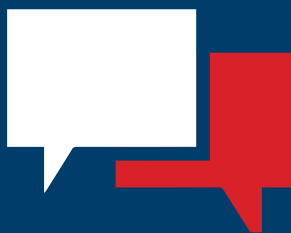


FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)



Decision Ready Claims

www.benefits.va.gov/drc

1 What is the DRC Program?

The Decision Ready Claim (DRC) Program is the fastest way to get your VA claim processed. With the DRC Program, you can get a decision within 30 days after you submit your claim by working with an accredited Veterans Service Organization (VSO) or other accredited representative. Your claim is considered "decision-ready" if you provide all relevant medical records and supporting evidence when you submit your claim, including federal records and VA claim exam results provided on Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs).

2 How do I submit a claim through the DRC Program?

You must work with an accredited VSO or other accredited representative to file a claim through the DRC Program. VSOs can help you determine if the DRC Program is right for you and your claim. They can then serve as advocates on your behalf and help you gather all the required medical evidence to support your claim.

As part of the DRC Program, VSOs can now request a VA claim exam for you, also called a Compensation & Pension (C&P) exam, if needed. Your VSO will check to make sure all of your necessary information is included, such as your federal and medical records, and help you electronically submit your claim to VA.

3 Is it true I can get a claim decision in 30 days?

Yes, when a VSO submits a DRC on your behalf to VA, you can get a decision on your claim within 30 days after you submit your claim.

4 What types of claims are eligible for the DRC Program?

Currently, the DRC Program is available for the following types of compensation claims:

- ✓ Direct Service Connection Claims
- ✓ Presumptive Service Connection Claims
- ✓ Secondary Service Connection Claims
- ✓ Increased Disability Claims
- ✓ Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Claims
- ✓ Pre-Discharge Claims

To file a DRC, you must have previously filed a VA claim and received a rating decision from VA on that claim (this does not include Pre-Discharge or DIC claims). You also cannot file your claim through the DRC Program if you currently have another disability claim pending, if you have an appeal pending for the condition you are claiming, or if your claim is related to pension or special monthly compensation (SMC).

To see a full list of exclusions that would disqualify your claim from the DRC Program, go to www.benefits.va.gov/drc.

5 How do I find an accredited VSO?

You can find an accredited VSO near you and appoint them to serve as your representative free of charge by going to www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/vso-search.

Accredited VSOs are fully trained on the DRC Program and can help you determine if the DRC Program is right for your claim.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)



What information do I need to submit with my claim?

You will need copies of your federal records, medical records, completed Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs), and any other evidence that supports your claim. Depending on the type of DRC you're filing, you may also need copies of your Service Treatment Records (STRs), the Veteran's death certificate, and all of the Veteran's relevant medical records. Your VSO can also help you gather any medical information you are missing to make sure your claim is complete.

Your VSO will request a claim exam for you, if needed. Providing all relevant evidence when you submit your DRC allows VA to process your claim faster.



What happens if my claim doesn't meet the DRC criteria?

If your claim does not include all the required information and evidence needed for a VA rating specialist to make a decision when you submit your application, your claim will be routed through the Fully Developed Claim (FDC) Program or traditional claim process. If your claim is rerouted from the DRC Program, it may take longer than 30 days to get a claim decision. You and your VSO will be notified of the reason(s) why your claim could not be processed through the DRC Program.



How is the DRC Program different from the Fully Developed Claims (FDC) Program?

In the DRC Program, you are required to work with an accredited VSO, who will help you gather all relevant records and evidence, including federal records and completed DBQs, to file a Decision Ready Claim. In this program, VSOs also have the ability to request your VA claim exam before you submit your claim. This allows you to include your claim exam results to submit a truly complete claim so it can go directly to a VA Rating Specialist for a decision.

In the FDC Program, while you must also provide all relevant and required evidence when you submit your FDC application, the claim may still need additional evidence because you have not yet attended a VA claim exam and VA may still need to request additional federal records. In the FDC Program, VA can only schedule your claim exam after your claim has been submitted, and may need to further develop your claim to be complete, which can take additional processing time.



What if my VSO does not participate in the DRC Program?

Not all accredited VSOs choose to participate in the DRC Program. You may want to consider a few VSOs until you find one that fits best for you and your claim needs.



Can I get reimbursed for travel costs for attending my DRC exam?

Yes. Similar to the standard contract exam process, you can get reimbursed for travel expenses for attending your exam, such as mileage. However, VA does not provide any travel assistance to physically help you get to and from your exam location. Ask your VSO how to get travel reimbursement for your DRC exam.