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ANATOMY OF A STRONG VA NEXUS LETTER

ANNOTATED

What each section contributes to the opinion's probative value.

This is a structural guide, not a fill-in-the-blank medical opinion. The provider must exercise independent medical judgment and tailor the analysis to the veteran's actual record.

MEDICAL OPINION

PROVIDER AND CREDENTIALS
Relevant license, specialty, experience, practice information, and contact details.

VETERAN AND CLAIMED CONDITION
Correct identity, current diagnosis, and the exact direct, secondary, or aggravation question.

EVIDENCE REVIEWED
Service records, treatment history, prior examinations, tests, imaging, lay evidence, and relevant literature.

MEDICAL HISTORY
Concise timeline of onset, progression, treatment, exposures, symptoms, and meaningful risk factors.

MEDICAL OPINION
A clear conclusion using understandable probability language and the correct claim direction.

RATIONALE
The medical mechanism applied to the documented facts, including contrary evidence and alternative explanations.

AUTHENTICATION
Signature, date, credentials, and professional contact information.

1 ACCURACY
Names, dates, diagnoses, service facts, and cited records must be correct.

2 RELEVANCE
The provider's training and experience should fit the medical question.

3 REASONING
The letter must show how the provider moved from evidence to conclusion.

4 COMPLETENESS
Address all reasonably raised theories, including aggravation when applicable.

5 INDIVIDUALIZATION
Apply literature and general medicine to this veteran's history.

NOT A TEMPLATE CONTEST

A polished letter with the wrong facts is weak evidence. A shorter opinion can be persuasive when it is accurate, medically competent, and well reasoned.

AGGRAVATION VARIANT

ADD THE WORSENING ANALYSIS

SEVERITY BEFORE AGGRAVATION → **INCREMENTAL INCREASE LINKED TO THE PRIMARY**

BASELINE EVIDENCE
Describe severity before the medically supported increase when the record permits.

CURRENT SEVERITY
Identify the present disability and the evidence showing worsening.

ATTRIBUTABLE INCREASE
Explain what portion of worsening is medically linked to the service-connected condition.

THE PROVIDER OWNS THE CONCLUSION. Veterans can organize records and identify the question, but the medical opinion must reflect the clinician's independent judgment.