

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
**Veterans Health Administration**  
*Claims and Appeals Process*



**So, your claim was denied...*NOW WHAT?***

If you disagree with a benefits decision, you have three options for review.

**Supplemental Claim:** If you have **new** evidence to submit that is **relevant** to your claim, you may file a Supplemental Claim. You must file a Supplemental Claim within **one year** of the prior decision to continuously pursue your claim. Here are some points to remember:

- New and relevant evidence **must** be **submitted** or **identified** with the Supplemental Claim.
- Evidence is “relevant” if it tends to prove or disprove a matter at issue in the claim. Evidence is “new” if it was not considered in the previous decision.
- VHA will assist in gathering evidence that you identify with your Supplemental Claim.

**To file a Supplemental Claim, please submit VA Form 20-0995 to the facility where your claim was denied. For PCAFC decisions, please refer to VA Form 10-305 for filing instructions.**

**Higher-Level Review:** If you disagree with a benefits decision, but you have no new evidence to submit, you can request a Higher-Level Review. Here are some points to remember:

- If you choose this option, a more experienced or senior decision-maker will take a second look at the same evidence.
- Your claim will be considered based on the evidence that was part of the record at the time of the prior decision. No new evidence will be considered.
- However, you may submit an explanation in support of your claim.
- You may request a one-time, informal conference to discuss your claim.

**To request a Higher-Level Review, please submit VA Form 20-0996 to the facility where your claim was denied within one year of the decision. For PCAFC decisions, please refer to VA Form 10-305 for filing instructions.**

**Appeal to the Board:** If you disagree with a benefits decision, you can file an appeal with the Board and request to: 1) **submit additional evidence**, 2) **have a hearing**, OR 3) have the Board decide your appeal based on the **same evidence** as the prior decision. These options are called “dockets”.

**Direct Review docket:** Your appeal will be reviewed by a Veterans Law Judge based on the same evidence of record at the time of prior decision.

**Evidence Submission docket:** You or your representative may submit evidence to the Board with or within 90 days following the submission of a VA Form 10182.

**Hearing docket:** You will be scheduled for a hearing. You or your representative may submit evidence at or within 90 days following the hearing.

**To appeal to the Board, please submit VA Form 10182 to the address or fax number included on the form within one year of the decision.**

**Your decision came with a *full explanation* of what to do if you disagree with your decision. Please refer to that document for a complete explanation of your rights and options.**