

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF VA C&P EXAMS

Legislative Point Paper

PROBLEM:

- VA Compensation and Pension (C&P) exam is a vital part of the VA disability claims process. It provides critical medical evaluations for VA claims adjudicators to make a rating decision.
- In 1996, Congress authorized **VA to contract private medical providers to conduct C&P exams**, managed by the VA Medical Disability Examination Office (MDEO).
- Unfortunately, MDEO's management of VA-contracted vendors has been reported as substandard. Some of the significant issues include **poorly trained examiners, unqualified practitioners, questionable "medical facilities," inadequate medical opinions, disrespectful attitudes, unnecessary exams, and incomplete Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs)**.
- An OIG Report from 2024 finds that of 100 claims remanded in fiscal year 2023, **34 were remanded for inadequate exams or medical opinions**.
- MDEO's quality control procedures did not include steps for routinely (1) verifying that contractors complete the corrective actions cited in their plans and (2) determining the extent to which these actions help improve exam quality.

KEY POINTS:

- The VA Medical Disability Examination Office's (MDEO) management of VA-contracted vendors has been reported as substandard.
- The American Legion service officers across the country consistently receive complaints from veterans about the poor quality and experience during C&P examinations that resulted in delayed or wrongful denial of veterans' disability claims.
- **Currently, there is no mechanism to hold these contracted C&P providers accountable.**

WHAT CONGRESS CAN DO:

1. Conduct oversight on MDEO's progress in following GAO/OIG recommendations.
2. Hold a hearing on MDEO's transparency and accountability in managing the VA vendor program.
3. Investigate how and why VA vendors were chosen over teaching hospitals (or some other resource) as the preferred solution for handling C&P exams.



1 / 3

RATE OF CLAIMS
REMANDED FOR
INADEQUATE EXAMS
OR MEDICAL
OPINIONS IN FY2023

FOR MORE
INFORMATION, SCAN
THE QR CODE OR VISIT
[LEGION.ORG/ADVOCACY](https://legion.org/advocacy)

