓ Ask you questions
- ✓ Observe your behavior
- ✓ Perform a limited physical exam
- ✓ Simply review your file with you

Each exam is different. Remember, your in-person visit is only one part of the claim review process. Typically, examiners spend time before and/or after your appointment reviewing your medical records. Even if your visit is short, he or she is still carefully reviewing your claim.

SCHEDULING OF THE EXAM



After you submit your claim, you may receive a phone call or a letter from VA or a VA partner asking you to come to one or more claim exams. Not every application for a benefit will require an exam; it depends on what medical evidence has been included with the application.

Contact VA, or the contract vendor, immediately at the number provided to reschedule your exam if you have a conflict with your exam time. Please try not to reschedule on the day before or day of the exam.

It is 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), which could impact your benefits.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

myVA
Putting Veterans First

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.benefits.va.gov/compensation

Reach out to your local Veterans Service Organization

Call 1-800-827-1000

YOUR VA CLAIM EXAM: KNOW WHAT'S NEXT

Are your Medical Records Complete?

If you have medical documents that you have not yet sent to VA, you can bring them to your claim exam. However, the examiner cannot submit that information to be part of your claim on your behalf. Ideally, you should submit all of your medical evidence with your claim application or before your claim exam. This will help the examiner have the most complete picture of your health status.

Make Sure VA has Your Current Contact Information

Make sure that both the VA regional office and the VA medical center nearest to you have your current address, phone, and email information. This will help VA more quickly communicate with you about any need for a claim exam appointment.

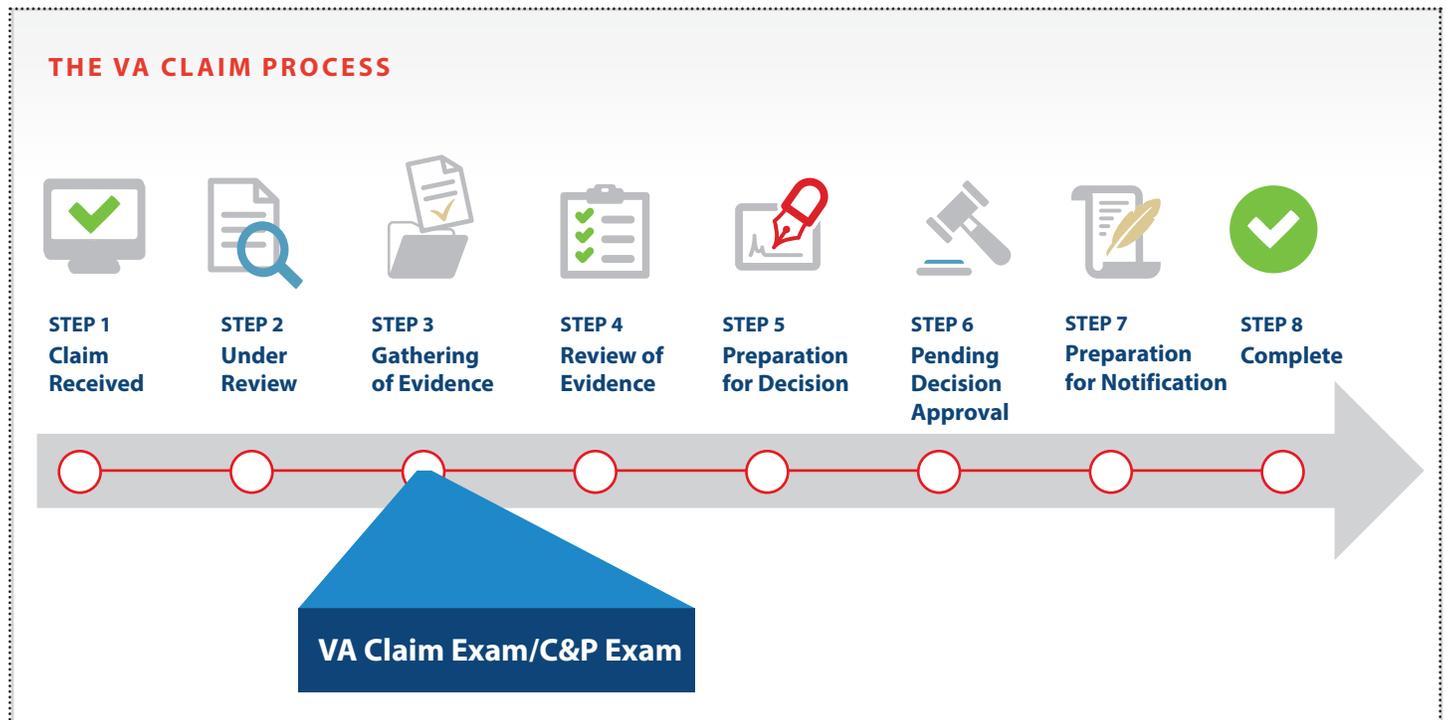
After the Exam

Following your exam, a report will be sent to a VA claims processor and added to your claim file. It will be used along with your claim application to make a decision on your claim.

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

When Will I Get My Rating?

While every claim is different, it takes VA an average of three to four months to process a claim from beginning to end. Processing times depend on how complex your claim is and the number of conditions you've claimed. For the most recent average-time estimate, please visit www.vets.gov/disability-benefits/apply-for-benefits.



 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.