

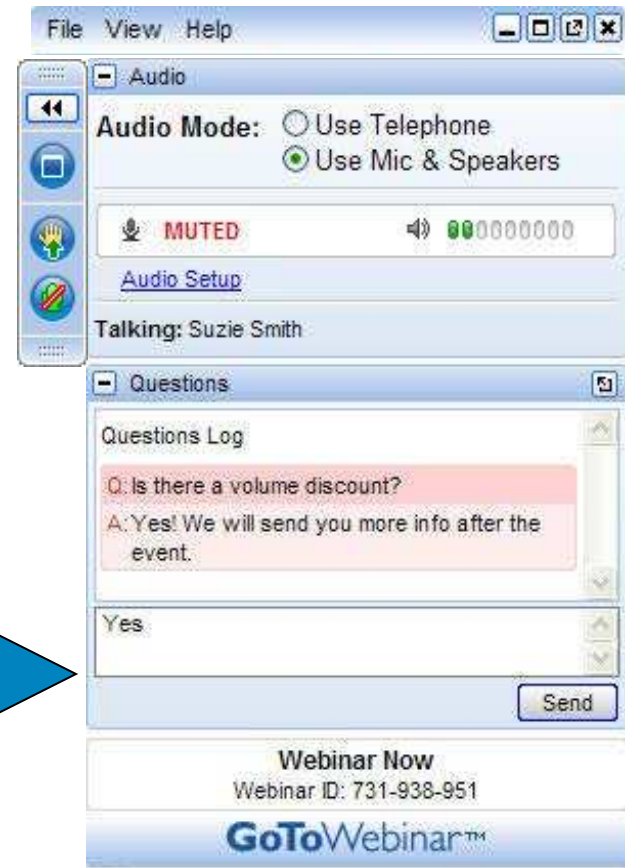
VA BENEFITS FOR SERVICEMEMBERS, VETERANS, AND FAMILIES

Veterans and the Fully Developed Claims (FDC) Program



Asking Questions

- Audience polls, questions and answers, and chat broadcasts will appear in the sidebar.
- Please e-mail questions to Outreach.VBACO@va.gov, referencing slide numbers if you can, to help us better understand your question.
- You can also type your questions in the Question Box on your screen.



Goals for Today's Webinar

Five goals for today's webinar:

- Explain the Fully Developed Claims (FDC) Program
- Demonstrate how to submit an FDC electronically through eBenefits
- Show you how a Veteran can partner with a Veterans Service Organization (VSO)
- Provide you with the knowledge and tools to help Veterans use the FDC Program
- Answer your questions about the FDC Program

Agenda

- Overview of Disability Compensation
- Fully Developed Claims (FDC) Program
- FDC Electronic Application
- Additional Application Information
- Presentation Summary and Resources
- Q&A Session

Overview of VA Benefits

- Eligibility for VA Benefits
- Disability Compensation
- Eligibility for Disability Compensation
- Pension
- Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)
- VBA Transformation

Eligibility for VA Benefits

The three main groups that are eligible for VA benefits are:

- Veterans,
- Servicemembers, including National Guard and Reserve members, and
- Dependents and Survivors of Servicemembers or Veterans.



Reserve Member



Veteran



National Guard Member



Dependents and
Survivors

Disability Compensation

What is it?

Service-connected disability compensation is a tax-free benefit paid to Veterans for a disability that arose during service, was worsened or aggravated by service, or is presumed by VA to relate to military service.

Who Qualifies?

A typical beneficiary for disability compensation is a Veteran who became injured or incurred a disease related to active military service.



Eligibility for Disability Compensation

General Eligibility Requirements

- The disability is related to an injury, disease, or event experienced while on active duty
- The Veteran did not receive a dishonorable discharge

Factors Determining the Benefit Amount

- Degree of disability
- Number of dependents
- Loss or loss of use of specific organs or extremities

PRESUMPTIVE DISABILITY BENEFITS

VA presumes that some disabilities are a result of military service. A Servicemember or Veteran may be eligible to receive disability benefits if he or she has a qualifying disability related to certain conditions of service such as exposure to Agent Orange or radiation, or being held as a prisoner of war.

Pension

Veterans can file an FDC for pension claims and utilize a VSO to do so.

What is it?

Pension is a tax-free benefit paid to wartime Veterans with limited or no income who are age 65 or older or permanently and totally disabled due to a non-service-connected cause.

General Eligibility Requirements

Generally, a Veteran must have at least 90 days of active duty service, with at least one day during a wartime period to qualify for a VA Pension. Generally, if the Veteran entered active duty after September 7, 1980, he or she must have served at least 24 months or the full period for which he or she was called or ordered to active duty (with some exceptions), with at least one day during a wartime period. The Veteran's yearly family income must be less than the amount set by Congress to qualify for the Veterans Pension benefit.

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

What is it?

DIC is a monthly tax-free benefit paid to an eligible surviving spouse, dependent children, and/or parents of a deceased Servicemember or Veteran.

General Eligibility Requirements

For a Servicemember's family to be eligible, the Servicemember must have died while on active duty or during training. For a Veteran's family to be eligible, the Veteran must have died from an injury or disease related to military service, or from a non-service-related disease or injury while receiving VA compensation for service-connected disability that was rated as totally disabling.

VBA Transformation

- Transforming the VBA claims processing system
- Empowering customers through technology
- Redeploying resources to meet a wider range of Veterans' needs
- Improving outreach to keep Veterans informed
- Building a culture of lifelong engagement with Servicemembers and Veterans
- Learn more at <http://benefits.va.gov/transformation>



FDC Reminders

- Submitting an FDC electronically with the help of a VSO ensures that the application is complete the first time it is submitted.
- The more accurate and complete information a Veteran submits at the time of application, the quicker VA can provide a decision. Therefore, submitting an FDC, with the assistance of a VSO, is the fastest way to get a disability or pension claim processed.
- The best way to apply for disability compensation and track the status of a claim is by obtaining an eBenefits account online at www.eBenefits.va.gov.
- The claimant should have access to the following information to apply:
 - Discharge or separation papers (DD214 or equivalent), **AND**
 - Private medical evidence relevant to the disability claim (doctor and hospital reports) and treatment dates, **AND**
 - Dependency records (claimed dependents' social security numbers and birth information).

Fully Developed Claims Program

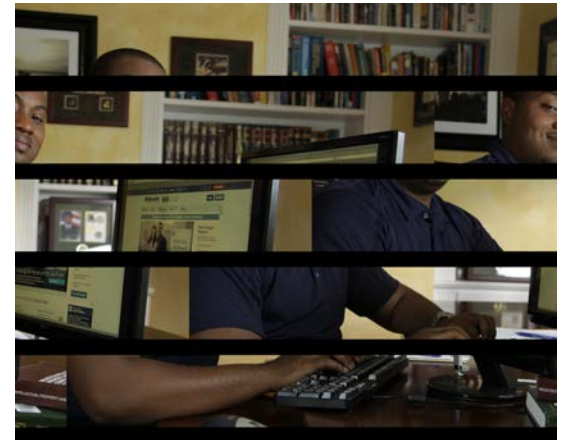
- About the Fully Developed Claims (FDC) Program
- eBenefits
- Partnering with a VSO
- FDC eligibility
- FDC statistics and trends

Fully Developed Claims (FDC) Program

- The Fully Developed Claims Program is a voluntary program that enables Veterans and their families to:
 - Submit all evidence and medical records (both private treatment records and records available at a Federal facility) at the time of claim submission, and
 - Certify he or she has no further evidence to submit.
- When an FDC is filed, VA is able to expedite the claim which:
 - Benefits the Veterans,
 - Decreases the amount of time VA spends developing a claim, and
 - Contributes to reducing the claims backlog.
- Since the FDC Program began nationwide in June 2010, VA completed more than 75,000 FDC claims, and the percentage of Veterans using the FDC Program instead of the standard process continues to rapidly increase.
- Learn more about the FDC Program here: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/fdc/>.

eBenefits

- eBenefits is a joint VA and Department of Defense (DoD) online portal allowing Veterans, Servicemembers, survivors and their families to browse VA and DoD benefits information.
- Once an eBenefits account is created, users can:
 - Quickly access eBenefits tools,
 - Apply for benefits online,
 - Download military service records (Form DD 214), and
 - Access benefit claims status 24/7.
- Submitting an FDC online through an eBenefits account will accelerate the claims process, allowing a Veteran to receive benefit payments sooner, if eligible.



eBenefits

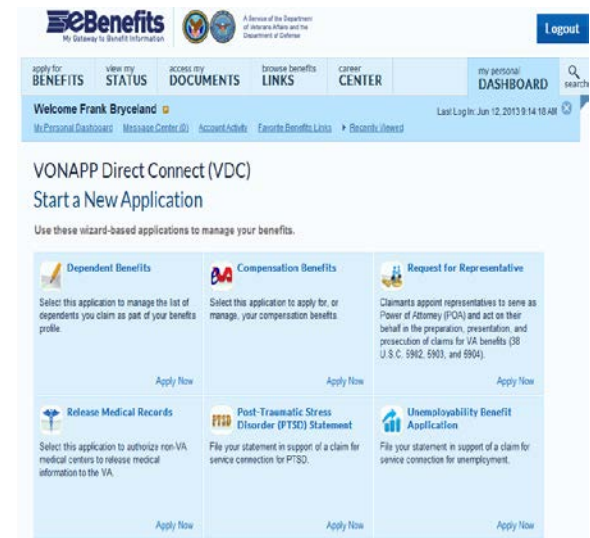
**Your VA & DoD Benefits.
Online.**

Register Now

www.ebenefits.va.gov

VA Electronic Claims Submission

- The electronic claims submission capability via eBenefits, powered by VONAPP Direct Connect (VDC), streamlines the way claims are accepted by VA.
- VDC is a web-based interface within eBenefits that intakes claims.
- VDC pre-populates information and helps Veterans navigate through the online claims submission process using interview-style questions.
- The information is loaded directly into VA's claims processing system known as the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) for paperless claims processing.
- Electronic claims submission capabilities:
 - Access, complete, and electronically submit claims for compensation benefits
 - Upload medical information associated with a claim
 - Manage dependent benefits



Partnering With a Veterans Service Organization (VSO)

- Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) serve and advocate for Veterans, Servicemembers, and their families. They can help file claims for VA disability compensation, pension, vocational rehabilitation and employment, education, home loan guaranty, life insurance, death benefits, health care, and much more at no cost.
- Accredited VSOs are federally recognized, trained, and approved by the VA Secretary to prepare, represent, and submit claims.
- VSOs can help in the FDC process by gathering required documents and information and reviewing a Veteran's claim before submitting it to VA.
- VA encourages Veterans to appoint a VSO for assistance with their FDCs.
- The Veteran must complete VA Form 21-22, Appointment of Veterans Service Organization as Claimant's Representative, for a VSO to serve as an advocate on behalf of the Veteran during the claim process.
- VSOs are able to accept VA Form 21-22 and work the claim through the *Stakeholder Enterprise Portal*.
- Veterans can partner with a VSO online through the eBenefits (www.eBenefits.va.gov) website or find a VSO near them or call 1-800-827-1000 for assistance.

Who Can File an FDC?

Veterans and their dependents or survivors can file an FDC, per the following chart:

Who	For Which FDC Benefit
Veteran	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disability compensation• Pension
Survivor or Dependent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Death pension• Dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC)

We've Completed More Than 75K Fully Developed Claims Since Implementation

- FDCs identify the information and evidence needed to substantiate a claim at the time of application
- On average, FDCs provide an overall improvement of approximately 50% in claims processing timeliness

Two Steps to Submitting an FDC

Step 1

Log into www.ebenefits.va.gov and start filling out a:

- VA Form 21-526EZ (compensation)
- VA Form 21-527EZ (pension)
- VA Form 21-534EZ (survivor's DIC, death pension, and/or accrued benefit claim)

Hit "SAVE"

Step 2

Gather all necessary evidence described in eBenefits and **submit simultaneously** with your claim. This may include:

- DoD service medical and personnel records
- Applicable DBQs
- Private medical records
- Personal and/or buddy statements

FDC Electronic Application

- Overview for Applying Online
- Steps to Apply Online

Overview for Applying Online

Below are the steps to filing an FDC using eBenefits once the eBenefits account has been created:

1. Log on to eBenefits.va.gov.
2. Enter personal information.
3. Choose a VSO.
4. Tell VA about service information.
5. Choose your type of claim.
6. Enter treatment and direct deposit information.
7. Review special circumstances
8. Upload documents.
9. Perform final review and submit the application.

Start a New Application

Use these wizard-based applications to manage your benefits.

 Dependent Benefits Select this application to manage the list of dependents you claim as part of your benefits profile. Apply Now	 Compensation Benefits Select this application to apply for, or manage, your compensation benefits. Apply Now	 Request for Representative Claimants appoint representatives to serve as Power of Attorney (POA) and act on their behalf in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for VA benefits (38 U.S.C. 5902, 5903, and 5904). Apply Now	 Release Medical Records Select this application to authorize non-VA medical centers to release medical information to the VA. Apply Now
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Open Applications

Unsubmitted applications will be deleted upon reaching their expiration date.

Application Type	Created	Last Updated	Last Opened	Expires	Actions
No open requests are available.					

Completed Applications

Completed applications greater than 365 days old will be deleted. If any information in a completed application is incorrect, you must either complete a new application or [contact the VA](#)

Application Type	Interview Completed	Submitted Online	Expires	Actions
No completed requests are available.				

Steps 1 and 2: Log onto eBenefits and Enter Personal Information



- Once logged on, click **Apply for Benefits**.
- Next, go to the **Compensation Benefits** area and select **Apply Now** to start a new application.
- Accept the **Terms and Conditions** and click **Save & Continue** on the Privacy Act Statement.
- Enter your VA File Number. If you do not know the number, select **I do not have a VA File Number** and the system will locate the record on its own.
- Review the information at the **Claim Notification** page, check **I understand these Terms and Conditions**, and click **Save & Continue**.
- Review the **Informative Material** to understand the requirements and benefits of the FDC Program, and then click **Save & Continue**.

Step 3: Choose a VSO

- After entering personal information, select **Apply for Benefits** and then **Apply for Disability Compensation** to select a VSO.
- On the **Start a New Application** page, there will be an option to **Request for Representation**.



Request for Representative

Claimants appoint representatives to serve as Power of Attorney (POA) and act on their behalf in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for VA benefits (38 U.S.C. 5902, 5903, and 5904).

[Apply Now](#)

Step 3: Choose a VSO, Continued

- This is where you will be able to find a VSO.
- Select **Recognized Veterans Service Organization (VSO)**. Select the appropriate location by **State/City** or by **Zip Code**.

[Return to Your Current POA Representative](#)

Find a Local Representative

Select the type of Representative below that best fits your needs

Recognized Veterans Service Organization (VSO)

I understand that if I choose a VSO, any one of their VA-accredited representatives can help me with my claim. I also understand that, by law, VSOs and VSO representatives cannot charge a fee for representing me in my claims for benefits. VSOs and VSO representatives can operate at the national, regional, state, or local level.

Attorney

I understand that if I choose a VA-accredited attorney, he or she may charge a reasonable fee for representing me before the Department; however, the law provides that such fees may be charged only for services provided after VA has decided a claim and I have initiated an appeal regarding that decision. Accordingly, I understand that attorneys and agents cannot charge me for simply preparing my claim.

Claims Agent

I understand that if I choose a VA-accredited claims agent, he or she may charge a reasonable fee for representing me before the Department; however, the law provides that such fees may be charged only for services provided after VA has decided a claim and I have initiated an appeal regarding that decision. Accordingly, I understand that attorneys and agents cannot charge me for simply preparing my claim.

Select a location

Search by State / Territory

State / Territory City optional

Search by Zip Code

Zip Code Search Within 50 miles -

Refine your search

Full Organization Name optional

[Blank Forms Available for Download](#)

Step 3: Choose a VSO, Continued

- eBenefits will display the filtered results, and you can select a VSO.
- eBenefits will notify the chosen representative.
- Print out the representative's contact information.

The screenshot shows the eBenefits website interface. At the top, there are logos for eBenefits, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Department of Defense. Below the logos are navigation tabs: 'apply for BENEFITS', 'view my STATUS', 'access my DOCUMENTS', 'browse benefits LINKS', and 'career CENTER'. A search bar is located on the right side of the navigation bar.

The main heading is 'Manage Your Representative for VA Claims'. Below this heading is a link to 'Return to Your Current VA Claims Representative'. The search results section is titled 'Search Results' and includes a link to 'Print Search Results'. The search criteria are: 'Showing Type: VSO | Organization Name: Disabled American Veterans | State: IL - change search criteria'. The results are displayed in a table with 6 rows, each representing a VSO. Each row has a 'Select' button next to it. To the right of the table is a map of Illinois with red pins indicating the locations of the VSOs.

	Attorney, Claims Agent, or VSO Name	Address	Contact Information	
1	Disabled American Veterans (083)	20 South Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue Waukegan, IL 60085	202-554-3581	Select
2	Disabled American Veterans (083)	2030 W. Talor Street Chicago, IL 60612	202-554-3581	Select
3	Disabled American Veterans (083)	2030 West Taylor Street Chicago, IL 60612	202-554-3581	Select
4	Disabled American Veterans (083)	2200 North Seminary Avenue Woodstock, IL 60098	202-554-3581	Select
5	Disabled American Veterans (083)	7145 S. Claremont Ave Chicago, IL 60636	202-554-3581	Select
6	Disabled American Veterans (083)	c/o VA Regional Office Chicago, IL 60612	202-554-3581	Select

Step 4: Service Information



- Verify your **Service History** and **Add a New Period of Service** if one is missing. Verified Service Periods are marked **Verified** and are not editable.
- Answer every question and input all applicable required information on the **Service Information** and **Military Pay** pages and click **Save & Continue**.

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Service Information 0% Complete

Service History

You may use the "Edit" and "Delete" links provided, as well as the "Add" button, to manage missing or unverified periods of service in your VA record. If there is an error in a verified entry shown below, please contact the VA at 1-800-827-1000 (711 if you use a TDD).

[Add a New Period of Service](#)

Branch of Service	Entered Active Duty	Released from Active Duty	Verified	Actions
Amy	11/19/1988	10/28/2001	Yes	

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Save & Continue



TIP: Start Your Claim Today

You have up to 365 days to gather the required documents and information to complete your claim from the date you initiate your claim in eBenefits. This acts as a placeholder and may allow VA to pay your benefits back to the date you first started the claim, if eligible.

Step 5: Choose Your Type of Claim



- On the **Disability Records** page, you may either **Claim a New Disability**, **Request Increase**, or **Request Reopen**. Click **Save & Continue**.
- If you choose **Claim a New Disability**, enter your new disability information. Once you **Save & Continue**, the disability will appear in the grid. Click **Save & Continue**.

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Your Disability Records > Claim a New Disability

** Required to continue * Required to submit

** What is the disability?

Please select each disability that you are claiming is due to service from the list below. You may filter the list by typing part of the name of your condition. Once you find your condition you may select it to update your entry field, or continue typing. If you do not see your condition, you may click "reset" to restore the table to the full list and search again, or simply enter your condition name to submit your own.

** Disability:

amputation - foot (feet)
amputation - leg(s)
amputation - multiple fingers
amputation - single finger
amputation - toe (toes)
amyotrophic lateral sclerosis
anatomical loss
anemia, primary
aneurysm
angina
ankle condition, bilateral
ankle condition, left
ankle condition, right

Step 5: Choose Your Type of Claim, Continued

Type of Claim	Evidence Required
Original Disability Claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medical evidence of a current physical or mental disability; AND• Evidence of an event, injury, or disease in service; AND• Evidence of a link between the Veteran's current disability and the event, injury, or disease in military service. VA usually requires medical records or medical opinions
New Disability Claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medical evidence of a current physical or mental disability; AND• Evidence of an event, injury, or disease in service; AND• Evidence of a link between the Veteran's current disability and the event, injury, or disease in military service. VA usually requires medical records or medical opinions
Reopened Disability Claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To reopen these claims, VA must receive new evidence that has never been considered or evidence that relates to the reason for the previous denial
Claim for Increased Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current evidence that shows the Veteran's disability has gotten worse
Secondary Disability Claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medical evidence that shows the Veteran has a disability that was caused or aggravated by an already established service-connected disability

Step 6: Enter Treatment and Direct Deposit Information



- At the **Confirm Treatment** page, answer the question about receiving any medical treatment at a VA Medical Center. If “No,” you’ll go to the **Direct Deposit** page. If “Yes,” you’ll go to the **Medical Treatment Records** page to provide all the information as directed.
- Make sure to click **Save & Continue** on every page.
- Upload all the required documents with the application. Click **Manage Files** to upload documents or images.

[VDC](#) > Apply for Compensation Benefits

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Treatment Records 0% Complete

Confirm Treatment

** Required to continue * Required to submit

VA is responsible for getting relevant records from a Federal facility, such as a VA medical center, that you adequately identify and authorize VA to obtain. VA will provide a medical examination for you, or get a medical opinion, if we determine it is necessary to decide your claim.

** Have you received any medical treatment at a VA Medical Center?

- No
 Yes

In addition to your application, you may also submit the following to expedite the processing of your claim:

- All, if any, relevant, private medical treatment records for the disabilities you are claiming and an identification of any treatment records from a Federal treatment facility such as a VA medical center.
- For Guard and Reserve members, any and all Service Treatment and Personnel Records in the custody of your Unit(s).
- For Pre-Discharge claims, your claim will not be processed until your service treatment records are received. Please submit them as soon as possible. Additionally, you may be asked to undergo a VA Examination for your claimed disabilities.

If you would like us to assist you in obtaining medical evidence from a private provider, please complete [VA Form 21-4142](#) Authorization and Consent to Release Information to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Please note the Veterans signature is required.



TIP: Gather Your Own Evidence

If you request VA assistance in gathering medical evidence by completing VA Form 21-4142, Authorization and Consent to Release Information to the Department of Veterans Affairs, the claim will not be processed as an FDC.

Step 6: Enter Treatment and Direct Deposit Information – Disability Benefits Questionnaire (DBQ)

- While not required to submit an FDC, Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs) speed the Fully Developed Claims Program by providing medical information that is directly relevant to determining a disability rating.
- DBQs are downloadable electronic forms that, once completed by a private or VA physician with an active medical license, serve as the equivalent to an examination at a VA facility.
- If filing electronically, gather completed DBQs from medical providers and upload them to eBenefits.
- Learn more about DBQs at eBenefits: www.eBenefits.gov.

Step 6: Enter Treatment and Direct Deposit Information - Private Medical Evidence

- Private medical evidence includes:
 - Treatment notes from private physicians
 - Hospital records
 - Outpatient records
 - Other medical records related to the claimed disability.
- The Veteran must submit copies of all relevant private treatment records to remain in the FDC Program.
- A Veteran who does not have all the evidence may save an initiated application, gather the needed evidence, upload it, and submit the claim. He or she may take up to a year to complete and submit the claim. Without submitting the necessary evidence, however, the claim will be ineligible for the FDC Program.
- If the Veteran submits a completed VA Form 21-4142 (release of information) for a private provider along with the claim, VA will exclude the claim from the FDC Program and process it routinely.

Step 7: Review Special Circumstances

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Additional Information Required During Submission

Failure to provide this information may result in your claim being excluded from expedited processing

IF YOU ARE...	THEN...
a Guard or Reserve member	Submit any and all Service Treatment and Personnel Records in the custody of your Unit(s)
claiming Dependents	Include VA Form 21-686c , <i>Declaration of Status of Dependents</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> And that child (dependent) is in school and between the ages of 18 and 23 	Also include VA Form 21-674 , <i>Request for Approval of School Attendance (in addition to VA Form 21-686c)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> And that child is a seriously disabled (helpless) child 	Also include all relevant private medical treatment records pertaining to the child's disabilities
claiming PTSD	Include VA Form 21-0781 , <i>Statement in Support of Claim for Service Connection for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder</i>
Claiming PTSD due to personal assault	Include VA Form 21-0781a , <i>Statement in Support of Claim for Service Connection for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Secondary to Personal Assault</i>
claiming Individual Unemployability (IU)	Include VA Form 21-8940 , <i>Veteran's Application for Increased Compensation Based on Unemployability</i> AND include VA Form 21-4192 , <i>Request for Employment Information in Connection with Claim for Disability Benefits</i>

Step 7: Review Special Circumstances, Continued

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Additional Information Required During Submission

Failure to provide this information may result in your claim being excluded from expedited processing

IF YOU ARE...	THEN...
claiming Specially Adapted Housing	Include VA Form 26-4555 , <i>Application in Acquiring Specially Adapted Housing or Special Home Adaptation Grant</i>
claiming Special Home Adaptation	Include VA Form 26-4555 , <i>Application in Acquiring Specially Adapted Housing or Special Home Adaptation Grant</i>
claiming Auto Allowance	Include VA Form 21-4502 , <i>Examination for Housebound Status or Permanent Need for Regular Aid and Attendance</i>
claiming additional benefits because you or your spouse require Aid and Attendance	Include VA Form 21-2680 , <i>Examination for Housebound Status or Permanent Need for Regular Aid and Attendance</i>
claiming additional benefits because you or your spouse are a patient in a nursing home	Include VA Form 21-0779 , <i>Request for Nursing Home Information in Connection with Claim for Aid and Attendance</i>
a current active duty Servicemember	Submit ALL service treatment records for your current period of service

Step 8: Upload Documents

- Click **Manage Files** to upload documents or images.
- Click **Browse** to navigate to the file or image you want to upload from the personal files on your computer. Then click on the file and click **Open**. When the file name displays, click **Upload**.
- The **Error Check** page will display errors found during the upload process. Correct the errors and then click **Recheck** to resume uploading.

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Print Incomplete Forms

Personal Information > Informative Material > Service Information > Military Pay > Disability Records > Treatment Records > Direct Deposit > Special Circumstances > Upload Documents > Error Check > Final Review

Required Documents

Attachments for Other

Uploaded files must be one of the following file types: pdf (unlocked), .jpg, .jpeg, .gif, .tiff, .bmp, or .bit.

There is a maximum file size of 5MB. If your documentation is larger than 5MB, you may split your document and upload it as multiple files.

You may also mail or FAX your required documents to your VA Regional Office with your name, and the confirmation number you will receive following the submission of this application, on each page.

Remember to always keep a copy for your records.

Document Type	File Name	Size	Date Uploaded	Actions
Other Correspondence	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> Browse...	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Upload"/>

Finished

VDC > Apply for Compensation Benefits

Print Incomplete Forms

Personal Information > Informative Material > Service Information > Military Pay > Disability Records > Treatment Records > Direct Deposit > Special Circumstances > Upload Documents > Error Check > Final Review

Error Check

You have 2 error(s)

There were errors detected in your information. Please review the information below and make corrections.

Error: ROBERTA: Your primary phone number is required.

(999) 999-9999

Error: ROBERTA: Your primary phone number type is required.
 Daytime

Warnings

There were no warnings detected in your information.

<

Recheck

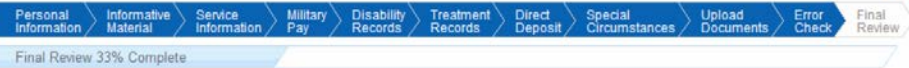
Step 9: Perform Final Review and Application Submission



- The **Final Validation** page displays all the information you provided for your final review. If a record is missing, click on the **Treatment Record** tab. Click **Save & Continue**.
- Finally, certify that you have enclosed all the information and evidence to support the claim. Select **No More Evidence** or **More Evidence** from the drop-down box.
- Click **Continue**, certify that the information is correct and true, accept the **Terms & Conditions** and click **Submit**.

[VDC](#) > Apply for Compensation Benefits

Print Incomplete Forms



Evidence Certification

** Required to continue * Required to submit

I certify I have enclosed all the information or evidence that will support my claim, to include identifying records from Federal treating facilities, or I have no information or evidence to give VA to support my claim.

OR

I will send more information or evidence to VA to support my claim.

** Evidence Certification:

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Continue

Additional Application Information

- Evidence: The Veteran's Obligation vs. VA's Obligation
- Evidence to Support a Claim
- Fully Developed Claims: Development
- New Forms
- Exclusions

Evidence – The Veteran’s Obligation vs. VA’s Obligation

- The Veteran must submit all relevant evidence and give VA enough information to enable it to obtain any relevant evidence not in the Veteran’s possession.
- When submitting an FDC, the Veteran must:
 - Submit all relevant private medical treatment records, and
 - Identify any relevant treatment records held at a federal facility, such as a VA medical center.
- For FDC claims, VA will:
 - Retrieve relevant records that the Veteran identified and authorized from a federal facility, and
 - Provide a medical examination for the Veteran, or get a medical opinion, if it is deemed necessary to decide the claim, and
 - Be able to process the claim quicker if the Veteran submits his or her service treatment records and DBQs with the claim.

Evidence to Support a Claim

If the Veteran is claiming...	See the evidence table titled...
A disability that was caused or aggravated by his or her service	Disability Service Connection
Service connected disability caused or aggravated an additional disability	Secondary Service Connection
Service connected disability has worsened	Increased Disability Compensation
Service connected disability requires hospitalization, surgery or other treatment	Temporary Total Disability Rating
Service connected disability prevents him or her from gaining or sustaining substantial employment	Individual Unemployability
A disability caused or aggravated by VA medical treatment, vocational rehabilitation, or compensated work therapy	Compensation Under 38 U.S.C. 1151
Service-connected disability causes him or her to need aid and attendance or to be confined to his or her residence	Special Monthly Compensation

Fully Developed Claims: Development

Despite the name, FDCs are not ready for a decision immediately upon receipt. VA will still complete the following development on an FDC:

- Request any identified federal records. These records include service treatment records (except Guard/Reserve), VAMC records, personnel records, Social Security records, etc.
- Request a VA exam and opinion if necessary to decide the claim.
- There are two circumstances where VA will still send a development letter to the claimant under the FDC Program:
 - A claim for a condition that has been previously denied.
 - When VA determines that federal records are unavailable.

New Forms, Continued

The updated VA Forms 21-526EZ, 21-527EZ, and the new VA Form 21-534EZ are comprised of two main parts:

- The Notice
- The Application

Please note: The application part of the new forms needs to be completely filled out and submitted to your local VA Regional Office.



NOTICE TO VETERAN/SERVICE MEMBER OF EVIDENCE NECESSARY TO SUBSTANTIATE A CLAIM FOR VETERANS DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND RELATED COMPENSATION BENEFITS

(This notice is applicable to claims for: Disability Service Connection • Secondary Service Connection • Increased Disability Compensation • Temporary Total Disability Rating • Individual Unemployability • Compensation under 38 U.S.C. 1151 • Special Monthly Compensation • Specially Adapted Housing/Special Home Adaptation • Automobile Allowance/Adaptive Equipment • Benefits Based on a Veteran's Seriousness Disabled Child)

Use this notice and the attached application to submit a claim for veterans disability compensation and related compensation benefits. This notice informs you of the evidence necessary to substantiate your claim.

Want your claim processed faster? The Fully Developed Claim (FDC) Program is the fastest way to get your claim processed and there is no risk to participate! To participate in the FDC Program, if you are making a claim for veterans disability compensation or related compensation benefits, simply submit your claim in accordance with the "FDC Criteria" shown below. If you are making a claim for veterans non service-connected pension benefits, use VA Form 21-527EZ, *Application for Pension*. If you are making a claim for survivor benefits, use VA Form 21-534EZ, *Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits*. VA forms are available at www.va.gov/vaforms.

FDC Criteria (Claim(s) for Veterans Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits)	
1.	Submit your claim on a signed and completed VA Form 21-526EZ, <i>Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits (Attached)</i> .
2.	Submit simultaneously with your claim: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All, if any, relevant, private medical treatment records; AND• An identification of any relevant treatment records available at a Federal facility, such as a VA medical center. <p>Special Circumstances</p> <p>Under the special circumstances shown below, you must also submit simultaneously with your claim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For Guard and Reserve members, any and all Service Treatment and Personnel Records in the custody of your Unit(s)• If claiming dependent, a completed VA Form 21-686c, <i>Declaration of Status of Dependents</i>. If claiming a child in school between the ages of 18 and 23, you must also submit a completed VA Form 21-674, <i>Request for Approval of School Attendance</i>. If claiming benefits for a seriously disabled (deaf/blind) child, you must also submit all relevant, private medical treatment records pertaining to the child's pertinent disabilities• If claiming Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a completed VA Form 21-0781, <i>Statement in Support of Claim for Service Connection for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder</i>, or if claiming PTSD based on personal assault, a completed VA Form 21-0781a, <i>Statement in Support of Claim for Service Connection for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Secondary to Personal Assault</i>• If claiming Individual Unemployability, a completed VA Form 21-8940, <i>Veteran's Application for Increased Compensation Based on Unemployability</i>, and a completed VA Form 21-4192, <i>Request for Employment Information in Connection with Claims for Disability Benefits</i>• If claiming Specially Adapted Housing or Special Home Adaptation, a completed VA Form 26-4155, <i>Application in Acquiring Specially Adapted Housing or Special Home Adaptation Grant</i>• If claiming Auto Allowance, a completed VA Form 21-4502, <i>Application for Automobile or Other Conveyance and Adaptive Equipment</i>• If claiming additional benefits because you or your spouse require Aid and Attendance, a completed VA Form 21-2680, <i>Examination for Housebound Status or Permanent Need for Regular Aid and Attendance</i>, or if claiming Aid and Attendance based on nursing home residence, a VA Form 21-0779, <i>Request for Nursing Home Information in Connection with Claim for Aid and Attendance</i>.• For current active duty Service Members, all service treatment records for your current period of service.
3.	Report for any VA medical examinations that VA determines are necessary to decide your claim.

VA FORM 21-526EZ

JAN 2013

SUPERSEDES VA FORM 21-526EZ, AUG 2011,
WHICH WILL NOT BE USED.

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Exclusions from the FDC Program

A claimant can be excluded from the FDC Program for various reasons, including:

- Further evidence is needed from the claimant or an identified private medical provider.
- The claim requires any development except:
 - Records in the custody of the Federal government
 - Claimant-identified Federal treatment records such as VA medical center (VAMC) treatment records
 - A VA examination/DBQ.
- The Veteran fails to report for a VA exam.
- VA receives a supplemental claim, additional evidence, or a Notice of Disagreement (NOD) on any claim after receipt of the FDC.

When a claim is excluded from the FDC Program, either at initial receipt or subsequently, the Veteran is notified.

Summary and Resources

The background of the slide is a solid blue color. It features a subtle pattern of small, light blue stars arranged in a grid. Overlaid on this are several light blue lines that resemble circuit traces or a technical drawing, including solid lines, dashed lines, and lines that form various geometric shapes and paths. There are also a few small, light blue circles scattered across the background, some of which appear to be connected to the lines.

Summary

The main takeaways:

- Veterans should file a disability compensation or pension claim through the Fully Developed Claims (FDC) Program because it allows VA to expedite the process and provide the Veteran benefits quicker, if eligible.
- Filing an FDC electronically through eBenefits is the easiest way for a Veteran to file, and makes the process even faster.
- Veterans should request a Veterans Service Organization (VSO) to represent them in the claims process. VSOs can help Veterans gather records and evidence, and help review the application prior to submission for missing information or evidence.

Resources

- eBenefits: www.eBenefits.va.gov
- Fully Developed Claims: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/fdc/>
- VBA Transformation: <http://benefits.va.gov/transformation/>
- FDC Application Forms: www.va.gov/vaforms
- VSOs: <https://www.nrd.gov/>
- [Veterans Crisis Line](https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/): 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- [Military Crisis Line](https://www.militarycrisisline.net/): 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- [National Call Center for Homeless Veterans](https://www.nccveterans.org/): 1-877-4AID-VET (424-3838)
- [VA Caregiver Support Line](https://www.va.gov/caregiver-support-line/): 1-855-260-3274
- VA Women's Hotline: 1-855-VA-WOMEN (1-855-829-6636)
- Wounded Warrior Resource Center: 1-800-342-9647



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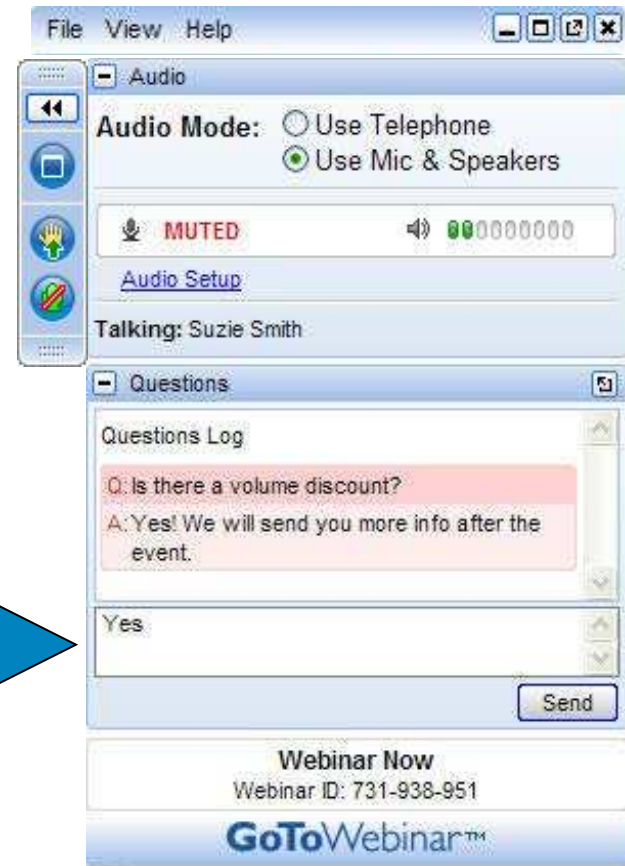
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Question & Answers

- Type your question using the webinar question feature in the sidebar
- E-mail questions to: **Outreach.VBACO@va.gov**

Asking Questions

- Please e-mail your questions to Outreach.VBACO@va.gov.
- Please note that we can only take questions about today's webinar and the topics we covered.
- To protect your privacy, we cannot accept questions or comments about a specific Veteran or claim issue during this presentation.



Thank You



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION