

How the VA Rates Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)

Regulatory Source: 38 CFR § 4.88b – Diagnostic Code 6354

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

Summary:

CFS is rated based on how much it limits your ability to function. It must last at least 6 months and be diagnosed by a physician. Symptoms often overlap with Gulf War Illness and must be persistent, not explained by other conditions.

VA Rating Table:

Rating	Explanation
10%	Debilitating fatigue that reduces daily activity by less than 25%. Symptoms are controlled with continuous medication.
20%	Daily activity reduced by 25%–50%. Symptoms persist for 6 months or more and are not fully relieved by rest.
40%	Daily activity reduced by 50%–75%. Includes cognitive problems, joint pain, and frequent flare-ups lasting a week or more.
60%–100%	Severe and nearly constant symptoms. Inability to perform daily work or self-care. Highest ratings require medical documentation of prolonged flare-ups.

Required Evidence:

- Diagnosis of chronic fatigue syndrome by physician
- Medical records showing symptoms last 6+ months
- Proof of cognitive impairment, joint pain, or flu-like symptoms
- Daily activity logs or work performance impacts
- Ruling out other known medical conditions

Pro Tip:

Pairing CFS with Gulf War Illness or PTSD can build a stronger overall claim. Use symptom journals and doctor summaries to show how it limits daily functioning.