



January 10, 2018

## We made a decision on your VA benefits.

Dear

This letter will guide you through the information you should know and steps you may take now that VA has made a decision about your benefits.

### Your benefit information:

- Service connection for post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)- MST is granted with an evaluation of 100 percent effective May 4, 2017.
- Service connection for internal or external hemorrhoids (claimed as hemorrhoids) is granted with an evaluation of 20 percent effective May 4, 2017.
- Service connection for major depressive disorder (MDD) is denied.

We have reviewed your records and they suggest you may be entitled to an additional benefit. If you want to file a claim for revision of scar due to rhinoplasty and Parkinson Disease for ex-spouse Billy Shepard please submit a completed VA Form 21-526EZ, *Application For Disability Compensation And Related Compensation Benefits*, to the appropriate address listed on the attached *Where to Send Your Written Correspondence* chart. You can download the form at <http://www.va.gov/vaforms> or you can call us at 1-800-827-1000. We recommend you return the form as soon as you can, in order to ensure the earliest possible payment date, if an award is authorized.

Your combined rating evaluation is 100%.

### How VA Combines Percentages

If you have more than one condition, VA will combine percentages to determine your overall disability rating. The percentages assigned for each of your conditions may not always add up to your combined rating evaluation. The following website has additional information

#### We have included with this letter:

1. Explanation of Payment
2. Additional Benefits
3. Where to Send Written Correspondence
4. VA Form 4107
5. VA Form 21-0958
6. VA Form 21-526EZ
7. VA Form 21P-534EZ
8. Rating Decision

#### Contact information:

Web: [www.vets.gov](http://www.vets.gov)  
Phone: 1-800-827-1000  
TDD: 711  
To send questions online: visit <https://iris.va.gov>

#### Social Media:

Twitter: @VAVetBenefits  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/VeteransBenefits](https://www.facebook.com/VeteransBenefits)

#### Your representative:

You appointed CHUCK R PARDUE as your accredited representative. They have also received a copy of this letter.

They can help you with any questions you have about your claim.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, call the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 and press 1.

about how VA combines percentages: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/rates-index.asp#howcalc>.

Your monthly entitlement amount is shown below:

Monthly Entitlement Amount	Payment Start Date	Reason
\$2,915.55	Jun 1, 2017	Original Award
\$2,973.86	Dec 1, 2017	Cost of Living Adjustment

We are currently paying you as a single Veteran with no dependents.

You should receive your first payment within 7-10 days of this notice.

See **Explanation of Payment** for more details about your payment.

Your payment will be directed to the financial institution and account number that you specified. To confirm when your payment was deposited, please contact your financial institution.

If this account is no longer open,

*please notify us immediately.*

## Evidence Considered

In making our decision, in addition to the evidence listed in the Rating Decision, we considered the following evidence:

- Duty to Inform Letter, November 8, 2017
- DBQ Medical Opinion (Complete), December 5, 2017
- Service Treatment Records, from September 28, 2016 through December 19, 2017
- Harlington VA Medical Records, from October 21, 2015 through November 6, 2015
- Personnel Records, from December 14, 1983 through March 7, 1987
- Duty to Inform Letter, May 15, 2017
- VA Form 21-526EZ Veteran's Fully Developed Claim, received May 4, 2017
- Power Attorney- Chuck R. Pardue, June 29, 2017
- Duty to Inform Letter (Officer Support), August 21, 2017
- Duty to Inform Letter, September 8, 2017
- VA Form 21-22, Appointment of Veterans Service Organization as Claimant's



**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
Veterans Benefits Administration  
Regional Office**

**VA File Number**

**Represented By:  
CHUCK R PARDUE  
Rating Decision  
01/09/2018**

**INTRODUCTION**

The records reflect that you are a veteran of the Peacetime. You served in the rvice from January 23, 1984, to March 7, 1987. You filed an original disability claim that was received on May 4, 2017. Based on a review of the evidence listed below, we have made the following decision(s) on your claim.

VA Regional Office can reasonably conclude that Augusta VA records do not exist. We have been unable to obtain records from Augusta VA Medical Center for the period 1/1/2016-9/26/2016. We have determined that these records do not exist. We will now make a decision based on the evidence of record.

**DECISION**

- 1. Service connection for post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)- MST is granted with an evaluation of 100 percent effective May 4, 2017.**
- 2. Service connection for internal or external hemorrhoids (claimed as hemorrhoids) is granted with an evaluation of 20 percent effective May 4, 2017.**

3. The claimant is considered competent.
4. Service connection for major depressive disorder (MDD) is denied.

### EVIDENCE

- Augusta VA Medical Records, from September 29, 2016 through December 19, 2017
- Service Treatment Records, from December 24, 1983 through December 12, 1986
- VA Form 21-22, Appointment of Veterans Service Organization as Claimant's Representative, received May 4, 2017
- VA Form 21-0781, Statement In Support Of Claim For Service Connection for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), received May 4, 2017
- VA Form 21-526EZ Veteran's Fully Developed Claim, received May 4, 2017
- Duty to Inform Letter, May 15, 2017
- Duty to Inform Letter, June 1, 2017
- Duty to Inform Letter, June 19, 2017
- Power Attorney- Chuck R. Pardue, June 29, 2017
- VA Form 21-22a, Appointment of Individual as Claimant's Representative, received June 29, 2017
- Duty to Inform Letter, July 7, 2017
- Duty to Inform Letter, July 10, 2017
- VA Form 21-0820 Report of General Information, dated July 18, 2017
- Duty to Inform Letter, August 21, 2017
- Duty to Inform Letter (Officer Support), August 21, 2017
- Letter from Law Offices Pardue & Associates, P.C, August 30, 2017
- Divorce Decree, July 30, 1997
- Duty to Inform Letter, September 8, 2017
- Duty to Inform Letter, September 19, 2017
- Duty to Inform Letter, October 24, 2017
- Duty To Inform Letter, October 24, 2017
- VA Form 21-22a, Appointment of Individual as Claimant's Representative, received November 8, 2017
- Duty to Inform Letter, November 8, 2017
- Section (§) 5103 Notice, dated November 22, 2017
- VA Form 21-0781a, Statement In Support Of Claim For Service Connection For Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Secondary To Personal Trauma, received November 22, 2017
- DBQ Rectum and Anus Conditions (Including Hemorrhoids), December 5, 2017
- DBQ Medical Opinion (Complete), December 5, 2017
- Service Treatment Records, from September 28, 2016 through December 19, 2017
- Personnel Records, from December 14, 1983 through March 7, 1987
- VA Form 21-0820 Report of General Information, dated December 27, 2017
- Section (§) 5103 Notice Response, received November 22, 2017
- Harlington VA Medical Records, from October 21, 2015 through November 6, 2015
- Central Texas VA Medical Record, November 10, 2015

## REASONS FOR DECISION

### **1. Service connection for post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)- MST.**

Service connection for post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)- MST has been established as directly related to military service.

Service Treatment Records showed no complaints/diagnosis of post traumatic stress disorder. However, Personnel Records showed you took leave on March 1, 1987, which is 6 days prior to your release from active duty.

Augusta VA medical records and VA examination showed a diagnosis of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The examiner provided the following medical opinion with rationale: You reported that while in the military in Tishomingo, her first duty station a reported an Military Sexual Trauma by the clinical psychologist on the team. You reported it to the director and was told to go along to get along to be a part of the team. This experience caused you to feel unsafe and not a member of a community. You left the service leaving everything behind and began to go from job to job without success. You were not able to go up the ladder of success but down the ladder of success. You experienced nightmares, flashbacks, anger, irritability, depression, panic attacks and your isolated yourself. You have a gun in every room in your house. Your PTSD is at least as likely as not related to the claimed in-service stressor(s). Your post-traumatic stress disorder due to military sexual trauma is at least as likely as not (a 50 percent or greater probability) incurred in or caused by the sexual trauma during service. The symptoms of PTSD were not recorded until the markers for the MST became evident.

We have assigned a 100 percent evaluation for your post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)- MST based on:

- Suspiciousness
- Persistent danger of hurting others
- Persistent danger of hurting self
- Depressed mood
- Near-continuous depression affecting the ability to function independently, appropriately and effectively
- Disturbances of motivation and mood
- Impaired judgment
- Persistent delusions
- Difficulty in understanding complex commands
- Obsessional rituals which interfere with routine activities
- Total occupational and social impairment
- Persistent hallucinations
- Speech intermittently irrelevant
- Difficulty in adapting to stressful circumstances
- Difficulty in adapting to work
- Inability to establish and maintain effective relationships
- Grossly inappropriate behavior
- Impairment of short- and long-term memory

- Flattened affect
- Intermittent inability to perform maintenance of minimal personal hygiene
- Difficulty in adapting to a worklike setting
- Anxiety
- Difficulty in establishing and maintaining effective work and social relationships
- Intermittent inability to perform activities of daily living

The overall evidentiary record shows that the severity of your disability most closely approximates the criteria for a 100 percent disability evaluation.

This is the highest schedular evaluation allowed under the law for posttraumatic stress disorder.

Since there is a likelihood of improvement, the assigned evaluation is not considered permanent and is subject to a future review examination.

**An evaluation of 100 percent is assigned from May 4, 2017.**

The effective date is May 4, 2017, which is the date we received your claim.

## **2. Service connection for internal or external hemorrhoids (claimed as hemorrhoids).**

**Service connection for internal or external hemorrhoids (claimed as hemorrhoids) has been established as directly related to military service.**

Service Treatment Records showed a diagnosis of hemorrhoids.

Augusta VA medical records and VA examination showed a diagnosis of internal or external hemorrhoids. The examiner provided the following medical opinion with rationale: Based on physical exam findings of hemorrhoids and on medical records showing STR dated 3/26/17 for hemorrhoidectomy for mixed hemorrhoids, your hemorrhoids were at least as likely as not (50 percent or greater probability) incurred in or caused by the hemorrhoids during service. The claimed condition was at least as likely as not (50 percent or greater probability) incurred in or caused by the claimed in service injury, event, or illness.

**We have assigned a 20 percent evaluation for your hemorrhoids based on:**

- Persistent bleeding

Additional symptom(s) include:

- Excessive redundant tissue
- Large

This is the highest schedular evaluation allowed under the law for hemorrhoids.

**An evaluation of 20 percent is assigned from May 4, 2017.**

The effective date is May 4, 2017, which is the date we received your claim.

**3. Competency to handle disbursement of funds.**

Since the claimant in this case is not shown as unable to manage personal affairs, we have determined that the claimant is competent for VA purposes.

**4. Service connection for major depressive disorder (MDD).**

Service connection may be granted for a disability which began in military service or was caused by some event or experience in service.

Service Treatment Records showed no complaints/diagnosis of major depressive disorder (MDD).

Augusta VA Examination showed no diagnosis of Major Depressive Disorder. The examiner noted that Major Depression is not diagnosed because other post traumatic stress disorder symptoms are present. Your Post Traumatic Stress Disorder covers symptoms of depression.

We did not find a link between your medical condition and military service. Service connection for major depressive disorder (MDD) is denied because the medical evidence of record fails to show that this disability has been clinically diagnosed. Service connection may be granted for a disability which began in military service or was caused by some event or experience in service. Service connection for major depressive disorder (MDD) is denied since this condition neither occurred in nor was caused by service.

**REFERENCES:**

Title 38 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Pensions, Bonuses and Veterans' Relief contains the regulations of the Department of Veterans Affairs which govern entitlement to all veteran benefits. For additional information regarding applicable laws and regulations, please consult your local library, or visit us at our website, [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov).