



Requesting an Increase Without a Coach: A Veteran's Step-by-Step Guide

A step-by-step walkthrough for Veterans filing for an increase on their own.

Requesting an increase in your VA disability rating can feel overwhelming.

You were already rated.

You already went through the process once.

And now your condition has worsened — or the rating doesn't reflect your current reality.

This guide walks you through:

- **Understanding when you qualify for an increase**
- **Submitting an Intent to File (if needed)**
- **Filing for a rating increase on VA.gov**
- **Uploading medical evidence to support worsening symptoms**
- **Preparing for a new C&P exam**

Take this one step at a time.

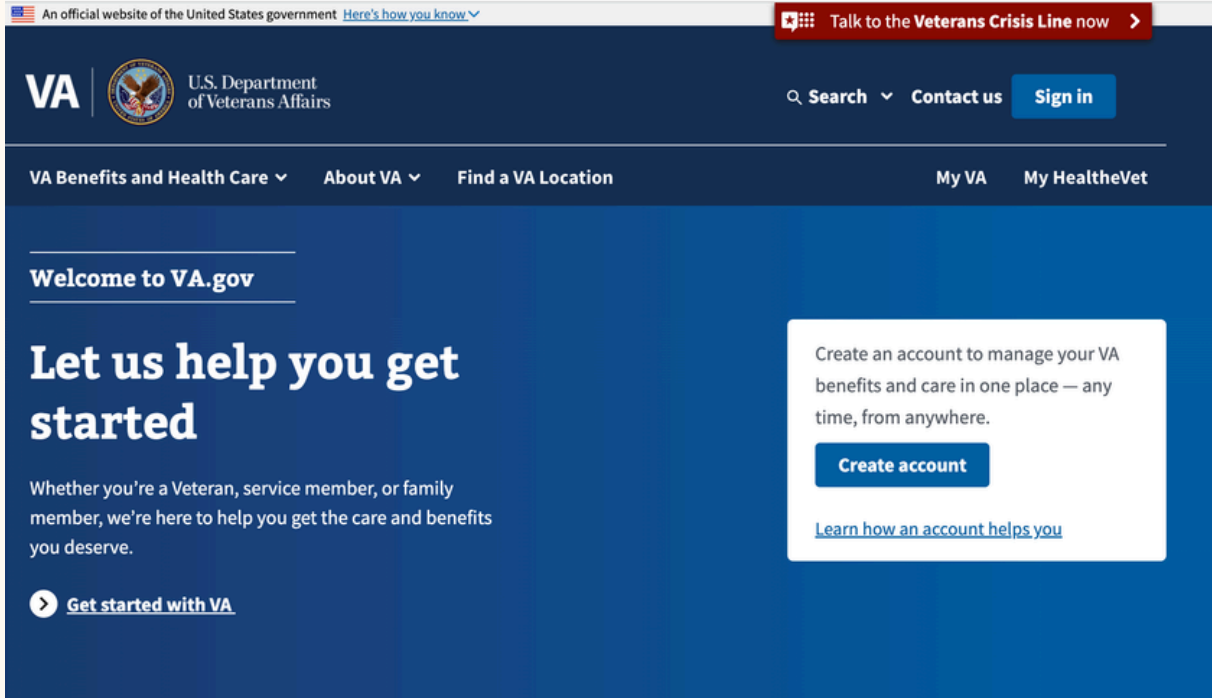
You do not have to complete everything in one sitting.

You served.

Your benefits should reflect your current condition.

This guide does not replace medical or legal advice. It is an educational resource to help you navigate VA.gov with clarity.

Step 1: Log into your VA.gov Account



What You'll Need:

- SSN
- Email address
- Phone number
- Access to ID.me or Login.gov

Step-by-Step:

- Go to VA.gov
- Click "Sign In" or "Create Account"
- Choose Login.gov or ID.me to
- Verify identity
- Confirm contact information
- Access your dashboard

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

- Using an outdated email
- Not completing identity verification fully
- Creating duplicate accounts

Once your account is active, the next step is protecting your effective date with an Intent to File.



Step 2: Request an Increase in Your VA Rating (Step-by-Step)

An increase is for a condition the VA has already rated as service-connected that has gotten worse (you'll need updated medical evidence).

A) Gather “worsening” evidence first

1. Collect recent evidence that shows increased severity, such as:
 - New medical records
 - New test results/imaging
 - Provider notes documenting worsening symptoms
 - A personal statement describing what has changed

VA specifically notes that you'll need up-to-date medical evidence showing the disability has worsened for an increased claim.

B) Start the increase request on VA.gov

1. Sign in to VA.gov
2. Go to Disability
3. Choose File for disability compensation (same entry point as filing)
4. When asked what you're filing for, select Increase (wording may look like “increased claim” or “request an increase”)

C) Select the condition you want increased

1. Choose the already-rated condition from your list (example: “PTSD,” “knee condition,” etc.)
2. Confirm you're requesting an increase because symptoms have worsened



Step 2: Request an Increase in Your VA Rating (Step-by-Step, Continued)

D) Upload updated evidence

- Upload your new evidence (the “worsening” proof)
- Label files clearly and confirm each upload completes successfully
 - Keep to accepted file types and size limits where applicable (PDF, GIF, JPEG, BMP, TXT; 25MB/file shown in VA upload guidance).

E) Review and submit the increase request

- Review:
 - Condition selected is correct
 - Updated evidence is attached
 - Contact info is correct
 - Certify/attest (truthfulness statement)
 - Click Submit
 - Save the confirmation page

F) After submitting an increase

- Track progress in the Claim status tool
- If VA requests a C&P exam, attend it (missing it can delay or impact the outcome)
- You can upload additional evidence later via claim status tool (“Files” → “Additional evidence” → Add Files)



If You Need Support

You Don't Have to Navigate This Alone

Filing alone is possible. Filing strategically requires documentation.

If you're preparing for an increase, **Essential Veteran Services** can help.



Created by Essential Veteran Services