

ORDINARY CONDITIONS OF LIFE AND WORK

Improvement during rest or a restrictive regimen may not show improvement in ordinary life.



ASK

Where did improvement occur?

COMPARE

Rest or regimen versus normal activity

DOCUMENT

Function across time

RULE FILE

The reduction analysis must consider whether improvement occurred while the veteran was working or actively seeking work, or only while symptoms were controlled by prolonged rest or a regimen that prevents ordinary activity.

FUNCTION 01 | CONTEXT COMPARISON

WHERE THE BETTER FINDINGS CAME FROM

REST

Prolonged rest

Better findings during bed rest, reduced activity, or recovery may not translate to ordinary functioning.

REGIMEN

Restrictive treatment

A demanding regimen that controls symptoms only by preventing work or normal activity needs context.

WORK

Ordinary activity

Evidence of function while working, seeking work, traveling, completing chores, or maintaining a normal schedule is more probative.

FUNCTION 02 | EVIDENCE MAP

DOCUMENT FUNCTION, NOT ONLY SYMPTOMS

DAY

Typical day

Describe the pace, assistance, breaks, recovery time, and activities that are actually sustainable.

FLARE

Bad periods and recovery

Record frequency, duration, triggers, functional limits, and the time required to return to baseline.

WORK

Employment context

Address attendance, accommodations, reduced duties, productivity, and why work stopped or changed.

CARE

Treatment burden

Explain medication effects, appointments, devices, therapy, rest, and restrictions needed to maintain current function.

FUNCTION 03 | PRACTICAL STATEMENT

A USEFUL FUNCTIONAL COMPARISON

Before the claimed improvement

What could the veteran do, how often, and with what assistance or recovery?

FUNCTIONAL BASELINE

At the recent exam

What conditions, rest, medication, or limited activity affected the snapshot?

EXAM CONTEXT

Across ordinary life

Has capacity actually and durably increased outside the examination room?

REAL-WORLD CHANGE

FUNCTION IS THE BRIDGE

A diagnosis can remain the same while severity changes. The key comparison is whether disability and functional impairment materially improved in ordinary life.

