

VA rates service-connected PTSD from **0% to 100%** under the General Rating Formula for Mental Disorders. The central question is the resulting level of occupational and social impairment.

01 WHAT VA MUST EVALUATE

F

FREQUENCY

How often symptoms occur and how often functioning is disrupted.

S

SEVERITY

How intense the symptoms and resulting limitations are.

D

DURATION

How long episodes last, including remissions and the ability to adjust.

R

WHOLE RECORD

All evidence bearing on occupational and social impairment, not only one examination.

Social impairment matters, but a rating cannot be assigned solely on social impairment. 38 CFR § 4.126

02 THE SIX RATING LEVELS

|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 100% | <p>RATING STANDARD</p> <p><b>TOTAL OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT</b></p>                                                                                                                           | <p><b>LISTED EXAMPLES INCLUDE:</b></p> <p>Gross impairment in thought or communication, persistent delusions or hallucinations, grossly inappropriate behavior, persistent danger of hurting self or others, inability to perform activities of daily living, disorientation, or profound memory loss.</p> |
| 70%  | <p>RATING STANDARD</p> <p><b>DEFICIENCIES IN MOST AREAS</b></p> <p>Such as work, school, family relations, judgment, thinking, or mood.</p>                                                             | <p><b>LISTED EXAMPLES INCLUDE:</b></p> <p>Suicidal ideation, interfering rituals, near-continuous panic or depression, impaired impulse control, neglect of hygiene, difficulty adapting to stress, or inability to maintain effective relationships.</p>                                                  |
| 50%  | <p>RATING STANDARD</p> <p><b>REDUCED RELIABILITY AND PRODUCTIVITY</b></p>                                                                                                                               | <p><b>LISTED EXAMPLES INCLUDE:</b></p> <p>Flattened affect, certain speech disturbances, panic attacks more than weekly, difficulty with complex commands, memory impairment, impaired judgment or abstract thinking, disturbances of motivation and mood, or relationship difficulty.</p>                 |
| 30%  | <p>RATING STANDARD</p> <p><b>OCCASIONAL DECREASE IN WORK EFFICIENCY</b></p> <p>With intermittent periods of inability to perform occupational tasks, although generally functioning satisfactorily.</p> | <p><b>LISTED EXAMPLES INCLUDE:</b></p> <p>Depressed mood, anxiety, suspiciousness, panic attacks weekly or less often, chronic sleep impairment, or mild memory loss.</p>                                                                                                                                  |
| 10%  | <p>RATING STANDARD</p> <p><b>MILD OR TRANSIENT IMPAIRMENT</b></p>                                                                                                                                       | <p>Symptoms decrease work efficiency and ability to perform occupational tasks only during significant stress, or symptoms are controlled by continuous medication.</p>                                                                                                                                    |
| 0%   | <p>RATING STANDARD</p> <p><b>DIAGNOSIS WITHOUT COMPENSABLE IMPAIRMENT</b></p>                                                                                                                           | <p>A mental condition is formally diagnosed, but symptoms are not severe enough to interfere with occupational and social functioning or require continuous medication.</p>                                                                                                                                |

03 HOW TO READ THE FORMULA CORRECTLY



FOCUS ON IMPAIRMENT

The percentage labels describe levels of occupational and social impairment.



EXAMPLES ARE NOT A CHECKLIST

The regulation uses “such symptoms as.” A veteran does not need every listed symptom.



DOCUMENT REAL-WORLD EFFECTS

Explain how symptoms affect work, relationships, judgment, thinking, mood, self-care, and daily activities.



DESCRIBE THE FULL PERIOD

A brief good day or difficult examination should not replace the history shown by the entire record.

Report symptoms accurately. Do not select symptoms because they appear beside a desired percentage.