

# HOW DISABILITY RATINGS WORK

The VA determines a disability rating after reviewing your service medical records (“SMR”), C&P exam report and any other evidence submitted to them in support of your claim based upon the criteria below. You may have one or more symptoms in a higher disability rating, but still receive a lower rating that reflects where MOST of your symptoms are present. If you have multiple injuries, disability ratings are not added together (60% + 40% ≠ 100%). The VA has an internal ranking system of injuries that will determine your final disability rating.

## GENERAL RATING FORMULA FOR MENTAL DISORDERS (including PTSD, Depression, Anxiety, MST):

PERCENTAGE	DESCRIPTION
<b>100%</b>	<p><b>Total occupational and social impairment.</b> Due to such symptoms as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gross impairment in thought process or communication</li><li>• Persistent delusions/hallucinations</li><li>• Grossly inappropriate behavior</li><li>• Disorientation to time or place; memory loss for names of close relatives, own occupation, or own name</li><li>• Persistent danger of hurting self or others</li><li>• Intermittent inability to perform activities of daily living (including maintenance of minimal personal hygiene)</li></ul>
<b>70%</b>	<p><b>Occupational and social impairment, with deficiencies in most areas, such as work, school, family relations, judgment, thinking, or mood.</b> Due to such symptoms as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Suicidal ideation</li><li>• Obsessional rituals which interfere with routine activities</li><li>• Speech intermittently illogical, obscure, or irrelevant</li><li>• Spatial disorientation</li><li>• Near-continuous panic or depression affecting the ability to function independently, appropriately and effectively</li><li>• Impaired impulse control (such as unprovoked irritability with periods of violence)</li><li>• Neglect of personal appearance/hygiene</li><li>• Difficulty in adapting to stressful circumstances (including work or a worklike setting)</li><li>• Inability to establish and maintain effective relationships</li></ul>
<b>50%</b>	<p><b>Occupational and social impairment with reduced reliability and productivity.</b> Due to such symptoms as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flattened affect</li><li>• Circumstantial, circumlocutory, or stereotyped speech</li><li>• Panic attacks more than once a week</li><li>• Difficulty in understanding complex commands</li><li>• Impairment of short- and long-term memory (e.g., retention of only highly learned material, forgetting to complete tasks)</li><li>• Impaired judgment</li><li>• Impaired abstract thinking</li><li>• Disturbances of motivation and mood</li><li>• Difficulty in establishing and maintaining effective work and social relationships</li></ul>
<b>30%</b>	<p><b>Occupational and social impairment with 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).</b> Due to such symptoms as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Depressed mood</li><li>• Anxiety</li><li>• Suspiciousness</li><li>• Panic attacks (weekly or less often)</li><li>• Chronic sleep impairment</li><li>• Mild memory loss (such as forgetting names, directions, recent events)</li></ul>
<b>10%</b>	<p><b>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 continuous medication</b></p>
<b>0%</b>	<p><b>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</b></p>

## WHAT DO I DO IF I DISAGREE WITH MY RATING?

Speak to your VSO/VSR first. They will have the most information to determine if a rating may be incorrect. You have a limited amount of time to appeal your rating and preserve the effective date of your claim.