

One-Page Guide: How to Request a Strong VA Nexus Letter

Hand this to your PCP/specialist. Aim for a clear, evidence-based opinion linking your current diagnosis to service using VA-standard wording.

1) What a Nexus Letter Is

- A medical opinion explaining **why** your current diagnosed condition is related to military service (event, injury, illness, exposure, or aggravation).
- Uses the VA probability standard: **"at least as likely as not" (50%+)**.

2) What the Clinician Must Include (Minimum Requirements)

- **Who:** clinician name, credentials, license/state, specialty, clinic contact info.
- **Diagnosis:** specific condition(s) (ICD-10 if known) and that it is current.
- **Records reviewed:** STRs, DD-214/service history, VA/civilian notes, imaging/labs, prior C&P; (if any).
- **Medical opinion:** "at least as likely as not" service-related (or aggravated beyond natural progression).
- **Rationale:** brief medical reasoning that connects facts to the conclusion (not just symptoms).
- **Signature/date:** signed and dated on letterhead.

3) What You Provide to Make It Easy (1-2 Pages Total)

- A 1-page timeline (service dates, onset, key visits, continuity, current severity).
- Key records only (highlighted): in-service note/exposure + diagnosis + ongoing treatment/tests.
- Short impact statement (work, sleep, daily activities) + any buddy statement if relevant.

4) Copy/Paste Mini-Template (Clinician)

[LETTERHEAD] Date: _____

RE: Nexus opinion for [Veteran Name], DOB: _____, last 4 SSN/VA File #: _____

I, [Clinician Name, Credentials], licensed in [State] (License #: ____), have treated/evaluated this veteran.

Records reviewed: [STR dates], [DD-214/service history], [VA/civilian records], [imaging/labs], other: _____.

Current diagnosis: [Condition] (ICD-10: ____ if known).

Medical opinion: The veteran's [condition] is at least as likely as not (50% or greater probability) () caused by / related to military service () permanently aggravated beyond natural progression by service.

Rationale (brief): [In-service event/exposure/injury] + [onset/continuity] + [medical reasoning linking to diagnosis].

Alternative causes considered: _____ (and why less likely).

Signature: _____ Name/Creds: _____ Contact: _____

5) Pitfalls to Avoid

- Vague wording ("could be") instead of VA probability language.
- No rationale or no list of records reviewed.
- No confirmed current diagnosis ("pain" only).
- Doesn't address service event/exposure or aggravation.

Note: This is educational, not legal advice. The VA weighs all evidence; a nexus letter is strongest when it is specific, signed, and grounded in documented records.