

3 Things VA Must See Before They'll Approve Your Claim

To grant a disability as service connected, VA needs to see three pieces of evidence. If even one is missing, the claim is usually denied. Use this page as your checklist before you file.

1

A current diagnosis

A medical professional has to diagnose the condition you have today. Telling VA you have pain or trouble sleeping is not enough on its own. VA wants a named condition in your medical records.

Where to find it: VA medical records, records from your private doctor, or a recent exam.

☐ I have a diagnosis in writing for each condition I'm claiming.

2

Something that happened in service

VA needs proof of an injury, illness, or event during your time in uniform. This could be an injury in training, a condition treated at sick call, or exposure to noise, burn pits, or other hazards.

Where to find it: Service treatment records, personnel records, buddy statements from people you served with, and your own written statement.

☐ I can show what happened in service, and when.

3

A link between the two

This is called the "nexus," and it's where many claims fall apart. A medical opinion has to say your current condition is at least as likely as not connected to what happened in service.

Where to find it: A medical opinion letter from your doctor, or the findings from your VA exam (C&P exam).

☐ A doctor has connected my condition to my service.

Good to know: For some conditions, VA presumes the link for you. Examples include certain illnesses tied to Agent Orange, Gulf War service, and burn pit exposure under the PACT Act. If your condition is on one of those lists, you may not need a separate nexus opinion.

Free initial consultation

Not sure where you stand? Let's talk it through at no cost.

VA Claims Roadmap · \$27

The full step-by-step guide. Instant PDF at veterancoachcorner.com, coming soon to Amazon.