

# How the VA Rates Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Regulatory Source: 38 CFR § 4.124a – Diagnostic Code 8045

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

## Summary:

TBI is rated by evaluating cognitive, emotional, and physical impairment using 10 subcategories (e.g., memory, attention, judgment, communication). Ratings are based on severity and impact on function.

## VA Rating Table (Summarized from 10 Criteria in DC 8045):

Rating	Explanation
0%	TBI is diagnosed but symptoms do not cause functional impairment in cognitive, emotional, or physical domains.
10%	Mild memory loss, attention or concentration issues, irritability, insomnia, or occasional headaches. Symptoms cause occasional interference with work or daily activity.
40%	Moderate memory loss, frequent headaches, dizziness, reduced judgment or social function, partial loss of executive functioning. Interferes with employment and social interaction.
70%–100%	Severe functional impairment, including inability to work, difficulty with judgment, motor skills, orientation, or personal safety. Includes total social and occupational dysfunction.

## Required Evidence:

- Diagnosis of TBI from neurologist, neuropsychologist, or VA examiner
- C&P; exam using VA TBI Evaluation Protocol (10 domains of functioning)
- Neuropsychological testing (optional but valuable)
- Statements about impact on memory, focus, social behavior, and safety
- Secondary symptoms: headaches, mood disorders, seizures

## Pro Tip:

VA uses a grid-based model to rate each TBI domain from 0 to 3. The highest rating among the categories determines the total score. Track all symptoms across cognitive, emotional, and physical areas.