

MENTAL HEALTH

CURRENT VERSUS PROPOSED MENTAL-HEALTH RATING FORMULA

The current rule governs every claim. The five-domain model is a proposal and may change or never take effect.

NOT IN EFFECT

The five-domain model remains a 2022 proposed rule.

Claims are still evaluated under the current General Rating Formula for Mental Disorders at 38 C.F.R. Section 4.130.

SIDE BY SIDE

THE RULE THAT APPLIES NOW VERSUS THE DRAFT MODEL

CURRENT LAW	2022 PROPOSAL
OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT	FIVE FUNCTIONAL DOMAINS
- Six levels: 0, 10, 30, 50, 70, and 100 percent - Considers all symptoms and resulting impairment - Listed symptoms are examples, not a closed checklist 100 percent uses total occupational and social impairment - Separate eating-disorder formula remains in the schedule	- Five levels: 10, 30, 50, 70, and 100 percent - Scores intensity and frequency within each domain - A single domain at the highest level could support 100 percent - Would remove the current symptom examples - Would combine eating disorders into the general formula

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

THE FIVE DOMAINS

1 COGNITION Memory, concentration, judgment, planning, communication, and adapting.	2 INTERPERSONAL INTERACTIONS Relationships, workplace interaction, communication, conflict, and participation.
3 TASK COMPLETION AND LIFE ACTIVITIES Work, school, caregiving, household demands, pace, and completing tasks.	4 NAVIGATING ENVIRONMENTS Leaving home, crowds, confined spaces, travel, driving, and unfamiliar settings.
5 SELF-CARE Hygiene, dressing, nourishment, and completing basic personal needs.	

PROPOSED RATING LEVELS

HOW DOMAIN SCORES WOULD MAP TO A PERCENTAGE

10%	30%	50%	70%	100%
Minimum for one or more service-connected mental disorders	Mild impairment in two or more domains	Moderate impairment in one or more domains	Severe impairment in one or more domains	Total impairment in one or more domains

STATUS CHECK: Proposed rule published February 15, 2022, at 87 FR 8498, RIN 2900-AQ82. Comment period closed April 18, 2022. The Unified Agenda projects final action in August 2026, but that target is not a final rule or effective date. No final mental-disorders rule is reflected in the current Section 4.130 formula as of July 25, 2026.