



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Benefits Administration

Separation Health Assessment for Service Members

Overview

The separation health assessment provides a single separation exam. This supports the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation program and the Department of Defense (DoD) mandatory separation history and physical exam. The assessment makes current health information accessible by DoD and VA.

Who Conducts the Exam?

- VA conducts the exam when the Service member applying for disability compensation has at least 90 days remaining on active duty.
- DoD conducts the exam for Service members who aren't filing a disability compensation claim or have less than 90 days remaining on active duty.

Assessment Benefits

The assessment provides a complete medical evaluation at separation, which:

- Documents any medical concerns identified during your military career
- Assesses your current health and medical history

DoD can use the results to evaluate occupational exposures and hazards in military workplaces. This can help prevent future illnesses and injuries.

The assessment also:

- Efficiently identifies service-connected conditions
- Helps predict future health care needs
- Provides information to focus future Veteran outreach efforts

Actions

If you are filing a claim for VA disability compensation, you should:

- Submit an application between 90 and 180 days prior to separation or retirement. Use VA Form 21-526EZ, “Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits,” found at: <https://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-526EZ-ARE.pdf>.
- Submit your service treatment records (STRs) from your current period of service.
- Complete, sign and submit DD Form 2807-1, “Report of Medical History.” You can access the form at: <http://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/forms/dd/dd2807-1.pdf>.

VA will then schedule an exam to review claimed conditions.

If you are not filing a claim for VA disability compensation or have less than 90 days until discharge or retirement, follow this process:

- Complete and sign DD Form 2807-1, “Report of Medical History.” You can access the form at: <http://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/forms/dd/dd2807-1.pdf>.
- DoD will then complete the separation exam and coordinate with your appropriate out-processing center.

Note: If you have less than 90 days until discharge, you can still file a claim for disability benefits. DoD will still need to complete your separation exam.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: If I am not filing a disability claim, do I still need an exam?

A: Yes. The assessment can uncover unknown medical conditions. If you choose to file a claim later, this information will be essential. The assessment also helps prevent future illness and injuries caused by military service. It can also more accurately predict necessary Veteran health care services.

Q: What does the assessment include?

A:

- Subjective Assessment of Health: Using your completed Report of Medical History form, the examiner will review and address your answers. This becomes part of the record.
- Objective Assessment of Health: After reviewing your history and current health, the examiner will determine if you need further treatment or evaluation.

Q: Can I submit a VA disability claim while still on active duty?

A: Yes. The Benefit Delivery at Discharge (BDD) Program allows you to submit a claim 180 to 90 days prior to separation or retirement. For more information about filing a BDD claim, view the BDD Fact Sheet at:

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/general/BDDFactSheet.pdf>.

Q: What if I need to file a disability claim but have less than 90 days left on active duty?

A: You cannot file a BDD claim, but you can still submit a claim prior to separation. The claim will be processed through the traditional process. Visit the *Fully Developed Claim* (FDC) program web page at <https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/evidence-needed/fully-developed-claims/>.

Q: How do I file a VA disability claim?

A: There are a few ways to file a disability claim:

- Online through your VA.gov account at <https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/>
- In person, with a Veterans Service Organization (VSO)
- In person, with a VA representative at a military installation. Go to <https://www.va.gov/find-locations> to find VA locations.

You will need to submit a copy of your STRs and any previous treatment records not associated with TRICARE referrals. You should receive details on eligibility and requirements during your Transition Assistance Program (TAPS) briefing.

For more information about VA disability benefits, call 800-827-1000 or visit <https://www.va.gov/disability/>.

For instructions and claim forms, visit <https://www.tricareonline.com/>.