

How the VA Rates Anxiety and Depression

Regulatory Source: 38 CFR § 4.130 – General Rating Formula for Mental Disorders

VA Source: <https://ecfr.gov>

Summary:

The VA uses the same rating formula for most mental health conditions—including generalized anxiety disorder, major depressive disorder, panic disorder, and others. Ratings are based on how symptoms affect your ability to work, interact with others, and manage daily life.

VA Rating Table:

Rating	Explanation
0%	Mental condition diagnosed, but symptoms are not severe enough to interfere with work or social functioning or to require continuous medication.
10%	Mild or transient symptoms. May decrease work efficiency during periods of significant stress or symptoms are controlled by continuous medication.
30%	Occasional decrease in work efficiency and intermittent inability to perform occupational tasks. Symptoms include depression, anxiety, panic attacks (weekly or less), sleep disturbances, and mild memory loss.
50%	Reduced reliability and productivity due to symptoms like flattened affect, frequent panic attacks, impaired judgment, disturbances in motivation and mood, difficulty in relationships.
70%	Deficiencies in most areas (work, school, family, judgment, thinking, mood). Symptoms include suicidal thoughts, obsessional rituals, illogical speech, near-continuous panic or depression, impaired impulse control, neglect of hygiene, or inability to maintain relationships.
100%	Total occupational and social impairment. Symptoms include gross impairment in thought processes, persistent delusions or hallucinations, danger to self or others, inability to perform daily living tasks, disorientation, or severe memory loss.

Required Evidence:

- Diagnosis of anxiety, depression, or related disorder (DSM-5 criteria)
- C&P; exam showing current symptoms and level of social/occupational impact
- Therapist or psychiatrist treatment notes (if applicable)
- Statements describing work struggles, isolation, mood instability, or daily challenges
- Optional: medication list or past hospitalizations

Pro Tip:

Depression and anxiety are commonly secondary to chronic pain, PTSD, or sleep disorders. You can also claim these if they developed after a service-connected physical condition impacted your quality of life.