

Use this worksheet to organize the claim, identify gaps, and prepare for VA development.
Check only what is accurate for your case.

3

THE CORE REQUIREMENT

BUILD ALL THREE SERVICE-
CONNECTION ELEMENTS

Supporting evidence varies by case. The goal is not to collect every possible document.
The goal is to establish each required element with credible, relevant evidence.

PART 1

REQUIRED FOUNDATION

START HERE

01

CURRENT PTSD DIAGNOSIS

- ☐ A qualified professional has diagnosed current PTSD.
- ☐ The evaluation supports the applicable DSM-5 criteria.
- ☐ Relevant treatment and evaluation records are identified.

Symptoms alone do not establish a PTSD diagnosis.

02

QUALIFYING IN-SERVICE
STRESSOR

- ☐ The event is described accurately and specifically.
- ☐ The correct stressor category and evidentiary rule are identified.
- ☐ Available corroborating or alternative evidence is identified.

Not every stressor requires the same type of proof.

03

MEDICAL NEXUS

- ☐ Medical evidence links current PTSD to the claimed stressor.
- ☐ The opinion identifies the evidence and stressor it relies on.
- ☐ The explanation addresses important contrary evidence.

A diagnosis and stressor do not automatically establish the link.

PART 2

CLAIM DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET

USE WHAT APPLIES



SERVICE AND EVENT RECORDS

- ☐ Service treatment records
- ☐ Personnel or assignment records
- ☐ Unit, incident, police, or investigative records
- ☐ Awards or other service documentation



MEDICAL RECORD

- ☐ VA mental-health records
- ☐ Private treatment and evaluation records
- ☐ Medication and treatment history
- ☐ Relevant records authorizations completed



STATEMENTS

- ☐ Personal statement is accurate and consistent
- ☐ Dates, locations, units, and people are as specific as possible
- ☐ Lay or buddy statements are included when useful
- ☐ Behavioral changes or markers are addressed when applicable



CURRENT FUNCTIONAL IMPACT

- ☐ Symptom frequency, severity, and duration are documented
- ☐ Work and education effects are described
- ☐ Relationship and social effects are described
- ☐ Judgment, thinking, mood, self-care, and daily activity are addressed

PART 3

BEFORE SUBMISSION

Run a final accuracy and completeness check. Keep a copy of everything submitted.



CLAIMED ISSUE

The condition and theory of service connection are clearly identified.



EVIDENCE INVENTORY

Relevant records are attached, identified, or authorized for collection.



CONSISTENCY CHECK

Names, dates, locations, and event descriptions do not conflict without explanation.



CONTACT DETAILS

Mailing address, phone number, email, and direct-deposit details are current.



SUBMISSION COPY

A complete dated copy and confirmation are saved.



OPEN REQUESTS

Any stated VA evidence deadline or pending request is recorded.

PART 4

AFTER FILING

01

MONITOR

Check VA.gov and your mail for evidence requests, examination notices, and status updates.

02

RESPOND

Answer development requests by the stated date and report scheduling problems promptly.

03

ATTEND

Attend scheduled examinations. Describe typical functioning honestly, including meaningful variation.

04

REVIEW

Read the full decision letter, reasons, favorable findings, evaluation, effective date, and review options.

THIS IS AN ORGANIZATION TOOL, NOT A FILING PREREQUISITE.

A claim can be filed while VA assists with development. Do not delay needed treatment, invent details, or assume every box must be checked before filing.