

CLAIM OVERVIEW DOCUMENT ANATOMY

A one-page index that tells the reviewer what is claimed and where the supporting evidence is located.



LENGTH Aim for one readable page	FUNCTION Map claims to evidence	LIMIT Do not argue every fact
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READ FIRST

The overview is a navigation sheet, not a substitute for evidence. Its purpose is to reduce ambiguity and connect each claimed issue to the documents already in the packet.

HEADER BLOCK

IDENTIFY THE SUBMISSION

CLAIM OVERVIEW	Veteran name VA file number last four submission date
CLAIM PURPOSE	Initial disability claim, increase, or other identified filing purpose
PRIMARY FORM	VA Form 21-526EZ and any supporting forms included
REPRESENTATIVE	Name and organization, if appointed

ISSUE TABLE

USE ONE ROW FOR EACH CLAIMED CONDITION

CONDITION	CLAIM THEORY	EVIDENCE REFERENCES
Left knee condition	Direct service connection	STR 06/14/2017; MRI 03/2026; Dr. Lee opinion
Sleep apnea	Secondary to service-connected asthma	Sleep study; treatment record; Dr. Smith opinion
Migraine increase	Increased evaluation	Headache log; neurology notes; employer statement

Examples show structure only. Use the veteran's actual conditions, theories, records, and dates.

EVIDENCE KEY

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS BY THEIR EXACT FILENAMES

- ✓ **Use stable filenames**
Example: Left-Knee_MRI_2026-03-12.pdf.
- ✓ **Name the author or source**
Identify the provider, witness, military record, or agency record.
- ✓ **Add the relevant date**
The date helps the reviewer locate the cited event or finding.
- ✓ **Keep the reference short**
The overview points to evidence. It does not reproduce the whole argument.

CLOSING BLOCK

STATE PENDING ITEMS AND REQUESTS CLEARLY

P Pending records Identify requested records that are not yet available, who holds them, and whether a release is attached.	VA Assistance requested State the specific federal or private records the VA is asked to obtain. Avoid a vague request for everything.	R Requested decision List the claimed issues accurately. Do not state a guaranteed percentage or outcome.
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KEEP IT NEUTRAL

A claim overview should clarify the packet. Unsupported conclusions, exaggerated language, and medical opinions from a lay author make the document less useful.