THE CLAIM BRIEF

Helping Veterans Understand VA Decisions

FREE PRINTABLE RESOURCE

# VA Claim Evidence Organizer

Keep records, dates, observations, and submission notes together.

6-PAGE PRINTABLE ORGANIZER

- ☐ Make a record inventory for one issue.
- ☐ Track treatment and document date ranges.
- ☐ Separate firsthand observations from medical conclusions.

> Use privately, offline. This resource provides general education and writing space. It does not evaluate your claim, select a review option, or replace accredited help.

01 / ONE ISSUE, ONE ORGANIZED STARTING POINT

# Build a record inventory

VA considers evidence related to the benefit and claim type. Its evidence page describes service records, medical records, and lay evidence. This organizer tracks what you have; it is not a complete list of requirements for every claim.

**Issue I am organizing - private notes**

| Record type | Source / date range | Have / requested / submitted |
|---|---|---|
| Service records | | |
| VA medical records | | |
| Private medical records | | |
| Lay or witness observations | | |
| Other documents | | |

Use VA's official evidence instructions for your claim type. A blank row is not a finding that a required item is missing, and a completed row does not prove entitlement.

02 / DATES AND SOURCE REFERENCES

# Make a factual timeline

Record dates as accurately as you can. If a date is approximate or based on memory, label it that way. Keep observations separate from assumptions about medical cause or legal entitlement.

| Date / approximate date | Event or observation | Supporting record / location |
|---|---|---|
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Write in your own words. Do not change a date or description to make it fit a theory. Leave room for uncertainty when the record is incomplete.

03 / KNOW WHAT EACH SOURCE COVERS

# Track treatment records

A source may have more than one relevant date range. Use this page to track records you have, have asked for, or want to discuss with accredited help.

| Provider / facility | Treatment dates | Record type / status |
|---|---|---|
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| | | |

**Record request or date-range questions**

This organizer does not request records or grant permission for VA to obtain them. Use current VA instructions and any required authorization forms.

04 / SPECIFIC, TRUTHFUL DESCRIPTIONS

# Record firsthand observations

Lay evidence can describe matters a person observed or experienced. A factual description and a medical opinion are different kinds of information. Use this page to organize observations, not to diagnose a condition or script someone else's account.

**What happened or what I personally observed**

Describe an actual example, in your own words.

**When, how often, and what changed in daily activities**

Label estimates and avoid guessing about events you did not observe.

**Who observed it, and how they know - private notes**

VA lists ways to submit lay evidence on its official evidence page. This worksheet is not a VA statement form and does not determine what evidence is sufficient.

05 / COPIES, QUESTIONS, AND SOURCES

# Keep a submission record

| Document / record group | Date submitted | Method / confirmation saved |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

**Questions for an accredited representative**

## Official sources and next reading

**VA: Evidence needed for a disability claim**
va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/evidence-needed/

**VA: How to file a disability claim**
va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/

**VA: Find and appoint accredited help**
va.gov/get-help-from-accredited-representative/

Prepared October 30, 2026. Save copies and submission confirmations privately. No website upload is needed. General education only; not affiliated with VA and not a substitute for legal, medical, or individual claim advice.