



A summary of the strongest descriptive findings from RateMyVSO's PTSD research. Every panel identifies its own population.

START WITH THE DENOMINATORS

THESE FINDINGS COME FROM
DIFFERENT STUDY
POPULATIONS

Do not treat the numbers below as if they were calculated from one universal PTSD sample.

171,863

PTSD issues scanned for selected
stressor-proof markers

27,488

granted PTSD decisions in the
symptom analysis

34,620

denied PTSD service-connection
issues in the denial analysis

CLAIM THEORY

OBSERVED GRANT SHARE
VARIED BY THEORY

Granted divided by granted plus denied within each coded theory group.



44.3%

DIRECT

n = 63,676



49.7%

SECONDARY

n = 9,588



86.3%

AGGRAVATION

n = 285

Small-sample caution: The aggravation group is much smaller than the other two groups. This is an observed appellate pattern, not a forecast.

GRANTED DECISIONS

NIGHTMARES LED THE DETECTED
SYMPTOMS

Share of 27,488 granted decisions containing each selected term pattern.



Detected documentation frequency is not a symptom checklist and does not establish a rating.

DENIED SERVICE CONNECTION

NO NEXUS AND NO DIAGNOSIS WERE TIED

Primary reason among 31,843 classified denied issues.

37.3%

NO NEXUS

11,864 issues

37.2%

NO DIAGNOSIS

11,854 issues

25.5%

NO IN-SERVICE ELEMENT

8,125 issues

Coverage: 31,843 of 34,620 denied service-connection issues were classified. The remaining 2,777 were unclassified.

EVIDENCE CITATIONS

MILITARY RECORDS AND LAY EVIDENCE
DOMINATED

Decided PTSD issues citing each retained evidence category.



Rows overlap. One issue may cite more than one evidence category.

STRESSOR PROOF

CONTEXT, VERIFICATION, AND FINDINGS
ARE SEPARATE

Selected marker counts among 171,863 scanned PTSD issues.



Markers overlap and do not form a complete stressor-type ranking.

THE RESPONSIBLE CONCLUSION

USE THE DATA TO UNDERSTAND
PATTERNS, NOT TO PREDICT A
CLAIM

Board appeals are not initial claims. They represent cases that reached the Board.

Issue counts are not unique veterans. One decision may contain multiple issues.

Detection is descriptive. A cited symptom, record, or marker does not prove that it caused the outcome.



SOURCE AND SCOPE

RateMyVSO analysis of published Board decisions coded for PTSD under diagnostic code 9411. Source artifacts generated August 10 through August 10, 2026. Drawn from a research corpus containing more than 1.9 million published BVA decisions. Panel-specific populations are shown within the graphic.