

National Association of County Veterans Service Officers



**Fully Developed
Claims
FDC**

Processing Time

The average processing time is over 300 days
Typical processing time nears 24-28 months
How can you 'shorten' that?
...The Fully Developed Claim (FDC)

FDC

The VA's "Fully Developed Claim" program "formalizes" what most CVSO's have been doing for years – submitting a "complete claim", one that is ready for development and a decision.

- **"complete"** = ready for the VA to develop
- **"fully developed"** = the VA only needs to get information it already has in its system (treatment records) or to order a C&P examination.
- We provide all the private medical evidence if there is any.

The One-VA Concept (?)

Service Center Managers have created their own FDC process keeping within the VA's basic guidelines.

So there are variations among the RO's

Forms

The program currently uses three forms:

21-526EZ for compensation claims, original or reopening

21-527EZ for pension claims, original or reopening

21-534EZ for death pensions and DIC claims, original or reopening

Once Again . . .

A “Fully Developed Claim” is a claim submitted with ALL evidence required to prove the claim – the complete claim...

**Except federal records, typically -
Service Treatment Records (STR)
VHA treatment records**

Use of EZ forms required

FDC claims must be filed using the proper EZ form

The forms must be signed by the claimant

Note: always use the most recent version of the form; these forms have changed some legal requirements

Legal . . .

Further – updated language on the EZ forms eliminates the need for the VA to send a Duty to Assist (DTA) letter and to provide VCAA Notice Response

Use the FDC for -

A Fully Developed Claim can be:

- A new or original claim for compensation, pension, death pension, and/or DIC
- A claim for a new disability
- A claim for a new disability secondary to an existing service connected disability
- A claim for increased evaluation of an existing service connected disability

Important Note – NG & Reserve

For current National Guard and Reserve members, service treatment records and relevant personnel records in the custody of the veteran's unit must be submitted by the claimant.

As always, the claimant **MUST** report for any VA medical examinations as requested.

Additional Documents/Forms

... For a NEW claim –

Certified copies of all DD214s

A completed VA 21-686c if claiming dependents.

and, maybe, a DBQ . . .

“Not” an FDC

An FDC claim will be ‘kicked out’ and sent to the “traditional process track” if:

- **all identified private medical records are not submitted with the claim**
- **the VA determines that additional supporting documents or records are required**
- **the veteran submits additional supporting information or documentation after the submission of the FDC**
- **the veteran fails to appear for an ordered VA examination**

FDC vs. Traditional Track

If the VA moves an FDC to the traditional processing track, it will be processed based on original date of claim

This administrative decision is not appealable!

The VA will notify the veteran that the claim has been moved, and why

To DBQ or not?

An appropriate DBQ should contribute to a quicker decision by eliminating the need for a C&P exam

However, there are some considerations:

- Make sure you are using the correct DBQ**
- Will a medical opinion be needed?**
- Will you need a DBQ before you file the claim?
i.e., you'll have to wait to get the DBQ filled out**

Some restrictions

Claimant cannot

- **“mix” an FDC with another claim**
- **file an FDC if there is a pending claim, or pending appeal, on an issue related to the new issue being claimed**