

WELCOME

TO THE

VETLIFE®





On behalf of VETLIFE we want to welcome you home. We are proud of the sacrifices that you made through your dedicated service to our country, and we are here to help you with the transition from military to civilian life.

VETLIFE was born from our own family struggles we faced upon leaving the military. We became painfully aware of so many other veterans who were facing the same battles. The large number of veterans unaware of their benefits and the rising number of veteran suicides really bothered us, so we formed VETLIFE with the purpose of promoting a safer, healthier, and prosperous civilian lifestyle.

It is not uncommon for veterans to feel like they have lost a sense of purpose after they leave the military and VETLIFE is here to help you navigate the process of accessing your military benefits. Be proud of your service to your country, you are among a select few who wore the uniform. Through your military service you are authorized several benefits including, VA healthcare, education (Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits and possible VOC rehab benefits), VA home loan, disability compensation, as well as others.

We are here to help guide you through this process and have created a one stop shop on our website: www.vetlifetoday.org. Our website is designed to provide you with vetted, reliable information on where to go and who to speak with to obtain your benefits.

We are here to ease the transition into civilian life and make sure you are receiving every benefit—whether it's county, state, or federal—that you have earned. The process of obtaining these benefits can be confusing and daunting but VETLIFE is here for you from start to finish.

Livin' the VETLIFE is living your best life!

Joshua and Cortnie Parish

Co-Founders of VETLIFE



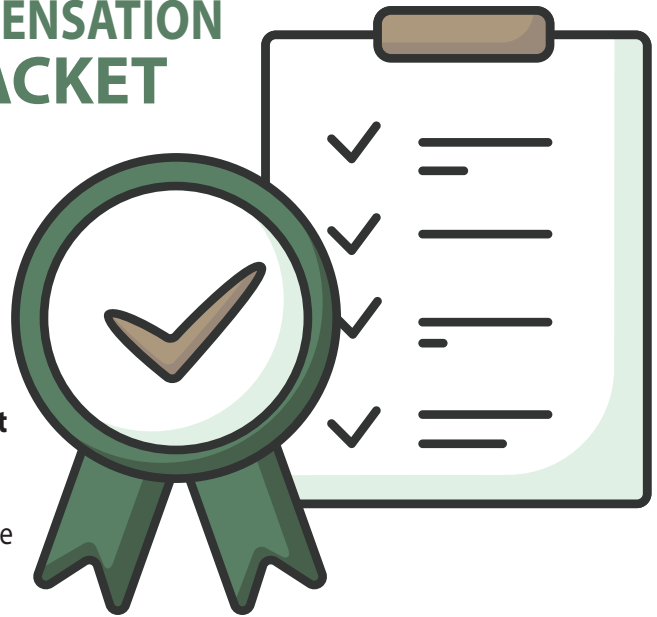
VA SERVICE CONNECTED COMPENSATION PRE-APPOINTMENT PACKET

Dear Veteran,

We appreciate your service to the United States of America, allowing all of us to enjoy our freedoms as Americans. **Please understand - you earned these military benefits and we are grateful to be able to assist you and to be an advocate for you throughout this process of obtaining them.**

Enclosed are the following documents pertaining to the VA's disability compensation:

- Disability Compensation FAQs
- How to schedule an appointment with a certified VSO
- Disability Compensation Checklist
- Sample Doctor Statement Letter



Livin' the
VETLIFE[™]
is living your best life.

www.vetlifetoday.org



DISABILITY COMPENSATION



FAQ

WHAT IS VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION?

Disability compensation is a benefit paid to a veteran because of injuries or diseases incurred or aggravated by your active military service. It is also paid to certain veterans disabled from VA Health Care. Disability compensation benefits are tax free.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

You may be eligible for disability compensation if you have a service related disability and you were discharged under honorable conditions.

HOW MUCH CAN I RECEIVE FROM DISABILITY COMPENSATION?

The amount of compensation varies depending on your disability rating. Most VA disability ratings range between 0 and 100 percent in increments of 10. If you are rated at 30 percent or higher you may be paid additional amounts if you have a spouse and/or dependents, if you or your spouse are severely disabled, or if you have loss of limb(s) incurred or aggravated due to military service.

HOW CAN I APPLY?

You will need to complete **VA Form 21-526EZ**.

BY MAIL:

Complete form and mail to:

Department of Veteran Affairs
Claims Intake Center
PO Box 4444
Janesville, WI 53547-4444

IN PERSON:

Bring your application and supporting documents to a certified VSO near you.
To locate an office near you visit: www.vetlifetoday.org/countyvaoffices

ONLINE:

You may apply online at:

www.va.gov/disability/file-disability-claim-form-21-526ez

SHOULD I SUBMIT AN INTENT TO FILE FORM?

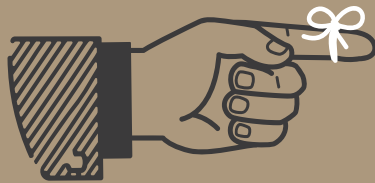
Yes. If you plan to file for disability compensation using a paper form then you should submit an intent to file form first. This will give you the time needed to gather your evidence while avoiding a later potential start date (also called an effective date). When you submit your intent to file you may be able to receive retroactive payments. If you file for disability compensation online then you do not need to notify of your intent to file because your effective date gets automatically set when you start filling out the form. To download a copy of the Intent to File Form search **VA Form 21-0966** or visit: www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-0966-ARE.pdf

SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH A CERTIFIED VSO



A veteran service officer can help with things such as disability compensation, education benefits, emergency financial relief, VA medical appointments, transportation to and from VA medical facilities, VA home loan questions, replacement of DD-214 forms, caregivers assistance, burial benefits, widows pension, and more.

To locate an office nearest you visit:
www.vetlifetoday.org/countyvaoffices



RECORD APPOINTMENT INFORMATION HERE

DATE:

TIME:

LOCATION:

NOTES:



Disability Compensation CHECK LIST

Check off the items below as you gather them for your upcoming appointment.



VETERAN :

DISCHARGE PAPERS

DD-214, 215 or NGB-22*

*This would only pertain if you served in the National Guard.

MEDICAL INFORMATION :

MEDICAL RECORDS

Any private and/or military records pertaining to the issue(s) being filed.

VA TREATMENTS

If treated at any federal facility (VA Medical Center, Vet Center, etc.) need the VA treatment(s), date(s), and location(s).

NATIONAL GUARD & RESERVE MEMBERS

Obtain medical records and personnel records from service through unit or state component.

DISABILITY BENEFITS QUESTIONNAIRES

If provided and if applicable.

DOCTOR'S STATEMENT

Doctor's statement confirming current issue(s) are linked to military service.

BANK ACCOUNT INFORMATION :

VOID CHECK

For direct deposit payment(s).

DEPENDENT(S) INFORMATION :

SPOUSE

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

DATE OF BIRTH

MARITAL HISTORY

(Needed for both the veteran and spouse)
Names, dates of marriage along with divorce and/or death dates, and county married in and county ended in.

CHILDREN

NAME(S)

BIRTH CERTIFICATE(S)

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER(S)

COLLEGE CLASS SCHEDULE(S)*

*This only pertains to children ages 18-23 who are currently enrolled in college or university.

The information provided in this document is to assist veterans with making an appointment with a certified veteran service officer. VETLIFE does not collect or store any of this personally identifiable information. To locate a veteran service officer nearest you visit: www.vetlifetoday.org/countyvaoffices.

VETLIFE Disability Compensation Checklist © 2024 All Rights Reserved.



SAMPLE NEXUS LETTER TO PRESENT TO YOUR DOCTOR

Dear Doctor,

Your patient is one of our nation's veterans and will be filing a claim with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for service connected compensation. Our veterans may suffer daily from physical or mental conditions incurred as a result of their military service and deserve compensation for those conditions.

The VA claims procedure does not require physicians to testify at hearings or proceedings regarding the medical conditions of their patients. This results in a lesser burden for the physicians who are already overtaxed with commitments. Since we cannot expect to build our claim for compensation based on testimony of the veteran's physician, we must rely heavily on the written reports of those physicians. Thus, when reporting on the conditions of your veteran patients, we ask that your statements be made as strongly as possible. If you are inclined to believe that the veteran's condition may have originated in or have been aggravated by the veteran's military service, this should be stated in your report. According to current law, any "benefit of the doubt" on a veteran's claim is resolved in his or her favor. Likewise, any range of statements can help his or her claim including:

The veteran is currently diagnosed with chronic headaches and it is more likely than not due to the veteran's military service.

OR

As a result of please explain in detail how the veteran's diagnosed condition is related to his or her military service and include a thorough medical rationale supported by peer reviewed evidence (science/medical journals, etc.). Please also indicate any records you have reviewed to assist you in coming to this conclusion such as: **I have reviewed the veteran's service records.**

We are certain we can rely on your expert discretion to assist your veteran patient in obtaining a fair decision rating on his or her claim.

January 1, 2024
Reference: Jane Doe
VA File #: 1234567
Veteran's SSN: 111-11-1111

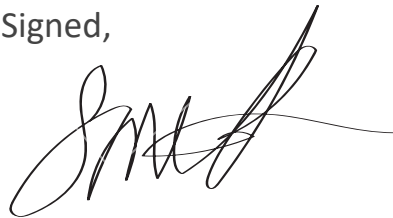
To Whom It May Concern,

I am Dr. Sam Brown. I am board certified by the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery. I am writing a statement in support of Jane Doe's application for disability benefits. Ms. Doe has a diagnosis of degenerative disc disease. I have personally reviewed Jane Doe's medical history. I have also reviewed the in-service events and incidents, which include the lifting and carrying of heavy military equipment that occurred between September of 2001 and March of 2002 during her service in Iraq.

I have examined Jane Doe and I am familiar with her diagnostic results, including spinal x-rays, CT scans, and MRI tests. I have attached these medical reports. Jane Doe does not have a known history of risk factors that may have caused the degenerative disc disease. Based on my professional experience as an orthopedic surgeon and knowledge of medical literature, it is known that lifting and carrying heavy objects for a prolonged period of time can put pressure on the spine and lead to degenerative disc disease.

It is in my professional opinion that it is more likely than not that Jane Doe's degenerative disc disease is a direct result of the prolonged lifting and carrying of heavy equipment that occurred during her military service.

Signed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SMB', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. Sam Brown, MD
Orthopedic Surgery | Jones Memorial Hospital