

How the VA Rates PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder)

Regulatory Source: 38 CFR § 4.130

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

Summary:

PTSD is rated based on how it impacts work, relationships, memory, and emotional stability. A diagnosis is not enough—ratings are based on the level of social and occupational impairment.

VA Rating Table:

Rating	Explanation
0%	A mental condition has been formally diagnosed, but symptoms are not severe enough to interfere with occupational and social functioning or to require continuous medication.
10%	Mild or transient symptoms which decrease work efficiency and ability to perform occupational tasks only during periods of significant stress, or symptoms controlled by continuous medication.
30%	Occupational and social impairment with occasional decrease in work efficiency and intermittent periods of inability to perform occupational tasks, though generally functioning satisfactorily, with routine behavior, self-care, and conversation normal.
50%	Occupational and social impairment with reduced reliability and productivity due to symptoms such as flattened affect, circumstantial speech, panic attacks more than once a week, difficulty understanding complex commands, impaired judgment, disturbances of motivation and mood, and difficulty establishing and maintaining effective work and social relationships.
70%	Occupational and social impairment with deficiencies in most areas, such as work, school, family relations, judgment, thinking, or mood. Symptoms may include suicidal ideation, obsessional rituals interfering with routine activities, intermittently illogical or irrelevant speech, near-continuous panic or depression, impaired impulse control, neglect of personal appearance, and inability to establish and maintain effective relationships.
100%	Total occupational and social impairment due to symptoms such as gross impairment in thought processes or communication, persistent delusions or hallucinations, grossly inappropriate behavior, persistent danger of hurting self or others, intermittent inability to perform activities of daily living (including maintenance of minimal personal hygiene), disorientation to time or place, and memory loss for names of close relatives, own occupation, or own name.

Required Evidence:

- Current PTSD diagnosis (DSM-5 criteria)
- Documented in-service stressor (combat, MST, etc.)
- Nexus between service and diagnosis
- C&P; exam confirmation of symptoms and impairment
- Buddy statements or personal impact statements

Pro Tip:

Symptoms like migraines, IBS, or ED linked to PTSD can be filed as secondary claims for additional ratings.