

VA Claim Exam (C&P exam)

1. *What is a C&P exam?*
 - After you file your disability benefits claim, VA may ask you to have a claim exam (also known as a compensation and pension, or C&P, exam).
2. *Why might I need a VA claim exam?*
 - This exam will help VA rate your disability. Your rating will be based on how severe your disability is—and will affect how much disability compensation you'll receive. Compensation may include things like monthly payments and enrollment in the VA health care program.
3. *Does everyone who files a claim need to have a C&P exam?*
 - No. VA will ask you to have a claim exam only if more information is needed to decide your claim.
 - If you have enough medical evidence in your file to support your claim, VA won't ask you to have a claim exam. Medical evidence may include doctor and hospital reports, test results, and other documents.
4. *How will VA contact me to schedule the C&P exam?*
 - The staff at your local VA medical center or a local doctor's office that VA collaborated with will contact you. They'll either send you a letter by mail with the date and time of your exam, or call you to find a time that works for you.
 - Make sure both the VA regional office and the VA medical center nearest you have your up-to-date address, phone number, and email address so you get your exam notice in time.
5. *What should I do when I receive the exam letter or phone call?*
 - Call the number provided right away to confirm the time and location of your exam. It's important not to miss your scheduled exam, so you'll want to double check that you have the right place and time.
6. *What if I can't make it to the scheduled exam?*
 - If you can't make it to your appointment, let the VA know right away. You can mostly likely reschedule, but this may delay your claim.
 - To reschedule your appointment:
 - Call 1800-827-100 **or**,
 - Go to your nearest VA Regional Office.
7. *What should I bring to my VA claim exam?*
 - You don't need to bring anything to your exam. If you have any new non-VA medical records (like records from a recent surgery or illness), please be sure to submit them before your appointment. The health care provider conducting the exam can't review new information during the exam.
8. *What else do I need to do to prepare for my exam?*
 - If you have children, you'll need to plan ahead for childcare during your exam. Because you and the doctor may discuss sensitive topics, children shouldn't be in the room with you.
 - On the day of the exam, you'll want to wear comfortable clothes so you can move freely while the doctor exams you.

9. *What happens at a VA claim exam?*

- A VA claim exam isn't like a normal medical exam or other VA health care visits. The doctor won't treat you for any illness or injury, give you referrals to other health care providers, or prescribe medicine. That's because the purpose of the exam is to gather information that will help VA make a decision on your claim. Each exam is different, depending on the information we need
- During your exam, the doctor may do any or all of these things:
 - Review your claim file with you
 - Ask you questions based on the medicals records in your claim file.
 - Perform a basic physical exam
 - Ask you to get other test-like X-rays or blood work-if needed
- If you have any questions about what's happening during your exam, feel free to ask the doctor. However, keep in mind that the doctor's job is to examine you, not to make any decisions about your claim. They won't be able to answer questions about the claims process.
- After your exam, the doctor will write up a report and send it to a VA claims processor to be added to your claim file.

10. *How long will the exam take?*

- Your exam may be very short, or it may last an hour or more. It all depends on the conditions you've claimed and whether VA need more information to make a decision.
- For example, the required questions the doctor asks about a knee injury may take only a few minutes. But the questions for a more complex illness or injury could take much longer. A mental health evaluation usually lasts 2 to 4 hours.
- It's important to remember that your in-person visit is only one part of the claim review process. The doctor will also spend time outside the exam carefully reviewing your records.

11. *Who will examine me?*

- Either a VA doctor or non-VA doctor who VA have contracted with will do the exam.

12. *Will I get my exam results at the VA claim exam?*

- No. The doctor will give the exam results to our VA claims processors. Our claims processors will decide your claim based on these results, plus your other medical and military records.

13. *What should I do if I miss my VA claim exam?*

- If you miss your claim exam, contact VA right away to let us know why you didn't make it. We can help you figure out what to do next.
- If you have what we consider to be a good reason for missing your exam (called "good cause"), we'll work with you to reschedule your exam. Examples of "good cause" might be an illness or the death of someone in your immediate family.

14. *What happens after my exam?*

- VA will review all the evidence in your file, assign your disability rating, and send you a decision notice (a letter letting you know your disability rating).

- Each claim is different, but it usually takes us about 3 to 4 months to process a claim from start to finish. The processing time for your claim depends on how complex your claim is and how many conditions you've claimed.
- You can track your claim by signing into eBenefits.va.gov

15. *Can I get a copy of my VA claim exam?*

- Yes, you can get a copy of the final report from your exam by contacting the VA or Freedom of Information Act ([FOIA](#)).

16. *What information will the VA claims processors have when making a decision?*

- VA claims processors will review
 - The medical records you've given
 - The report from the doctor who handled your claim exam, and the results of any ordered medical tests
 - Statements from you and others about your claim
 - Your military medical and personnel records

17. *Will I ever need to have another claim exam?*

- VA may ask you to have a claim exam if you appeal your disability benefits decision.

18. *My claim exam is scheduled far away from where I live; can I get help with paying for my travel?*

- Yes, if you are scheduled for a claim exam or C&P exam, you can request travel reimbursement. Mileage is calculated from your door to the exam facility. Your travel pay request will be submitted to the beneficiary travel office.

19. *I am unhappy with the treatment I received from the person doing my claim exam, what should I do?*

- If you attend your claim exam and have a negative experience with a VA examiner or a VA partner examiner, VA encourages you to share feedback immediately. You may go to the C&P exam supervisor within a VA medical center or the supervisor within the VA partner facility, reach out to the VA patient advocate at your closest VA medical facility, or call the number on your original appointment letter. It is helpful to write out a statement of concern that can be submitted as part of your claim file. Share concerns immediately. Do not wait until your claim decision has been made. This will help ensure any issues are handled as quickly as possible.

20. *My claim was denied without a claim exam or C&P exam. Is this a normal event?*

- VA awards disability compensation when the claim file shows three things:
 - Current diagnosis of a disability
 - Record of an event that happened during military service that could have resulted in the disability
 - An opinion that the disability is related to military service, also called a "nexus opinion"
- If the first two items are clearly shown in your claim application, that's when the C&P exam process comes in. If you did not submit enough information with your claim application to show that you have a current diagnosis of a disability or that an event occurred in military

service that may have caused the disability, there is no need for VA to schedule a claim exam to get a nexus opinion to tie the two events together. Make sure you submit all relevant military and treatment records as part of your claim application.

21. Why is a contractor conducting my claim exam and not a VA examiner?

- VA may use contractors or VA partners who are medical experts with experience working with Veterans to speed up the claim process. They support the timelier scheduling of claim exams and evidence gathering in support of your claim. You may get scheduled for a claim exam with a VA partner. They follow the same HIPAA policies as VA, so you are guaranteed that your privacy is protected.
- The exam is performed at the expense of VA and, just as if the exam was done at a VA medical center, the exam is used in the claim decision process for disability compensation or pension benefits. The medical facilities that work with VA are bound by the same rules and privacy laws as VA, so you can be sure your exam can be trusted and all of your information is secure and will be shared directly with VA.

22. For more information about VA C&P exam, please follow the link below.

- [VA C&P Exam.](#)