

VA APPEALS TIMELINE & PROCESS PDF

VA Appeals Timeline & Process

Understand your appeal options and deadlines after a VA decision.

When You Can Appeal

You may appeal if:

- Your claim was denied
- Your rating is too low
- Your effective date is incorrect

Most appeals must be started within **1 year** of the VA decision.

Appeal Options Overview

Veterans can choose one of three lanes:

1. Higher-Level Review (HLR)
2. Supplemental Claim
3. Board of Veterans' Appeals

Each option has different rules.

Higher-Level Review (HLR)

- No new evidence allowed
- Reviewed by a senior VA rater
- Informal conference optional

Timeline: Often faster than other options.

Supplemental Claim

- New and relevant evidence required
- Can correct missing documentation
- Medical records and nexus letters often used

Timeline: Varies based on evidence.

Board of Veterans' Appeals

Three docket options:

- Direct Review
- Evidence Submission
- Hearing

This option usually takes the longest.

Appeals Timeline (Typical)

- Initial decision issued
- Appeal filed within 1 year
- Evidence gathering (if applicable)
- VA review
- New decision issued

Timelines vary widely.

Common Appeal Mistakes

- Missing deadlines
- Submitting irrelevant evidence
- Not addressing the denial reason
- Choosing the wrong appeal lane

Understanding *why* VA denied the claim matters.

Getting Help

Veterans may seek help from:

- Accredited representatives
- Veterans Service Organizations
- Attorneys (for appeals only)

This guide is for educational purposes only and does not provide legal advice.