



# The Claim Clarity Checklist

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*Clarity. Strategy. Advocacy.*

Thank you for taking the time to review this checklist. The VA benefits system is complex, and many veterans struggle not because they lack entitlement — but because they lack structured guidance. This resource is designed to help you pause, organize your thinking, and approach your claim with clarity instead of frustration. This checklist is educational in nature and does not replace accredited representation. Its purpose is simple: help you file from structure and confidence.



# The Claim Clarity Checklist

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## Section 1 — Service Connection Foundation

- ■ I can identify a specific in-service event, injury, illness, or exposure.
- ■ I have a current medical diagnosis for the condition I am claiming.
- ■ There is documentation linking my condition to service.
- ■ I understand whether this may qualify as direct, secondary, or presumptive service connection.

## Section 2 — Evidence Inventory

- ■ I have reviewed my service treatment records.
- ■ I have gathered relevant VA and private medical records.
- ■ I have identified potential lay statements if appropriate.
- ■ I have considered whether nexus evidence may be required.

## Section 3 — Understanding Rating Criteria

- ■ I have reviewed the VA rating criteria for this condition.
- ■ My documented symptoms align with specific rating percentage tiers.
- ■ My records reflect frequency, duration, and severity of symptoms.
- ■ I have clearly described functional impact.

## Section 4 — Filing Strategy

- ■ I understand whether I am filing a new claim, supplemental claim, HLR, or Board appeal.
- ■ I understand effective date implications.

- ■ I have identified any possible secondary conditions.
- ■ I have considered whether Special Monthly Compensation (SMC) may apply.

## **Final Structured Pause**

- ■ My claim is clearly stated.
- ■ My evidence is organized and relevant.
- ■ I am filing from clarity — not urgency or frustration.
- ■ I understand the next procedural step after submission.

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Educational resource only. Not legal advice or accredited representation.