



Meeting with your Service Officer

What to bring to your first appointment

Congratulations on making the decision to meet with a veterans service officer and claim the benefits you have earned through your service. If this is your first visit with a service officer, you will want to bring documentation with you to support your claim.

You will need the following items to file your claim:

- Original or certified copy of your discharge papers (DD-214 or other)
 - Note: To request a copy of your DD-214, fill out the [Request for Record of Active Military Service form](#) at MichiganVeterans.com or contact the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency at 800-MICH-VET (800-642-4838).
- Medical evidence of your diagnosis including statement(s) from doctor(s) showing current medical condition being claimed that list date of diagnosis and doctor's name and contact information (address, phone, fax)
- Medical evidence indicating that the disability was caused by or arose during your active duty service
- Medical treatment records
- Collateral statement(s) – eyewitness accounts
- Other evidence you believe will support your claim

You may also need the following items, if they apply to your situation:

- Copy of marriage certificate
- Copy(s) of birth certificate(s) for each claimed dependent, including your spouse
- Copy of death certificate, if applying for survivor's benefits
- Copy(s) of divorce decree(s) for veteran and spouse
- Copy of guardianship document/court letters
- Copy of Social Security award letters showing current benefit rate
- Copy of pension or annuity award letter showing current benefit rate
- Any correspondence from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Social Security numbers for each claimed dependent
- Bank account and routing numbers (required for direct deposit of VA payments)

NOTE: All documents (especially DD-214) should be either originals or certified copies. A claim may be filed without all of the required documents; however, all of the above information relevant to the claim will be needed before a decision can be made on your claim. Claims received without full information may take longer to process or be denied until the information is received. Claims based on a non-service-connected disability or death generally require active duty during a recognized wartime period.

For more information, visit MichiganVeterans.com
or call the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency at 800-MICH-VET (800-642-4838).