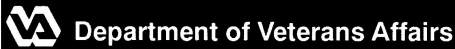


**How the VA Disability Benefits Questionnaire (DBQ) can sabotage a veteran's service-connected claim.**

OMB Control No. 2900-0779  
Respondent Burden: 30 minutes



**REVIEW POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)  
DISABILITY BENEFITS QUESTIONNAIRE**

**IMPORTANT** - THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) **WILL NOT PAY** OR **REIMBURSE** ANY EXPENSES OR COST INCURRED IN THE PROCESS OF COMPLETING AND/OR SUBMITTING THIS FORM. PLEASE READ THE PRIVACY ACT AND RESPONDENT BURDEN INFORMATION BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM.

NAME OF PATIENT/VETERAN

PATIENT/VETERAN'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

**NOTE TO PSYCHIATRIST/PSYCHOLOGIST** - Your patient is applying to the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for disability benefits. VA will consider the information you provide on this questionnaire as part of their evaluation in processing the veteran's claim. Please note that this questionnaire is for disability evaluation, not for treatment purposes.

**NOTE:** If the Veteran experiences a mental health emergency during the interview, please terminate the interview and obtain help, using local resources as appropriate. You may also contact the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Stay on the Crisis Line until help can link the Veteran to emergency care.

The following health care providers can perform REVIEW examinations for PTSD: a board-certified or board-eligible psychiatrist; a licensed doctorate-level psychologist; a doctorate-level mental health provider under the close supervision of a board-certified or board-eligible psychiatrist or licensed doctorate-level psychologist; a psychiatry resident under close supervision of a board-certified or board-eligible psychiatrist or licensed doctorate-level psychologist; a clinical or counseling psychologist completing a one-year internship or residency (for purposes of a doctorate-level degree) under close supervision of a board-certified or board-eligible psychiatrist or licensed doctorate-level psychologist; or a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW), a nurse practitioner, a clinical nurse specialist, or a physician assistant, under close supervision of a board-certified or board-eligible psychiatrist or licensed doctorate-level psychologist.

**SECTION I - DIAGNOSTIC SUMMARY**

**NOTE:** This section should be completed based on the current examination and clinical findings.

1. DOES THE VETERAN NOW HAVE OR HAS HE OR SHE EVER BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH PTSD?

YES  NO

**This first page "signals to" the medical provider this form will take several hours work instead of the 30 minutes noted at the top of the form.**

(If "Yes," continue to co

(If no diagnosis of PTSD, and the veteran has another Axis I and/or II diagnosis, then continue to complete this Questionnaire and/or VA Form 21-0960P-1, Eating Disorders Disability Benefits Questionnaire)

**SECTION II - CURRENT DIAGNOSES**

2A. LIST CURRENT DIAGNOSES

**Now the provider must list other psychiatric diagnoses and then look up the ICD code in the DSM V. No provider memorizes the ICD codes.**

DIAGNOSIS #1: \_\_\_\_\_

ICD CODE: \_\_\_\_\_ INDICATE THE AXIS CATEGORY:  AXIS I  AXIS II

COMMENTS, IF ANY: \_\_\_\_\_

**The VA encourages finding as many diagnoses as possible so some or many of the diagnoses can be labeled as non-service-connected.**

DIAGNOSIS #2: \_\_\_\_\_

ICD CODE: \_\_\_\_\_ INDICATE THE AXIS CATEGORY:  AXIS I  AXIS II

COMMENTS, IF ANY: \_\_\_\_\_

DIAGNOSIS #3: \_\_\_\_\_

ICD CODE: \_\_\_\_\_ INDICATE THE AXIS CATEGORY:  AXIS I  AXIS II

COMMENTS, IF ANY: \_\_\_\_\_

DIAGNOSIS #4: \_\_\_\_\_

ICD CODE: \_\_\_\_\_ INDICATE THE AXIS CATEGORY:  AXIS I  AXIS II

COMMENTS, IF ANY: \_\_\_\_\_

IF ADDITIONAL DIAGNOSES, DESCRIBE USING ABOVE FORMAT:

**Unlike Social Security forms, this form has no checkboxes throughout most of the form and every answer must be handwritten.**

2B. AXIS III - MEDICAL DIAGNOSES (to include TBI):

ICD CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS, IF ANY: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION II - CURRENT DIAGNOSES (Continued)**

2C. AXIS IV - PSYCHOSOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS (describe, if any):

2D. AXIS V - CURRENT GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF FUNCTIONING (GAF) SCORE:

The DSM V has no GAF table.

COMMENTS, IF ANY:

**SECTION III - DIFFERENTIATION OF SYMPTOMS**

3A. DOES THE VETERAN HAVE MORE THAN ONE MENTAL DISORDER DIAGNOSED?

YES  NO (If "Yes," complete Item 3B)

Is this question not answered on page one? Of course.

3B. IS IT POSSIBLE TO DIFFERENTIATE WHAT SYMPTOM(S) IS/ARE ATTRIBUTABLE TO EACH DIAGNOSIS?

YES  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

The answer must be "YES" or the opinion is considered inadequate.

(If "No," provide reason that it is not possible to differentiate what portion of each symptom is attributable to each diagnosis):

(If "Yes," list which symptoms are attributable to each diagnosis):

Now the provider must split hairs and jump through hoops to entertain the VA.

3C. DOES THE VETERAN HAVE A DIAGNOSED TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI)?

YES  NO  NOT SHOWN IN RECORDS REVIEWED (If "Yes," complete Item 3D)

(Comments, if any):

3D. IS IT POSSIBLE TO DIFFERENTIATE WHAT SYMPTOM(S) IS/ARE ATTRIBUTABLE TO EACH DIAGNOSIS?

YES  NO  NOT APPLICABLE

(If "No," provide reason that it is not possible to differentiate what portion of each symptom is attributable to each diagnosis):

(If "Yes," list which symptoms are attributable to each diagnosis):

**SECTION IV - OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT**

4A. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST SUMMARIZES THE VETERAN'S LEVEL OF OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT WITH REGARDS TO ALL MENTAL DIAGNOSES? (Check only one)

- NO MENTAL DISORDER DIAGNOSIS
- A MENTAL CONDITION HAS BEEN FORMALLY DIAGNOSED, BUT SYMPTOMS ARE NOT SEVERE ENOUGH EITHER TO INTERFERE WITH OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL FUNCTIONING OR TO REQUIRE CONTINUOUS MEDICATION
- OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT DUE TO MILD OR TRANSIENT SYMPTOMS WHICH DECREASE WORK EFFICIENCY AND ABILITY TO PERFORM OCCUPATIONAL TASKS ONLY DURING PERIODS OF SIGNIFICANT STRESS, OR SYMPTOMS CONTROLLED BY MEDICATION
- OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT WITH OCCASIONAL DECREASE IN WORK EFFICIENCY AND INTERMITTENT PERIODS OF INABILITY TO PERFORM OCCUPATIONAL TASKS, ALTHOUGH GENERALLY FUNCTIONING SATISFACTORILY, WITH NORMAL ROUTINE BEHAVIOR, SELF-CARE AND CONVERSATION
- OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT WITH REDUCED RELIABILITY AND PRODUCTIVITY
- OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT WITH DEFICIENCIES IN MOST AREAS, SUCH AS WORK, SCHOOL, FAMILY RELATIONS, JUDGMENT, THINKING AND/OR MOOD
- TOTAL OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT

<This answer is the only one to prove individual unemployability.

4B. FOR THE INDICATED LEVEL OF OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT, IS IT POSSIBLE TO DIFFERENTIATE WHAT PORTION OF THE OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT INDICATED ABOVE IS CAUSED BY EACH MENTAL DISORDER?

YES  NO  NO OTHER MENTAL DISORDER HAS BEEN DIAGNOSED

Most PTSD vets have multiple diagnoses secondary to PTSD.

(If "No," provide reason that it is not possible to differentiate what portion of the indicated level of occupational and social impairment is attributable to each diagnosis):

The above answer must be "YES" and the provider is required to split hairs.

(If "Yes," list which portion of the indicated level of occupational and social impairment is attributable to each diagnosis):

**SECTION IV - OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT (Continued)**

4C. IF A DIAGNOSIS OF TBI EXISTS, IS IT POSSIBLE TO DIFFERENTIATE WHAT PORTION OF THE OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT INDICATED ABOVE IS CAUSED BY THE TBI?

YES     NO     NO DIAGNOSIS OF TBI

*(If "No," provide reason that it is not possible to differentiate what portion of the indicated level of occupational and social impairment is attributable to each diagnosis):*

*(If "Yes," list which portion of the indicated level of occupational and social impairment is attributable to each diagnosis):*

**SECTION V - CLINICAL FINDINGS**

1. EVIDENCE REVIEW

5A. IF ANY RECORDS (EVIDENCE) WERE REVIEWED, PLEASE LIST:

Every VA employee will answer that he or she reviewed the entire C-File. It is almost true. The answer space is too small to fully list the full index of evidence.

2. RECENT HISTORY (SINCE PRIOR EXAM)

5B. RELEVANT SOCIAL/MARITAL/FAMILY HISTORY:

5C. RELEVANT OCCUPATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL HISTORY:

5D. RELEVANT MENTAL HEALTH HISTORY, TO INCLUDE PRESCRIBED MEDICATIONS AND FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH:

5E. RELEVANT LEGAL AND BEHAVIORAL HISTORY:

5F. RELEVANT SUBSTANCE ABUSE HISTORY:

This info is always used to deny PTSD claims even though most PTSD veterans have a substance abuse problem. The provider must explain that any substance abuse is secondary to PTSD.

5G. SENTINEL EVENT(S) (OTHER THAN STRESSORS):

The VA is begging the provider to identify any other trauma such as an auto accident to blame for the PTSD.

5H. OTHER *(If any)*:

**SECTION VI - PTSD DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA**

**NOTE: Please check criteria used for establishing the current PTSD diagnosis. The diagnostic criteria for PTSD, referred to as Criteria A-F, are from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th edition (DSM-IV). The DSM V is now in use by everyone but VA.**

CRITERION A: The Veteran has been exposed to a traumatic event where both of the following were present

- The Veteran experienced, witnessed or was confronted with an event that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others.
- The Veteran's response involved intense fear, helplessness or horror.
- No exposure to a traumatic event.

CRITERION B: The traumatic event is persistently re-experienced in 1 or more of the following ways:

- Recurrent and distressing recollections of the event, including images, thoughts or perceptions.
- Recurrent distressing dreams of the event.
- Acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring; this includes a sense of reliving the experience, illusions, hallucinations and dissociative flashback episodes, including those that occur on awakening or when intoxicated.
- Intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.
- Physiological reactivity on exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.
- The traumatic event is not persistently re-experienced.

CRITERION C: Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma and numbing of general responsiveness (*not present before the trauma*), as indicated by 3 or more of the following:

- Efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings or conversations associated with the trauma.
- Efforts to avoid activities, places or people that arouse recollections of the trauma.
- Inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma.
- Markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities.
- Feeling of detachment or estrangement from others.
- Restricted range of affection (*e.g., unable to have loving feelings*).
- Sense of a foreshortened future (*e.g., does not expect to have a career, marriage, children or a normal life span*).
- No persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma or numbing of general responsiveness.

CRITERION D: Persistent symptoms of increased arousal, not present before the trauma, as indicated by 2 or more of the following:

- Difficulty falling or staying asleep.
- Irritability or outbursts of anger.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Hypervigilance.
- Exaggerated startle response.
- No persistent symptoms of increased arousal.

CRITERION E: Duration of symptoms:

- The duration of the symptoms described in Criteria B, C and D is more than 1 month.
- The duration of the symptoms described in Criteria B, C and D is less than 1 month.
- Veteran does not meet full criteria for PTSD.

**<<This box checked is a favorite of VA providers. No details are ever provided as to why there is no "full criteria."**

CRITERION F: Clinically significant distress or impairment:

- The PTSD symptoms described above cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
- The PTSD symptoms described above do NOT cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
- Veteran does not meet full criteria for PTSD.

**<<This box checked is a favorite of VA providers. No details are ever provided as to why there is no "full criteria."**

**SECTION VII - SYMPTOMS**

7. FOR VA RATING PURPOSES, CHECK ALL SYMPTOMS THAT APPLY TO THE VETERAN'S DIAGNOSES:

- Depressed mood
- Anxiety
- Suspiciousness
- Panic attacks that occur weekly or less often
- Panic attacks more than once a week
- Near-continuous panic or depression affecting the ability to function independently, appropriately and effectively
- Chronic sleep impairment
- Mild memory loss, such as forgetting names, directions or recent events
- Impairment of short and long term memory, for example, retention of only highly learned material, while forgetting to complete tasks
- Memory loss for names of close relatives, own occupation, or own name
- Flattened affect
- Circumstantial, circumlocutory or stereotyped speech
- Speech intermittently illogical, obscure, or irrelevant
- Difficulty in understanding complex commands
- Impaired judgment
- Impaired abstract thinking
- Gross impairment in thought processes or communication
- Disturbances of motivation and mood
- Difficulty in establishing and maintaining effective work and social relationships
- Difficulty adapting to stressful circumstances, including work or a work like setting
- Inability to establish and maintain effective relationships
- Suicidal ideation
- Obsessional rituals which interfere with routine activities
- Impaired impulse control, such as unprovoked irritability with periods of violence
- Spatial disorientation
- Persistent delusions or hallucinations
- Grossly inappropriate behavior
- Persistent danger of hurting self or others
- Neglect of personal appearance and hygiene
- Intermittent inability to perform activities of daily living, including maintenance of minimal personal hygiene
- Disorientation to time or place

These checklists are VA "traps" because the provider is not invited to indicate whether these symptoms are "mild", "moderate", "marked" or "extreme".

**SECTION VIII - OTHER SYMPTOMS**

8. DOES THE VETERAN HAVE ANY OTHER SYMPTOMS ATTRIBUTABLE TO PTSD (AND OTHER MENTAL DISORDERS) THAT ARE NOT LISTED ABOVE?

- YES     NO (If "Yes," describe):

Again, symptomology is everything to the VA raters because it fails to address limitations of activities of daily living and work activity with descriptions like "mild", "moderate", "Marked" and "Extreme".  
Wasn't this asked above? YES!

**SECTION IX - COMPETENCY**

9. IS THE VETERAN CAPABLE OF MANAGING HIS OR HER FINANCIAL AFFAIRS?

YES  NO (If "No," explain):

**SECTION X - REMARKS**

10. REMARKS (If any):

**SECTION XI - PSYCHIATRIST/PSYCHOLOGIST CERTIFICATION AND SIGNATURE**

**CERTIFICATION** - To the best of my knowledge, the information contained herein is accurate, complete and current.

10A. PSYCHIATRIST/PSYCHOLOGIST SIGNATURE AND TITLE	10B. PSYCHIATRIST/PSYCHOLOGIST PRINTED NAME	10C. DATE SIGNED
10D. PSYCHIATRIST/PSYCHOLOGIST PHONE AND FAX NUMBERS	10E. PSYCHIATRIST/PSYCHOLOGIST LICENSE NUMBER	10F. PSYCHIATRIST/PSYCHOLOGIST ADDRESS

**NOTE** - VA may request additional medical information, including additional examinations, if necessary to complete VA's review of the veteran's application.

**IMPORTANT** - PSYCHIATRIST/PSYCHOLOGIST send the completed form to: \_\_\_\_\_  
(VA Regional Office FAX No.)

**NOTE** - A list of VA Regional Office FAX Numbers can be found at [www.benefits.va.gov/disabilityexams](http://www.benefits.va.gov/disabilityexams) or obtained by calling 1-800-827-1000.

**PRIVACY ACT NOTICE:** VA will not disclose information collected on this form to any source other than what has been authorized under the Privacy Act of 1974 or Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations. This information is used for research, studies, the collection of money owed to VA, the delivery of VA benefits, verification of identity and status, and personnel administration as identified in the VA system of records, 58/VA21/22/28, Compensation, Pension, Education and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Records - VA, published in the Federal Register. Your obligation to respond is voluntary. VA uses your SSN to identify your claim file. Providing your SSN will help ensure that your records are properly associated with your claim file. Giving us your SSN account information is voluntary. Refusal to provide your SSN by itself will not result in the denial of benefits. VA will not deny an individual benefits for refusing to provide his or her SSN unless the disclosure of the SSN is required by a Federal Statute of law in effect prior to January 1, 1975, and still in effect. The requested information is considered relevant and necessary to determine maximum benefits under the law. The responses you submit are considered confidential (38 U.S.C. 5701). Information submitted is subject to verification through computer matching programs with other agencies.

**Now all veteran evidence must be sent to Newnan, Georgia or Janesville, Wisconsin.**

**RESPONDENT BURDEN:** We need this information to determine entitlement to benefits (38 U.S.C. 501). Title 38, United States Code, allows us to ask for this information. We estimate that you will need an average of 30 minutes to review the instructions, find the information, and complete the form. VA cannot conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless a valid OMB control number is displayed. You are not required to respond to a collection of information if this number is not displayed. Valid OMB control numbers can be located on the OMB Internet Page at [www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain). If desired, you can call 1-800-827-1000 to get information on where to send comments or suggestions about this form.