

# EVIDENCE TO ANSWER A PROPOSED REDUCTION

Build the response around VA's stated improvement theory and the rule governing the current rating.



|                                       |                                      |                                                |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| START<br>Proposal and prior codesheet | COMPARE<br>Old basis to new evidence | GOAL<br>Answer the exact legal and factual gap |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|

RULE FILE

A strong response is organized as a comparison. It shows what supported the current rating, what VA says improved, why the new evidence does or does not prove durable improvement, and which procedural safeguard applies.

EVIDENCE 01 | FOUNDATION

## GATHER THE DECISION RECORD

OLD

### Prior rating decision and exam

Identify the factual findings and examination quality that supported the evaluation now at risk.

CODE

### Codesheet and effective dates

Confirm the diagnostic code, current level, service-connection date, future-exam status, and protection clocks.

NEW

### Proposal and recent examination

Mark every finding VA relies on and any missing history, test, flare-up analysis, or functional comparison.

EVIDENCE 02 | LONGITUDINAL PROOF

## SHOW THE CONDITION ACROSS TIME

CARE

### Treatment records

Use a meaningful period before and after the recent examination, including treatment intensity and restrictions.

LAY

### Veteran statement

Explain a typical day, episode pattern, accommodations, recovery time, and exam-day context.

BUDDY

### Witness statements

People who observe daily function can describe changes, consistency, episodes, and assistance.

WORK

### Employment evidence

Attendance, accommodations, reduced duties, warnings, leave, and earnings can show ordinary work conditions.

EVIDENCE 03 | MEDICAL COMPARISON

## ASK THE CLINICIAN TO ADDRESS THE RIGHT QUESTION

Was the recent exam complete?

Compare history, testing, records reviewed, specialty, flare-ups, and functional findings.

CLINICAL ANALYSIS

Is improvement material?

Identify whether disability and function truly changed, rather than only wording or a snapshot.

MATERIAL CHANGE

Will improvement continue?

Address durability under ordinary conditions of life and work.

SUSTAINED CHANGE

## TARGET THE RULE

Do not bury the response in unrelated records. Label each exhibit and connect it to the proposed reason, the rating criteria, and the applicable protection.

