

EVIDENCE TO ANSWER A PROPOSED REDUCTION

Build the response around VA's stated improvement theory and the rule governing the current rating.



START Proposal and prior codesheet	COMPARE Old basis to new evidence	GOAL Answer the exact legal and factual gap
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RULE FILE

A strong response is organized as a comparison. It shows what supported the current rating, what VA says improved, why the new evidence does or does not prove durable improvement, and which procedural safeguard applies.

EVIDENCE 01 | FOUNDATION

GATHER THE DECISION RECORD

OLD

Prior rating decision and exam

Identify the factual findings and examination quality that supported the evaluation now at risk.

CODE

Codesheet and effective dates

Confirm the diagnostic code, current level, service-connection date, future-exam status, and protection clocks.

NEW

Proposal and recent examination

Mark every finding VA relies on and any missing history, test, flare-up analysis, or functional comparison.

EVIDENCE 02 | LONGITUDINAL PROOF

SHOW THE CONDITION ACROSS TIME

CARE

Treatment records

Use a meaningful period before and after the recent examination, including treatment intensity and restrictions.

LAY

Veteran statement

Explain a typical day, episode pattern, accommodations, recovery time, and exam-day context.

BUDDY

Witness statements

People who observe daily function can describe changes, consistency, episodes, and assistance.

WORK

Employment evidence

Attendance, accommodations, reduced duties, warnings, leave, and earnings can show ordinary work conditions.

EVIDENCE 03 | MEDICAL COMPARISON

ASK THE CLINICIAN TO ADDRESS THE RIGHT QUESTION

Was the recent exam complete?

Compare history, testing, records reviewed, specialty, flare-ups, and functional findings.

CLINICAL ANALYSIS

Is improvement material?

Identify whether disability and function truly changed, rather than only wording or a snapshot.

MATERIAL CHANGE

Will improvement continue?

Address durability under ordinary conditions of life and work.

SUSTAINED CHANGE

TARGET THE RULE

Do not bury the response in unrelated records. Label each exhibit and connect it to the proposed reason, the rating criteria, and the applicable protection.

