



SEPARATION HEALTH ASSESSMENT SERVICEMEMBER FACT SHEET

OVERVIEW

The separation health assessment was developed to provide a single separation examination that supports the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation program and the Department of Defense (DoD) mandatory separation history and physical examination. The assessment captures current health information in a way that is accessible by DoD and VA.

WHO CONDUCTS THE EXAM?

- VA will conduct the exam for Servicemembers (SMs) who file a complete application for disability compensation while having at least 90 days remaining on active duty.
- DoD will conduct the exam for SMs who do not file a claim for disability compensation, or who file a claim with less than 90 days remaining on active duty.

ASSESSMENT BENEFITS

- Provides a comprehensive medical evaluation at separation:
 - Current and past medical concerns identified during military career are documented
 - Current health status and medical history are assessed
- DoD can use assessment results to identify and evaluate illnesses and injuries potentially caused by occupational exposures and physical hazards in military workplaces, possibly eliminating these exposures and hazards and preventing future illnesses and injuries
- Is an efficient way for VA to identify service-connected conditions
- Allows more accurate prediction of future healthcare needs
- Information gathered from the assessment can be used to focus Veteran outreach efforts

ACTIONS

SMs filing a claim for VA disability compensation should:

- Submit an application for VA benefits (VA Form 21-526EZ, “Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits”) between 180 and 90 days prior to separation or retirement;
- Submit a copy of service treatment records (STRs) from the current period of service
- Complete, sign, and submit DD Form 2807-1, “Report of Medical History”
- VA will schedule an exam to evaluate claimed conditions

SMs in the following categories must complete and sign DD Form 2807-1, “Report of Medical History,” and DoD will complete the separation exam in coordination with the appropriate our-processing center

- SMs not filing a claim for VA disability
- SMs with less than 90 days prior to discharge or retirement

Note: SMs with less than 90 days until discharge may still file a pre-discharge claim for VA disability benefits; however the SM must ensure the separation examination is completed by DoD.



FAQS

Question: I am not filing a VA disability claim, why do I have to get an exam?

Answer: The assessment can uncover medical conditions that occurred during military service of which you may be unaware. If you choose to file a VA disability claim at a later date, the information contained in the assessment may be essential in establishing that a disability was incurred in or aggravated by your military service. The assessment also provides information that can be used to identify and prevent illnesses and injuries caused by military service. Assessment information can also be used to more accurately predict healthcare services required for Veterans.

Question: What does an assessment include?

Answer:

- Subjective Assessment of Health: You will complete the DD Form 2807-1, “Report of Medical History” prior to your scheduled exam. The VA or DoD examiner performing the exam will review the answers and ensure claimed contentions are addressed in the examiner’s section of the form or in the exam report, which becomes part of the record.
- Objective Assessment of Health: The examiner will review your complete medical history (including the DD Form 2807-1) and your current health status to determine if there is a need for further treatment or evaluations regarding any medical concerns.

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

Answer: Yes, you can file a VA disability claim while still on active duty. You do not need to wait until after you separate or retire to submit your claim. VA accepts disability claims from separating SMs through two pre-discharge programs: SMs with 180 to 90 days remaining before discharge are eligible for the Benefits Delivery at Discharge Program, while SMs with less than 90 days before discharge may be eligible for the Quick Start Program. VA representatives are available at many military installations to assist with submitting VA disability claims through the pre-discharge programs. A list of military installations with a VA representative can be found in the VA Facility Locator (www.va.gov/directory).

Question: How do I file a VA disability claim?

Answer: You can file a VA disability claim by submitting a VA Form 21-526EZ through eBenefits via VONAPP Direct Connect (www.ebenefits.va.gov). You can also file a VA claim in person with a Veterans Service Organization (VSO) or a VA representative at a military installation. Submit a copy of your STRs from your current period of military service and any copies of private treatment records not associated with TRICARE referrals. You should receive information regarding eligibility and application requirements during your Transition Assistance Program (TAP) briefing. For further information regarding the pre-discharge programs, please refer to the Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) Fact Sheet (www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/general/BDDFactSheet.pdf).

For more information on VA disability benefits, call toll-free 1-800-827-1000 or visit VA’s Web site at www.va.gov. Instructions and claim forms can also be found on TRICARE Online (<http://www.military.com/benefits/tricare>).