



VA Claim Evidence Checklist

Claims are won on evidence, not on how much it hurts. Gather these before you file or appeal, so your file speaks the language the rater scores.

THE THREE THINGS EVERY CLAIM NEEDS

- ☐ A current diagnosis from a medical provider
- ☐ Evidence of the in-service event, injury, or exposure
- ☐ A link, called a nexus, connecting the two

RECORDS TO PULL

- ☐ Service treatment records (STRs)
- ☐ Your DD-214
- ☐ VA and private medical records for the condition
- ☐ Any prior VA decision on the same condition

STATEMENTS THAT STRENGTHEN YOUR CLAIM

- ☐ A nexus letter, a medical opinion from a doctor
- ☐ Buddy and lay statements from people who witnessed it
- ☐ Your own personal statement (VA Form 21-4138)

CONDITION-SPECIFIC EVIDENCE

- ☐ Secondary claim: proof the primary condition is service-connected
- ☐ PTSD or MST: stressor details, or markers if it was never reported
- ☐ Presumptive: proof of qualifying service, location, or exposure

Full guide: bootstobenefits.com/guides/what-is-a-nexus-letter

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