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Your **CAN DO!** Packet

The complete starting guide to building a winning VA disability claim — from evidence gathering to maximum rating.

"With a Will, Make a Way"

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A Letter From Your Advocate

Dear Fellow Veteran,

If you're holding this packet, you've taken the hardest step — deciding to fight for what you've earned. I know that journey. I've lived it. I'm a 100% Permanent & Total disabled veteran, and I built CAN DO! Veteran Services because the system that was supposed to serve us too often fails us.

This packet is your roadmap. It contains everything you need to begin building an ironclad claim: what evidence to gather, how to organize it, what to expect at each stage, and exactly how we'll work together to secure every dollar of compensation you deserve.

We don't take contingency fees. We don't take a percentage of your award. Your money stays yours. We charge a flat fee because your benefits are yours — not ours.

Read this packet. Follow the steps. Share your folder. Then let's get to work.

With a Will, We Make a Way.

— J. Little

Founder & System Architect, CAN DO! Veteran Services

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 *CAN DO! Veteran Services provides analytical support and document development, not legal representation. Results vary based on VA adjudication. We are not attorneys and do not provide legal advice. For Board Appeals or CAVC litigation, we coordinate with accredited attorneys.*

Gather Your Foundation

Every winning claim is built on complete evidence. Check off each item as you gather it. Don't worry if you're missing some — we'll identify gaps together.



Pro Tip

Start with what you have. Don't delay sharing your folder because something is missing. We'll help you obtain the rest.



Service Treatment Records (STRs)



Complete STRs (Enlistment through Separation)

All medical, dental, and mental health records from active duty

CRITICAL



DD-214 (Member-4 Copy Preferred)

Shows character of service, MOS, and deployment history

CRITICAL



Deployment Orders & Awards

Establishes exposure, combat, and hazardous duty



Sick Call Logs & Profile Sheets

Often overlooked — shows ongoing treatment in service



VA C-File & Decision Letters



Complete C-File (Claims File)

Request via FOIA if you don't have a copy — takes 30-90 days

CRITICAL



All Rating Decision Letters

Every decision VA has made on your claims, including denials



C&P Exam Reports

All Compensation & Pension exam results



Notice of Disagreement / Appeal Letters

If you've previously appealed any decision



Private Medical Records



Private Treatment Records (All Providers)

Doctors, therapists, specialists — anything post-service

CRITICAL



Independent Medical Opinions (IMOs)

Nexus letters connecting conditions to service



Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs)

Completed by private physicians



Pharmacy Records & Medication Lists

Shows ongoing treatment and severity



Mental Health Records

Therapy notes, psychiatric evaluations, hospitalizations



Lay Evidence & Supporting Statements



Buddy Statements (VA Form 21-10210)

From fellow service members, family, friends who witnessed symptoms



Personal Statement (VA Form 21-4138)

Your own account of how conditions affect daily life

CRITICAL



Spouse / Family Statements

Observations of symptoms, limitations, and changes



Employment Records

Job history, accommodations, performance reviews, termination letters



Financial Records (for TDIU / VR&E)

Tax returns, business plans, income documentation



Missing Something?

Don't stop here. Share what you have. Our Gap Analysis will identify exactly what's missing and how to obtain it — often faster than you think.

Organize Your Evidence

A clean folder structure saves weeks of back-and-forth. We've simplified it to 4 core buckets — just drop files in the right folder and we'll handle the rest.

1

Choose Your Platform

Select one cloud storage service. All three work — pick what you already use.

- ✓ Google Drive — Best for sharing. Free 15GB.
- ✓ iCloud — Best if you're in the Apple ecosystem. Free 5GB.
- ✓ Dropbox — Best for large files. Free 2GB.

2

Create the Folder Structure

Create a main folder named **"CAN DO! — [Your Last Name]"** with these 4 subfolders:

- 📁 **CAN DO! — [YOUR LAST NAME]/**
 - 📁 01_Service_Records/
STRs, DD-214, Deployment Orders, Awards
 - 📁 02_Private_Medical/
Private doctors, IMOs, DBQs, Pharmacy, Mental Health
 - 03_VA_Decisions/
C-File, Rating Decisions, C&P Exams, Appeal Letters
 - 📁 04_Personal_Statements/
Buddy Letters, Your Statement, Employment, Financial



Privacy & Security

All files are protected under 38 U.S.C. § 5701. We never share your information. Use password-protected folders if your platform supports it.

1

Share Access

Share the folder with **JLittle2216@gmail.com** with *Edit* access so we can add our analysis documents directly to your folder.



Email us once shared so we can confirm receipt and begin review.

Establish Your Baseline

This template helps you document how your conditions affect daily life. Be honest, be specific, and don't minimize your symptoms. This becomes foundational evidence.

VETERAN NAME

DATE COMPLETED

PRIMARY SERVICE-CONNECTED CONDITIONS

DAILY IMPACT — PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS

What can't you do physically that you could before service? (lifting, standing, walking, sleeping...)

DAILY IMPACT — COGNITIVE / MENTAL HEALTH

Memory issues, concentration, anxiety, panic, depression, irritability, social withdrawal...

DAILY IMPACT — WORK & EMPLOYMENT

How do conditions affect your ability to work? Missed days, reduced hours, accommodations needed...

DAILY IMPACT — FAMILY & SOCIAL LIFE

Strain on relationships, isolation, inability to participate in family activities...

WORST DAYS — DESCRIBE A TYPICAL "BAD DAY"

Be specific. What happens? How long does it last? What do you have to cancel or avoid?

MEDICATIONS & TREATMENTS

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Anything else we should know about how your conditions affect your life?



Save & Upload

Save this completed form as **Symptoms_Report_[LastName].pdf** and place it in the **04_Personal_Statements** folder.

What to Expect

Transparency is non-negotiable. Here's exactly what happens after you share your folder, and when you'll hear from us.

WEEK 1 • INTAKE

Folder Received & Initial Review

We confirm receipt, conduct a high-level file review, and send you a confirmation email with next steps. You'll receive a personalized Evidence Gap List within 5 business days.

WEEK 2-3 • ANALYSIS

Full Claims Analysis & Strategy

Deep-dive review of every document. We identify every eligible condition, missed secondary connections, and strategic angles. You receive your personalized Action Plan.

WEEK 3-4 • BUILD

Evidence Development & Document Drafting

We draft VA forms, medical request letters, buddy statement templates, and C&P exam prep materials. You review and approve everything before submission.

WEEK 4+ • EXECUTE

Filing, Exams, & Ongoing Support

We guide you through filing, prepare you for C&P exams, and stay with you through every decision. Appeals handled if needed — no extra charge for our support.

Critical Deadline: 1-Year Appeal Window

If you've received a denial, you have **365 days from the date on the decision letter** to file a Notice of Disagreement. This deadline is absolute. If you're within this window, tell us immediately — we'll prioritize your file.



Our Commitment

We provide thorough analytical support and document development for every claim we take on. If we identify an eligible condition that should have been claimed during our initial analysis, we develop it at no additional cost. Your maximum rating is our goal — though final outcomes depend on VA adjudication.

Maximize Your Claim Value

Two areas where veterans most often leave money on the table.
Understanding these can dramatically increase your rating.

The PACT Act — Toxic Exposure Presumptives

The PACT Act (2022) added 20+ presumptive conditions for veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, radiation, and other toxic substances. If you served in certain locations or eras, your condition may be *automatically* service-connected — no nexus letter required.

Burn Pit Exposure

Served in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Djibouti, or similar after 9/11?

→ *Asthma, rhinitis, sinusitis, cancers now presumptive*

Agent Orange

Served in Vietnam, Korea DMZ, or certain ships 1962-1975?

→ *Diabetes, Parkinson's, ischemic heart disease presumptive*

Gulf War

Served in Southwest Asia theater 1990-present?

→ *Chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, IBS presumptive*

Radiation

Participated in nuclear testing or POW in Japan?

→ *Certain cancers presumptive at any time*

 Tell us your deployment locations and dates — we'll cross-reference against the full PACT Act presumptive list.

Secondary Conditions — The Hidden Value

A **secondary service connection** is a condition caused or aggravated by an already service-connected disability. Most veterans don't know these exist — but they're often the highest-value claims.

Knee → Back

Altered gait from a service-connected knee injury causes lumbar strain.

Example: 20% knee + 20% back = 36% combined

Anxiety → Insomnia

Service-connected anxiety causes chronic sleep impairment.

Example: 50% anxiety + 30% insomnia = 65% combined

Tinnitus → Depression

Chronic ringing leads to cognitive fatigue and mood disorders.

Example: 10% tinnitus + 30% depression = 37% combined

Migraine → GI Issues

Medication side effects or stress cause gastrointestinal conditions.

Example: 30% migraine + 10% GI = 37% combined

 *List every symptom you have — even ones you think are "just part of getting older." We'll map the connections.*

100% Pay Without 100% Rating

Two pathways to receive 100% compensation even if your combined rating is below 100%:

TDIU (Total Disability - Individual Unemployability)

If your conditions prevent substantially gainful employment, you receive 100% pay at 60%+ single or 70%+ combined rating.

VR&E Chapter 31

Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment can fund self-employment, retraining, or job placement — separate from disability compensation.

 *Can't work full-time? Having to quit jobs? We should talk about TDIU.*

Key Contacts & VA Forms

Everything you need in one place. Save this page — you'll reference it throughout your claim journey.



CAN DO! Contacts



Business Line

(219) 370-6795

Call or text • Response: 24-48 hours



Email

JLittle2216@gmail.com

Share folder here • Response: 24-48 hours



Website

cando-veteran-services.com

Services & resources



Essential VA Forms

FORM	PURPOSE	WHEN TO USE
21-0966	Intent to File	DAY 1 — Locks in backpay
21-526EZ	Application for Disability	Initial claim or increase
21-4138	Statement in Support of Claim	Personal statement
21-10210	Lay/Witness Statement	Buddy & family letters
21-0781	PTSD Stressor Statement	Mental health claims
21-8940	TDIU Application	Unemployability claims
21-4192	Employment Information	TDIU support
20-0995	Supplemental Claim	New evidence appeals
20-0996	Higher-Level Review	Error-based appeals



ACTION: File Intent to File TODAY

VA Form 21-0966 takes 5 minutes on VA.gov and locks in your effective date for backpay. Every day you wait is money left on the table. Do this before you even share your folder with us.



All Forms Available Free

Download any VA form at va.gov/find-form. We'll pre-populate the relevant forms for your review before submission.

Frequently Asked Questions

Answers to the questions we hear most from veterans starting their claim journey.

✓ How much does CAN DO! cost?

We charge a flat fee — never a percentage of your award. Your VA compensation is yours. Pricing is discussed during your initial consultation after we review your file and scope the work.

> What if I've already been denied?

> How long does a claim take?

> Do I need a lawyer?

> What conditions can you help with?

> Is my information safe?

> What if I don't have all my records?

> Can you help with VR&E Self-Employment?

> What is the PACT Act and does it apply to me?

Let's Get Started

You've read the packet. You know what we do. Here's exactly what to do next — starting with the most time-sensitive action.



STEP 0 — DO THIS TODAY: File Intent to File

Go to [VA.gov](https://www.va.gov) → Search "Intent to File" → Submit Form 21-0966. Takes 5 minutes. This locks in your effective date and protects your backpay. *Do this before anything else.*

1

Set Up Your Folder

Follow the Folder Setup Guide (page 5). Create your cloud folder with the 4 core subfolders. Start uploading what you have — don't wait for perfection.

2

Complete Your Symptoms Report

Use the template on page 6. Be honest. Be specific. Don't minimize. This document becomes foundational evidence for your claim.

3

Share & Schedule

Share your folder with JLittle2216@gmail.com and call or text **(219) 370-6795** to schedule your initial consultation. We confirm receipt within 24-48 hours.

"With a Will, Make a Way"

You've earned every dollar. Let's make sure you get it.

 (219) 370-6795

 Email Us

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