

Meeting with your Veteran Service Officer - What to bring to your first appointment

Congratulations on making the decision to meet with a Veteran Service Officer and claim the benefits you have earned through your service. If this is your first visit, you will want to bring documentation with you to support your claim.

You will need the following items to file your claim:

- Original or certified copy of your discharge papers (DD-214 or other)
- Medical evidence of your diagnosis including statement(s) from doctor(s) showing current medical condition being claimed that list date of diagnosis and doctor's name and contact information (address, phone, fax)
- Medical evidence indicating that the disability was caused by or arose during your active duty service
- Medical treatment records (private, service, VA)
- Other evidence you believe will support your claim (buddy statements, OMPF)

You may also need the following items: (if it doesn't apply to you skip it)

- Copy of all marriage certificate(s) for veteran and spouse
- Copy(s) of birth certificate(s) for each claimed dependent, including your spouse
- Copy of death certificate, if applying for survivor's benefits
- Copy(s) of all divorce decree(s) for veteran and spouse
- Copy of guardianship document/court letters
- Copy of Social Security award letters showing current benefit rate
- Copy of pension or annuity award letter showing current benefit rate
- Collateral statement(s) – eyewitness accounts (if necessary)
- Any correspondence from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Social Security numbers for each claimed dependent
- Bank account and routing numbers (required for direct deposit of VA payments)

NOTE: All documents (especially DD-214) should be either originals or certified copies. A claim may be filed without all of the required documents; however, all of the above information relevant to the claim will be needed before a decision can be made on your claim. Claims received without full information may take longer to process or be denied until the information is received. Claims based on

a non-service-connected disability or death generally require active duty during a recognized wartime period. The CVSO can help request these documents if needed.