

A One-Page Guide for Your Treating Provider

Protect What You Earned | Free at fwdassisthq.com/provider-letter | J. Erickson

For the veteran: how to use this page

1. Give a copy to each provider who treats your service-connected condition: primary care, mental health, and the specialist.
2. Ask for a short written statement on letterhead, signed and dated. Ask early. In a proposed reduction you have 60 days from the date on the letter to send evidence.
3. When each statement comes back, read it. Make sure it covers current symptoms, how they affect work and daily life, and the treatment plan.
4. Send it to VA with the rest of your evidence, or give it to your accredited representative.

For the provider: why your patient is asking

VA is reviewing this patient's disability rating. VA decides on the evidence in the file. A VA exam is one appointment on one day. Your records show the condition over time, and a short statement from you tells the rater what those records mean.

What helps the rater most

- How long you have treated the patient, and for what.
- Current symptoms.
- How often the symptoms happen.
- How severe they get.
- How they affect work.
- How they affect family and social life.
- How they affect daily living.
- Whether the condition has improved in the patient's ordinary daily life, not just during an office visit.
- Whether current stability depends on ongoing treatment or medication, and what the current medication and treatment plan is.

What you do not need to do

- You do not need a VA form. Your letterhead is fine.
- You do not need to suggest a rating percentage. VA assigns the rating.
- You do not need to write more than a page. A short, specific statement is more useful than a long one.

One request. Please write only what your records and your own observations support.

Educational only. Not affiliated with or endorsed by VA. This is not legal advice or representation. Help from an accredited Veterans Service Officer is free: va.gov/get-help-from-accredited-representative. Veterans Crisis Line: dial 988, then press 1.