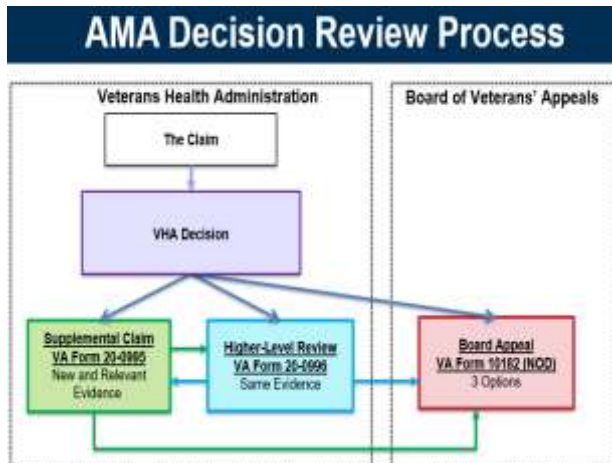


DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

**Veterans Health Administration**  
*Claims and Appeals Process*



**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
GO TO:**

[www.va.gov/health/appeals](http://www.va.gov/health/appeals)



# STOP!

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.

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

## ***Your Options***

If you disagree with a benefits decision, you have these 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”.

Here are some points to remember:

**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.