

Layman's Terms, aka "Lay Letter" instructions.

Please use the paragraph opening below to write your personal statement. (Write as much as you can possibly remember. The paragraph is endless for your use.) In this document, explain:

A. Why you never reported these conditions during service or at your separation physical (suck it up and drive on, only reported things you couldn't hide because you were trying to stay in, didn't report things when you got out cause you were like f... the service, just get me out of here or get me home, etc.).

B. Any specific physical training events, accidents (falls, pulling a muscle, vehicle accident, etc.) that may have injured your musculoskeletal conditions or your head.

C. Any specific event that you think of that could relate a specific condition to military service (e.g. got chemicals in my eye, and now I have eye pain, vision is worse, etc.; ever since I came back from deployment, I had difficulty sleeping, nightmares, insomnia, etc. and I believe this aggravated my now diagnosed obstructive sleep apnea, etc.)

D. Any pertinent information which may aid in your claims.

Here's why you NEED to do this...

The reasoning (from personnel who worked at the VA) is that if a Veteran puts in this much effort, then they will dig deep to try to grant the claim. It shows the Veteran is making an effort by providing as much specific information as possible where the Veteran thinks his conditions are related to service. If the Veteran is putting this much effort in, then the VA employee looking into this, should put the same amount of effort to aid the Veteran (since that is the motto of the VA - To fulfill President Lincoln's promise to care for those who have served in our nation's military and for their families, caregivers, and survivors).

Second, google any articles (e.g., that show particulate matter or chemical fumes cause certain respiratory conditions) and attach them to your statement. Any medical articles that are submitted with a claim, the doctor has to talk about them. For example, if you get an article that asbestos was used in military vehicles, ships, or facilities, then you submit the article, and in your words you write a statement, that yes, like in this article, I was assigned to military facility xyz and asbestos was used in xyz buildings, ships, vehicles, and now I suffer from bronchitis, upper respiratory infections (URIs), asthma, etc., and I assert this may be **related** to my current condition. So, you relate the article

to your specific situation. We will submit articles that we have found to you, when we send you documents for your review.

Any medical articles, your statements, statements from others, etc., will all bear weight when analyzing if the Board or the Regional Office, or the VA examiner should relate the condition to military service.

Finally, we will always be looking up current information as more studies are conducted to aid in finding medical articles that relate military activities to current disabilities. More importantly, this is a partnership between our company and the services we provide you.

We will do everything in our power to aid in getting the benefits you may be entitled to, and with the help (your statements, your stories, your experiences) you provide, it will all help in getting those benefits.

LASTLY...you can use parts of the following on your C&P exams as well.

Thank you for your trust in assisting you with your VA disability claims management.

Additionally, please help us here; the Veterans lay statement is CRITICAL to be prepared precisely as suggested on page 5 of your GenMed.

The military BROKE you.

Here's a framework to begin:

The BEST way to begin, is to combine your imagination with your recall ability.
The consultation was instrumental in assisting you to blow off some cobwebs of time and recall.

The imagination part.

It's Christmas. You are sitting on the hearth with a nice crackling fire in the fireplace. A grandchild walks over and sits by you and asks, "Grandpa. Tell me about your time in the military."

You will want them to know (almost) everything.
Start with WHY you enlisted.
WHERE you were at with boot or basic.
WHAT it felt like, physically AND emotionally.

WHAT was your job?

WHAT did your job entail? Did you EVER get injured on your job?

WHERE did you get sent to?

WHAT were you EXPOSED to? Again, physically AND mentally.

VA cares about the IMPACT on your daily life.

Start with each diagnosis or condition. Talk about the frequency of symptoms the duration (how long they last).

Then describe the functional impact; how it affects your job, your sleep, your relationships and your focus.

Examples: I missed three days of work this month due to my migraines. I can't sit longer than thirty minutes due to my back pain. I avoid grocery stores due to my panic attacks.

Start LOOKING at yourself objectively.

Were you the same person at discharge?

Are you the same person today that you were at enlistment?

Look at humans around you who are similar in age, but did NOT serve.

Are they generally in better condition than you?

The ROOT CAUSE of your conditions are what you need to convey to the raters at VA.

They do not have the opportunity we have in being able to spend time with you to learn about you.

It MUST be conveyed through your words, so craft them wisely.

ALWAYS TELL ANYONE FROM VA OR YOUR OWN DOCTOR, PRECISELY WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU AND WHERE. (Basically, take ALL the time you need to MAKE THEM SEE.)

(Also, please solicit a statement from your significant other as that person is your BEST witness.)