

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER REPORT

Some of you may run into a Veteran that may need help in submitting a claim for service connection, gathering evidence. The very best advice is to have that Veteran contact a Veterans Service Organization (VSO) that is not part of the Veterans Administration (VA). VSOs are recognized nationally as state organizations that help veterans and their dependents and survivors with their claims. These services are provided without charge.

VSO's can help you with questions about your claim. They can also act on your behalf regarding your claim with the VA. Use your VA representative or a VSO for more specific information about what VSOs do.

Some of you may ask, what is an example of a VSO? Below is a list of recognized national organizations that will assist with your claim. Other recognized state and local organizations can also help you. A more complete list of recognized VSOs can be found at www.va.gov.gov/vso .

American Legion	Disabled American Veterans	Paralyzed Veterans of America
American Red Cross	Marine Corps League	Veterans of Foreign Wars
AMVETS	Military Order of the Purple Heart	Vietnam Veterans of America

I always recommend getting as many documents together as you can prior to your visit with a national recognized VSO or representative. I call this the collection of information. Here is a thumbnail sketch of how to do this:

- Obtain your DD 214 if you do not have in your possession. It can be obtained on line: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs>
- Obtain your service records and your service medical records from the same place; unless, www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/medical.html
- You may file a claim yourself using the following methods:

VONAPP- [www.http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp](http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp)

VA Form 21-256- Veterans Application for Compensation and/or Pension (Fillable)

More than likely you will also need to fill a statement supporting your claim (VA Form 21-4138- Statement in Support of Claim (Fillable)) which may indicate your service at a particular place, your duties, etc. .

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