



Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): VA Disability Rating Explained

The VA rates Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) using the General Rating Formula for Mental Disorders under Diagnostic Code 9411. The ratings are based on the severity of the symptoms and the degree to which they impair social and occupational functioning.

Here are the rating levels and their corresponding criteria:

0% Rating Symptoms: PTSD symptoms are diagnosed, but they are not severe enough to interfere with occupational and social functioning or to require continuous medication.

- **Functional Impact:** No significant functional impairment.

10% Rating Symptoms: Mild or transient symptoms which decrease work efficiency and ability to perform occupational tasks only during periods of significant stress; or symptoms controlled by continuous medication.

- **Functional Impact:** Minor impairment in work or social functioning during stress.

30% Rating Symptoms: Occasional decrease in work efficiency and intermittent periods of inability to perform occupational tasks, although generally functioning satisfactorily, with routine behavior, self-care, and conversation normal.

- **Symptoms Include:** Depressed mood, anxiety, suspiciousness, panic attacks (weekly or less often), chronic sleep impairment, mild memory loss (e.g., forgetting names, directions, recent events).
- **Functional Impact:** Moderate impairment in social and occupational functioning.



Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): VA Disability Rating Explained

50% Rating Symptoms: Reduced reliability and productivity.

- **Symptoms Include:** Flattened affect, circumstantial, circumlocutory, or stereotyped speech, panic attacks more than once a week, difficulty in understanding complex commands, impairment of short- and long-term memory (e.g., retention of only highly learned material, forgetting to complete tasks), impaired judgment, impaired abstract thinking, disturbances of motivation and mood, difficulty in establishing and maintaining effective work and social relationships.
- **Functional Impact:** Significant impairment in social and occupational functioning.

70% Rating Symptoms: Deficiencies in most areas, such as work, school, family relations, judgment, thinking, or mood.

- **Symptoms Include:** Suicidal ideation, obsessional rituals which interfere with routine activities, speech intermittently illogical, obscure, or irrelevant, near-continuous panic or depression affecting the ability to function independently, appropriately, and effectively, impaired impulse control (such as unprovoked irritability with periods of violence), spatial disorientation, neglect of personal appearance and hygiene, difficulty in adapting to stressful circumstances (including work or a work-like setting), inability to establish and maintain effective relationships.
- **Functional Impact:** Severe impairment in social and occupational functioning.



Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): VA Disability Rating Explained

100% Rating Symptoms: Total occupational and social impairment.

- **Symptoms Include:** Gross impairment in thought processes or communication, persistent delusions or hallucinations, grossly inappropriate behavior, persistent danger of hurting self or others, intermittent inability to perform activities of daily living (including maintenance of minimal personal hygiene), disorientation to time or place, memory loss for names of close relatives, own occupation, or own name.
- **Functional Impact:** Complete impairment in social and occupational functioning.

Evidence Required To support a PTSD claim, veterans typically need:

- A **diagnosis** of PTSD by a qualified healthcare provider.
- **Evidence** linking the PTSD to a specific stressor related to their military service.
- **Detailed medical records** documenting the severity and frequency of symptoms.
- **Personal statements** and, if applicable, statements from family members or coworkers describing the impact of PTSD on daily life.



Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): VA Disability Rating Explained

Additional Considerations:

- **GAF Scores:** Previously, Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF) scores were used to help determine the severity of mental health conditions. However, the VA now relies more on the specific symptomatology described in the rating criteria.
- **Treatment Records:** Continuous records of treatment and medication management can strengthen a claim.
- **Consistency:** Consistent reporting of symptoms over time is crucial for establishing the chronic nature of PTSD. Veterans seeking a higher rating for PTSD should ensure that their medical documentation thoroughly reflects the severity and impact of their symptoms on their daily life and functioning.