

MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

BEHAVIORAL MARKER EVIDENCE GUIDE

Examples of records and behavior changes that may help support an MST-related claim.

38 C.F.R. 3.304(f)(5)

ALTERNATIVE EVIDENCE

MARKERS VA MAY CONSIDER

No official report is required.

A marker is evidence that may help show a change around the time of the claimed experience. No single marker is required, and no fixed number guarantees an outcome.

✓ SERVICE AND WORK Request for transfer to another unit or duty assignment	✓ SERVICE AND WORK Deterioration in work performance, including a drop in evaluations or Article 15s
✓ HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR Substance abuse onset or escalation during or after service	✓ EMOTIONAL Depression, panic attacks, or anxiety without prior history
✓ SOCIAL Unexplained economic or social behavior changes	✓ SOCIAL Relationship breakdowns, including divorce or breakups, around the time of the event
✓ MEDICAL RECORDS Pregnancy tests or STI tests in service treatment records	✓ MEDICAL RECORDS Requests for HIV testing
✓ HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR Eating disorder onset or significant weight changes	✓ HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR Sexual dysfunction
✓ SERVICE AND WORK Increased sick call or leave without clear medical cause	✓ OUTSIDE SOURCES Statements from family, roommates, fellow service members, or clergy
✓ OUTSIDE SOURCES Records from rape crisis centers, counseling, or hospitals	✓ OUTSIDE SOURCES Personal journals or diaries from the time period
✓ SERVICE AND WORK Changes in performance reports correlating with the timeframe	✓ SERVICE AND WORK Counseling statements or disciplinary actions around the same period

Use the **chronology**. Identify when each change began, who observed it, and where supporting records may exist. These examples are not a checklist of what a veteran must have or report.