

MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

BEHAVIORAL MARKER EVIDENCE GUIDE

Examples of records and behavior changes that may help support an MST-related claim.

38 C.F.R. 3.304(f)(5)

ALTERNATIVE EVIDENCE

MARKERS VA MAY CONSIDER

No official report is required.

A marker is evidence that may help show a change around the time of the claimed experience. No single marker is required, and no fixed number guarantees an outcome.

 SERVICE AND WORK Request for transfer to another unit or duty assignment	 SERVICE AND WORK Deterioration in work performance, including a drop in evaluations or Article 15s
 HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR Substance abuse onset or escalation during or after service	 EMOTIONAL Depression, panic attacks, or anxiety without prior history
 SOCIAL Unexplained economic or social behavior changes	 SOCIAL Relationship breakdowns, including divorce or breakups, around the time of the event
 MEDICAL RECORDS Pregnancy tests or STI tests in service treatment records	 MEDICAL RECORDS Requests for HIV testing
 HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR Eating disorder onset or significant weight changes	 HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR Sexual dysfunction
 SERVICE AND WORK Increased sick call or leave without clear medical cause	 OUTSIDE SOURCES Statements from family, roommates, fellow service members, or clergy
 OUTSIDE SOURCES Records from rape crisis centers, counseling, or hospitals	 OUTSIDE SOURCES Personal journals or diaries from the time period
 SERVICE AND WORK Changes in performance reports correlating with the timeframe	 SERVICE AND WORK Counseling statements or disciplinary actions around the same period

Use the **chronology**. Identify when each change began, who observed it, and where supporting records may exist. These examples are not a checklist of what a veteran must have or report.