

AIVetGuide

C&P Exam Prep Guide

Prepare clear, honest information for VA claim exams.

Important

Use this guide as educational preparation only. It is not legal advice, medical advice, or a guarantee of VA benefits. For official help, contact VA or an accredited representative.

Prepared for AI Vet Guide website resources
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C&P Exam Preparation Guide

A Compensation and Pension exam helps VA evaluate service connection and/or the severity of a claimed condition. This guide helps veterans prepare honest, specific answers and avoid forgetting important details.

What it is

A C&P exam is not a regular treatment visit. It is part of VA claim development. The examiner may review records, ask questions, perform measurements or tests, and report findings to VA.

Before the exam

- [] Confirm the date, time, location, phone/video details, and provider instructions.
- [] Review what condition the exam is for. Do not assume every condition will be addressed.
- [] Write a short symptom summary: onset, frequency, severity, duration, flare-ups, triggers, treatment, and impact.
- [] List medications, devices, therapy, surgeries, urgent care visits, ER visits, and side effects.
- [] Prepare examples of how the condition affects work, sleep, movement, concentration, social life, driving, household tasks, and personal care.
- [] Bring or upload relevant records if instructed, but do not rely on the examiner to review every document during the appointment.
- [] If you cannot attend, follow the scheduling instructions to reschedule as soon as possible.

During the exam

- Be honest and specific. Do not exaggerate and do not minimize symptoms.
- Explain flare-ups and bad days, including what triggers them and what you cannot do during them.
- Use plain numbers when possible: days per month, hours per episode, missed workdays, pain level, walking distance, lifting limit.
- For range-of-motion exams, tell the examiner when pain starts and whether repeated use makes symptoms worse.
- For mental health exams, describe symptoms, frequency, severity, social impact, work impact, sleep, panic, memory, concentration, and safety concerns.
- For migraines, describe frequency, duration, prostrating episodes, light/sound sensitivity, nausea, medication, and work impact.
- For tinnitus/hearing, describe onset, noise exposure, ringing pattern, sleep or concentration impact, and hearing difficulty.
- For sleep apnea, discuss diagnosis, sleep study, CPAP or other treatment, daytime fatigue, and any service or secondary theory.

After the exam

- [] Write down what happened while it is fresh: date, provider name, topics discussed, measurements, and anything important that was not covered.
- [] Continue checking claim status for evidence requests or additional exams.
- [] Upload additional evidence if VA requests it or if you realize something important is missing.
- [] If the decision is unfavorable, compare the decision letter with your records and the exam details before choosing a review option.

Common mistakes

- Saying "I am fine" out of habit when symptoms are ongoing.
- Only describing the exam-day condition and not flare-ups or worst days.
- Forgetting to discuss work impact, missed work, safety issues, or daily-life limitations.
- Not explaining when symptoms started or how they changed over time.
- Missing the exam without rescheduling through the proper channel.
- Assuming the examiner has read every record or knows your full story.

Exam notes worksheet

Prompt	Your notes
Condition examined	
Main symptoms	
Frequency / severity / duration	
Flare-ups and triggers	
Work and daily-life impact	
Treatment and medication	
What the examiner measured or asked	
What was not discussed	

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Official Sources Used

These guides summarize public VA information and should be checked against the official source before filing or responding to a VA decision.

- [VA Claim Exam \(C&P Exam\)](#)
- [The VA Claim Process After You File](#)
- [What Your Claim Status Means](#)
- [Evidence Needed For Your Disability Claim](#)

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