



STRONG VA NEXUS LETTER IN ONE PAGE



CASE FILE

A useful opinion is accurate, reasoned, and written for the actual claim.

A nexus letter is a medical opinion connecting a current disability to military service, another service-connected condition, or medically supported aggravation. The conclusion matters, but the explanation is what gives it weight.

FOUNDATION

IDENTIFY THE CLAIM

- Current diagnosis
- Relevant service event or primary disability
- Correct direct, secondary, or aggravation theory
- Accurate chronology

MEDICAL JUDGMENT

STATE THE OPINION

- Clear probability language
- Correct claim direction
- Causation and aggravation answered separately
- No speculative wording

PROBATIVE VALUE

EXPLAIN THE REASONING

- Mechanism applied to this veteran
- Evidence and lay history considered
- Contrary facts addressed
- Literature used appropriately

SEVEN PARTS OF THE RECORD

WHAT A STRONG LETTER CONTAINS

1 PROVIDER IDENTITY AND RELEVANT CREDENTIALS

Name, license, specialty, practice information, signature, and date.

2 RECORDS REVIEWED

Identify the service, VA, private, testing, examination, and lay evidence actually considered.

3 PERTINENT MEDICAL HISTORY

Summarize the facts that matter without copying the entire claims file.

4 CURRENT DIAGNOSIS

State the condition and the medical basis supporting that diagnosis.

5 CLEAR MEDICAL CONCLUSION

Use understandable probability language and identify the exact relationship being addressed.

6 REASONED RATIONALE

Connect facts, timing, mechanism, testing, risk factors, and medical literature.

7 ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

Address meaningful contrary evidence instead of pretending it does not exist.

THE PHRASE IS NOT ENOUGH BY ITSELF

A letter can say “at least as likely as not” and still carry little weight if the facts are wrong or the rationale is missing. VA weighs the reasoning, not merely the wording.

BEFORE THE APPOINTMENT

- Prepare a short condition timeline
- Bring the relevant records
- Identify the disputed nexus question
- List the prior negative opinion, if any

BEFORE FILING

- Check names, dates, and diagnoses
- Confirm the direction and theory
- Confirm the letter is signed and dated
- Keep a complete copy of the submission

REASONING BEATS BRANDING. VA does not award weight based only on price, letter length, provider label, or use of a preferred phrase.

