**How to Understand VA Acronyms**

**What:** Common acronyms used by the VA

**Service Officer Notes:** Much like the Department of Defense (DOD), the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) uses many acronyms in the handling of claims and appeals for VA benefits. The following is a sampling of some of the acronyms that a claimant or appellant may see in various military and VA records and documents.

**Web Sites:** [**https://helpdesk.vetsfirst.org/index.php?pg=kb.page&id=2825**](https://helpdesk.vetsfirst.org/index.php?pg=kb.page&id=2825)

**Who Qualifies:**

Any Veteran

**Information:** Acronyms below:

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| 9 | VA Form 9, Appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals |
| 10-10EZ | VA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Health Benefits |
| 10-10EZR | VA Form 10-10EZR, Health Benefits Renewal Form |
| 10-10EC | VA Form 10-10EC, Application for Extended Care Services |
| 1151 Claim | A claim for benefits under 38 U.S.C. Section 1151 as a result of injury caused by VA treatment or rehabilitation services similar to a medical malpractice claim. |
| A&A | Aid and attendance |
| AAO | Assistant adjudication officer |
| ABCMR | Army Board for Correction of Military Records |
| ACAP | Annual clothing allowance payment |
| ADA | Americans with Disabilities Act |
| ADHC | Adult day health care |
| ADL | Activities of daily living |
| ADT | Active duty for training |
| AFB | Air Force Base |
| AFBCMR | Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records |
| AFHRA | Air Force Historical Research Agency |
| AFI | Air Force instruction |
| AFIP | Armed Forces Institute of Pathology |
| AGG | Aggravated in service |
| AHRC | Army Human Resources Command |
| AL | American Legion |
| ALJ | Administrative Law Judge |
| ALS | Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis |
| AMC | Appeals Management Center |
| AML | Acute myelogenous leukemia |
| AMVETS | American Veterans |
| AO | Agent Orange or adjudication officer |
| AOCAP | Agent Orange Class Assistance Program |
| AOJ | Agency of original jurisdiction |
| AOR | Agent Orange Registry |
| APA | Administrative Procedures Act |
| Appellee | The party in an appeal who is defending the decision on appeal.  In the Veterans Court, the VA Secretary is always the Appellee. |
| Appellant | The party in an appeal who is challenging the decision on appeal.  In the Veterans Court, the claimant seeking benefits (veteran or dependent) is always the Appellant. |
| ARBA | Army Review Boards Agency |
| AVSCM | Assistant Veterans Service Center Manager |
| AWA | All Writs Act |
| AWOL | Absent without official leave |
| BCD | Bad conduct discharge |
| BCMR | Board for Correction of Military Records |
| BCNR | Board for Correction of Naval Records |
| BDD | Benefits Delivery at Discharge |
| BDN | Benefits Delivery Network |
| BHL | Bilateral hearing loss |
| Board | The Board of Veterans' Appeals or "BVA". |
| BVA | The Board of Veterans' Appeals.  The Board is the organization within VA that reviews initial rating decisions when the claimant files a Notice of Disagreement. |
| C-file | Claims file.  VA creates a hard copy paper file for each claimant that contains all the documents related to that claimant since the first application for benefits.  C-files can contain thousands of pages of documents and must be physically shipped between offices when claims are reviewed by different VA groups or the Veterans Court. |
| CAAF | Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces |
| CAVC | The Unites States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.  The appellate court to which claimants can appeal adverse Board decisions.  Also known as the "Veterans Court." |
| C&P | Compensation and Pension |
| CARES | Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services |
| CAVC | Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims |
| CBO | Chief business office |
| CBOC | Community Based Outpatient Clinic |
| CCF | Compound comminuted fracture |
| CDR | Counter designation of record |
| CFR | Code of Federal Regulations |
| CG | Coast Guard |
| CGBCMR | Coast Guard Board for Correction of Military Records |
| CHAMPUS | Department of Defense Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Service |
| CHAMPVA | Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs |
| CHR | Consolidated health record |
| CIB | Combat Infantryman Badge |
| Claim Number | Each claimant is assigned a unique VA claim number that VA uses to identify that claimant for life.  Claimants should put their claim number on each document and correspondence sent to VA. |
| CLC | VA Community Living Center (formerly VA Nursing Home Care Units) |
| CLL | Chronic lymphocytic leukemia |
| CMB | Combat Medical Badge |
| CMD | Chief Medical Director |
| CMO | Chief Medical Officer |
| CNHC | Community nursing home care |
| CO | VA Central Office or commanding officer |
| COD | Character of discharge |
| COG | Convenience of the government |
| COLA | Cost-of-living adjustment |
| Compensation | A monetary benefit awarded based on the degree of disability caused by a service-connected condition. |
| CONUS | The contiguous United States |
| COVA | Court of Veterans Appeals (Renamed Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims) |
| COWC | Committee on Waivers and Compromises |
| CPI | Claims Processing Improvement |
| CRC | Community residential center |
| CRDP | Concurrent retirement and disability pay |
| CRSC | Combat-related special compensation |
| CUE | Clear and unmistakable error |
| CURR | Center for Units Records Research |
| CWT | VA Compensated Work Therapy Program |
| DAV | Disabled American Veterans |
| DBQ | Disability Benefits Questionnaire |
| DC | Diagnostic code |
| DD | Dishonorable discharge |
| DD-214 | Discharge certificate |
| DDD | Degenerative disc disease |
| DEA | Dependent's educational assistance |
| DES | Disability evaluation system |
| DFAS | Defense Finance and Accounting Services |
| DFR | Dropped from the rolls |
| DIC | Death & Indemnity Compensation.  A benefit awarded to surviving spouses and qualifying dependents when a service-connected condition is a cause of a veteran's death. |
| DM | Diabetes mellitus |
| DMZ | Demilitarized zone |
| DOD | Department of Defense |
| DRB | Discharge Review Board |
| DRO | Decision Review Officer.  Usually an experienced member of a regional office rating team who reviews a rating decision at the request of the claimant after an initial denial.  DRO review is optional and cannot change decisions favorable to a claimant. |
| DSM | American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders |
| DSO | Department service officer |
| DTR | Deep tendon reflexes |
| DVA | The Department of Veterans Affairs.  A technically more accurate acronym than "VA," although not as widely used. |
| EAD | Entry on active duty |
| EAJA | Equal Access to Justice Act |
| eBenefits | VA online portal that allows veterans to manage their benefits and personal information. |
| ECA | Expedited Claims Adjudication Initiative |
| ED | Erectile dysfunction |
| EGC | Electrocardiogram |
| EKG | Electrocardiogram |
| EOB | Explanation of benefits |
| EOD | Entry on Duty or Explosive Ordinance Disposal |
| EVR | Eligibility verification report |
| FDC | Fully Developed Claim |
| Federal Circuit | The United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.  The federal appellate court to which claimants and VA can appeal Veteran Court decisions. |
| FOIA | Freedom of Information Act |
| Form 9 | The VA form that must be submitted after receipt of a Statement of the Case to perfect an appeal to the Board of Veterans Appeals. |
| FTCA | Federal Tort Claims Act |
| GAO | Government Accounting Office |
| GC | General counsel |
| GPO | Government Printing Office |
| GSW | Gunshot wound |
| GWS | Gulf war syndrome |
| HB | Housebound |
| HIPAA | Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act |
| HISA | Home improvement and structural alterations |
| HIV | Human immunodeficiency virus |
| HO | Hearing officer |
| IED | Improvised explosive device |
| IG | Inspector general |
| IME | Independent medical expert or independent medical evaluation |
| INC | Incurred in service |
| IOM | Institute of Medicine |
| IOP | Internal operating procedures |
| IRIS | Inquiry Routing and Information System |
| IU | Individual unemployability |
| IVAP | Income for VA purposes |
| JAG | Judge Advocate General |
| JMR | Joint motion for remand |
| JSRRC | Joint Services Records Research Center |
| LOD | Line of duty |
| LOM | Limitation of motion |
| LSW | Licensed social worker |
| M21-1MR | Adjudication Procedures Manual Rewrite |
| M-1 | VA Healthcare Adjudication Manual |
| M-21 | VA Claims Adjudication Manual |
| MACR | Missing air crew reports |
| MAPR | Maximum annual pension rate |
| MGIB | Montgomery GI Bill |
| MIB | Marine index bureau |
| MOS | Military occupational specialty |
| MPR | Military personnel records |
| MRI | Magnetic resonance imaging |
| MST | Military Sexual Trauma |
| NA | National Archives |
| NARA | National Archives and Record Administration |
| NAS | National Academy of Sciences |
| NAUS | National Association for Uniformed Services |
| NHL | Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma |
| NMCB | U.S. Navy Mobile Construction Battalion |
| NOA | Notice of Appeal |
| NOD | Notice of Disagreement.  Claimants must file a written NOD within one year of receiving a rating decision to be able to appeal that decision. |
| NOS | Not otherwise specified |
| NPC | Naval Personnel Command |
| NPRC | National Personnel Records Center |
| NRPC | Naval Reserve Personnel Command |
| NSC | Non-service-connected |
| NSLI | National Service Life Insurance |
| NSO | National service officer |
| NVLSP | National Veterans Legal Services Program |
| OEF | Operation Enduring Freedom |
| OGC | Office of the General Counsel |
| OIF | Operation Iraqi Freedom |
| OIG | Office of Inspector General |
| OMPF | Official military personnel file |
| OPC | Outpatient clinic |
| OPT | Outpatient treatment |
| OQP | Office of Quality and Performance |
| OTH | Other than honorable |
| PDBR | Physical Disability Board of Review |
| PDR | Physicians’ Desk Reference |
| PEB | Physical Evaluation Board |
| Pension | A VA benefit based on financial need available to fully disabled veterans who served during a time of war. |
| PERMS | Permanent Electronic Records Management System |
| PG | Persian Gulf |
| PGW | Persian Gulf War |
| PIES | Personnel Information Exchange System |
| PIF | Pending issue file |
| PMC | Pension Maintenance Center |
| POA | Power of attorney |
| POW | Prisoner-of-war |
| PRC | Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center |
| Presumption | A legal term meaning that no evidence of a nexus between a current medical condition and an in-service occurrence is required.  A claimant currently suffers from a "presumptive condition" only needs to establish he or she experienced the specified in-service event to be awarded service connection. See related [Knowledge Book](http://helpdesk.vetsfirst.org/index.php?pg=kb.page&id=1991). |
| PT | Physical therapy or permanent total disability |
| PTE | Peace time era |
| PTSD | Posttraumatic stress disorder |
| PEBLO | Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officer |
| RAD | Release from active duty |
| Rating Decision | The initial VA decision on a claim which either grants or denies an award or "continues" the claim for further development. |
| Rating Schedule | The table of medical conditions and disabilities established by law that VA raters use to determine the degree of disability for compensation purposes. |
| Remand | Return of a decision to the organization that made it for additional review and revision.  The Board remands rating decisions to the originating regional office.  The Veterans Court remands Board decisions back to the Board. |
| RMC | Records Management Center |
| RMO | Records Management Officer |
| RN | Registered nurse |
| RO | Regional Office |
| ROTC | Reserve Officers' Training Corps |
| RVN | Republic of Vietnam |
| RVSR | Rating Veterans Service Representative |
| SBP | Survivor Benefit Plan |
| SC | Service-connected |
| SDRP | Special Discharge Review Program |
| SDVI | Service Disabled Veterans' Insurance |
| Secretary | The Secretary of Veterans Affairs.  The Cabinet officer who is the administrative head of VA. |
| Service Connection | A requirement that a claimant for VA compensation must (1) have a current medical condition; (2) identify an event or condition during military service; and (3) establish a nexus or connection between the medical condition and the in-service event or condition.  Without establishing service connection, VA will not award compensation benefits. |
| SF | Special forces |
| SGLI | Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance |
| SMC | Special Monthly Compensation.  Additional compensation available to the most seriously disabled veterans for anatomical loss of limbs or loss of use of body parts, aid and attendance, and other special needs. |
| SMP | Special monthly pension |
| SMR | Service medical record |
| SN | Service number |
| SOC | Statement of the Case.  A document that VA must prepare and provide to a claimant who has submitted a timely Notice of Disagreement.  The purpose of an SOC is to identify the facts and law VA used to reach the decision(s) with which the claimant disagrees. |
| SPD | Separation program designator |
| SPN | Separation program number |
| SRD | Schedule for Rating Disabilities |
| SSA | Social Security Administration |
| SSB | Special separation benefits |
| SSDI | Social Security Disability Income |
| SSI | Supplemental Security Income |
| SSN | Social Security Number |
| SSOC | Supplemental Statement of the Case |
| STR | Service treatment records |
| STS | Soft tissue sarcoma |
| TAD | Temporary active duty |
| TBI | Traumatic brain injury |
| TCDD | 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzodioxin |
| TDIU | Total Disability based on Individual Unemployability.  A special rating that considers whether a claimant who does not meet the rating schedule requirements for 100% disability is still unable to work in a substantially gainful occupation.  A TDIU award pays benefits at the 100% scheduler rate even though the actual rating percentage is less than 100%. |
| TRDL | Temporary disabled retirement list |
| TDY | Temporary duty |
| UCMJ | Uniform Code of Military Justice |
| U.S.C. | United States Code |
| U.S.C.A. | United States Code Annotated |
| U.S.C.S. | United States Code Service |
| USGLI | United States Government Life Insurance |
| USJSRRC | United States Joint Service Records Research Center |
| VA | The most commonly used acronym for the Department of Veterans Affairs. |
| VACO | VA Central Office |
| VAF | VA form |
| VAGC | VA General Counsel |
| VAHAC | VA Health Administration Center |
| VAMC | VA Medical Center |
| VAOGC | VA Office of the General Counsel |
| VAOIG | VA Office of the Inspector General |
| VAOPC | VA outpatient clinic |
| VAR | VA regulation |
| VARO | VA Regional Office |
| VBA | Veterans Benefits Administration |
| VCAA | Veterans Claims Assistance Act |
| VEAP | Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance Program |
| Veterans Court | Another common name for the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.  *See* *also* CAVC. |
| VFW | Veterans of Foreign Wars |
| VGLI | Veterans' Group Life Insurance |
| VHA | Veterans’ Health Administration |
| VISN | Veterans Integrated Service Network |
| VJRA | Veterans Judicial Review Act |
| VLJ | Veterans Law Judge.  A member of the Board of Veterans' Appeals who hears appeals from claimants who disagree with a rating decision. |
| VMLI | Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance |
| VONAPP | Veterans Online Application.  A VA website for electronically applying for VA benefits.  <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal?_nfpb=true&_nfxr=false&_pageLabel=Vonapp> |
| VRC | Vocational rehabilitation counseling |
| VSCM | Veterans Service Center Manager |
| VSM | Vietnam Service Medal |
| VSO | Veterans service organization |
| VSR | Veterans Service Representative |
| WRIISC | War Related Illness and Injury Center |

**POCs:** None