

What happens after I file a VA disability claim?

Claim received by VA

VA will let you know when they receive your VA disability claim.

- **If you file your claim online**, you'll get an on-screen message from the VA after you submit the form.
- **If you mail your application**, the VA will send you a letter to let you know they have your claim. It should arrive approximately one week, plus mailing time, after they receive your claim.

Initial review by VA

The VA will check your claim for basic information, like your name and Social Security number. If information is missing, they will contact you.

Evidence gathering

The VA will review your claim and make sure they have all the evidence and information needed. If more evidence is needed to decide your claim, they may gather it in these ways:

- Ask you to submit evidence
- Ask you to have a claim exam <https://www.va.gov/resources/va-claim-exam/>
- Request medical records from your private health care provider
- Gather evidence from the VA records

This is usually the longest step in the process.

Note: You can submit evidence at any time. But if you submit evidence after this step, your claim will go back to this step for review.

Evidence review

The VA will review all the available evidence for your claim. If they need more evidence or you submit more evidence, your claim will go back to Step 3: Evidence gathering.

Rating

The VA will decide your claim and determine your disability rating.

If we need more evidence or you submit more evidence, your claim will go back to Step 3: Evidence gathering.

Preparing decision letter

The VA prepares your decision letter.

If you're eligible for disability benefits, this letter will include your disability rating, the amount of your monthly payments, and the date your payments will start.

If the VA needs more evidence or you submit more evidence, your claim will go back to Step 3: Evidence gathering.

Final review

A senior VA reviewer will do a final review of your claim and the decision letter.

Claim decided

You'll be able to review and download your decision letter in the claim status tool.

The VA will also send you a copy of your decision letter by mail. It should arrive within 10 business days (but may take longer).

