

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER FILING

Understand the internal workflow, the simplified public tracker, and the moments that require action.



PUBLIC TRACKER

Five simplified steps

INTERNAL WORKFLOW

Eight processing stages

NORMAL BEHAVIOR

Claims can move backward

READ FIRST

The VA.gov tracker combines several internal stages. A claim can move back to evidence gathering when a record, examination, or clarification is needed. Backward movement alone does not show that the claim will be denied.

INTERNAL STAGES 1 TO 4

RECEIPT AND EVIDENCE DEVELOPMENT

1

Claim Received

The VA records the filing and establishes the receipt date.

PUBLIC STEP 1

2

Initial Review

A VSR checks the application, claimed issues, and initial development needs.

PUBLIC STEP 2

3

Evidence Gathering

The VA requests identified records, schedules examinations, and receives submitted evidence.

PUBLIC STEP 3

4

Evidence Review

The file is checked for completeness and may return for more development.

PUBLIC STEP 3

INTERNAL STAGES 5 TO 8

DECISION AND NOTIFICATION

5

Rating

An RVSR reviews the record, decides each issue, and assigns evaluations and effective dates.

PUBLIC STEP 3

6

Preparing Decision Letter

The system prepares the explanation, award information, and notice documents.

PUBLIC STEP 3

7

Final Review

The decision and notice receive final authorization or return for correction.

PUBLIC STEP 4

8

Complete

The VA issues the decision and updates the claim status.

PUBLIC STEP 5

ACTION POINTS

WATCH FOR REQUESTS THAT NEED A RESPONSE

MAIL

Development letter

Read what evidence is missing, what the VA will request, what the claimant should provide, and the deadline.

EXAM

C&P scheduling

Confirm the appointment, attend, or promptly address a legitimate scheduling conflict.

INFO

Contact changes

Keep mailing address, telephone, email, and direct-deposit information current.

DEC

Decision notice

Read every granted, denied, deferred, effective-date, and evaluation determination separately.

TRACKER CONTROL

WHAT MOVEMENT CAN MEAN

BACK

Return to evidence gathering

A missing record, examination addendum, clarification, or newly identified issue can send the file backward. This is routine development.

DONE

Complete does not mean every issue granted

The claim has been decided. Read the decision letter to see which issues were granted, denied, or deferred and why.

After the decision: compare the issue list, evidence considered, Reasons for Decision, percentages, effective dates, combined rating, dependents, and payment details. Use the dedicated review-lane guides if correction is needed.

DO NOT READ THE TRACKER AS EVIDENCE

Status movement shows workflow, not claim strength. The decision letter and underlying record explain what the VA decided and what options remain.



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Research-backed VA claim education

READ THE VA CLAIM STAGES GUIDE

RateMyVSO.net/dc/claim-stages

Stage names and displays can change. Use the current VA.gov tracker for live status.