

**RVSR VA TERMINOLOGY
TRAINEE HANDOUT**

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OBJECTIVES

- Identify commonly used words and abbreviations within the VA, medical, and military context.
- Utilize resources to locate definitions of VA, medical, and military words and abbreviations.
- Understand correct use of VA medical, and military abbreviations in various types of communication mediums.

REFERENCES

- [M21-1, Part III, Subpart iv, 6.C, Completing the Rating Decision Narrative](#)
- [VA Acronym Lookup Tool](#)
- [Medical Electronic Performance Support System \(EPSS\)](#)
- [Medical Abbreviations](#)
- [Department of Defense \(DOD\) Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms](#)
- [Board of Veterans' Appeals Military Abbreviations Site](#)

TOPIC 1: VA ABBREVIATIONS AND RESOURCES

Introduction:

RVSRs must become familiar with VA, Medical, and Military terminology and abbreviations. For the purposes of this lesson, the term abbreviations, will include acronyms and initialisms.

As an RVSR, avoid VA jargon and abbreviations in all rating decisions. Never use an abbreviation without first writing the words out completely, followed by the abbreviation in parenthesis (i.e. service treatment records (STRs)). Avoid using complex medical or legal terminology, or explain the concept in layman's terms when such use is unavoidable.

Abbreviations:

An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word or phrase.

For example:

- Dr. – doctor
- Appt. – appointment
- Comp – compensation
- Vet – Veteran
- Org – organization

Acronyms:

An acronym is an abbreviation formed from the initial letters of other words and pronounced as a word.

For example:

- CAD – coronary artery disease
- AIDS – acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
- PIV – personal identification verification
- PIES – Personnel Information Exchange System
- CEST – claims establishment
- CAR – Combat Action Ribbon

Initialisms:

An initialism is an abbreviation consisting of initial letters pronounced separately.

For example:

- VBMS – Veterans Benefits Management System
- IU – Individual Unemployability
- PTSD – Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
- SMC – Special Monthly Compensation
- HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- CIB – Combat Infantryman Badge

Resource:

VA Acronym Lookup. When searching, keep in mind the context of the abbreviation to select the correct definition. See below for navigation to the tool.

VA Intranet Home **About VA** **Organizations** **Find a Facility** **Employee Resources** **Search**

VBA Intranet

COMPENSATION SERVICE INTRANET HOME PAGE

Policy (211)

- [Court Related Info Home Page](#)
- [Court & DAD Cases](#)
- [Decision Assessment Documents](#)
- [General Counsel Opinions & DADs](#)
- [Judicial Conference Calls \(historical\)](#)
- [FAQs](#)

Business Management (215)

- [Business Management Home Page](#)
- [Dashboard](#)
- [Need Help?](#)
- [Veterans Information Solution \(VIS\)](#)
- [VETSNET](#)
 - [Awards](#)
 - [COVERS](#)
 - [MAP-D](#)
 - [Share](#)
 - [Other Guides](#)

Procedures (212)

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- [Duty to Assist / VCAA](#)

Click VA Intranet Home

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VA Intranet Home **About VA**

VA INTRANET HOME

Welcome to the VA Intranet Home Page

To view all notices from VA

HEY VA! HAVE YOU HEARD?

This year's [National VA Res Implementation.](#) Since 1925, prevent and treat disease and remains on moving the results of practices developed by VA nationwide, in both VA and no associated urinary tract infection among nursing home infections in this population. T'

Click Employee Resources

EMPLOYEE RESOURCES

The resources below are intended to assist a percentage of VA employees who will continue

- [Benefits](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Medical](#)
- [Reference](#)
- [Technical](#)
- [Tools](#)

Click Reference

Reference

- [The Functional Organization Manual \(FOM\) — v1.3](#)
 - The Functional Organization Manual (FOM) describes the Department's current organizational structure, missions, functions, and tasks. The FOM describes what gets done, by whom, for whom, and under what authorities.
- [VA Acronym Lookup](#)
 - The Acronym Database provides an web-enabled searchable database of acronyms used within the VA.
- [VA Phone Book](#)
 - The "White Pages" of the VA Phone Book allows users to search for any VA employee who is in the VA's Active Directory. Contact information will be displayed for those matches which happen to have a VA Exchange account. The "Yellow Pages" allows users to search for VA facilities based on data from the VA Facilities & Leadership Directory.

[Back to top](#)

Select VA Acronym Lookup

VA ACRONYM LOOKUP

This Intranet web page provides an online searchable database of acronyms used in the VA. You may search by entering the start of an acronym (such as "V" for VA, VHA, VBA) or by entering a part of the acronym expansion.

[Suggest a new acronym!](#)

Enter an acronym:

OR

Enter a part of the acronym expansion:

(i.e., "veteran" will return "MVR – Master Veteran Record", etc.)

Input your search

VA ACRONYM LOOKUP

Some acronyms are duplicated. Take care in selecting the appropriate acronym according to the context of your document.

Acronym	Description	Date Updated
VBMS	Veterans Benefits Management System	September 20, 2010
VBMS-A	Veterans Benefits Management System - Awards	September 23, 2014
VBMS-C	Veterans Benefits Management System - Correspondence	April 18, 2014
VBMS-CORE	Veterans Benefits Management System-Core	June 16, 2015
VBMS-R	Veterans Benefits Management System - Rating	August 11, 2015

[Suggest a new acronym!](#)

Enter an acronym:

OR

Enter a part of the acronym expansion:

(i.e., "veteran" will return "MVR - Master Veteran Record", etc.)

Review results within the context of your search

TOPIC 2: MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY AND RESOURCES

RVSRs are required to review various types of medical evidence. Having a basic understanding of medical terms and abbreviations will help RVSRs effectively review records, evaluate conditions, and make accurate decisions on all claimed conditions. Types of medical evidence RVSRs may review, include, but are not limited to:

- Service treatment records (STRs)
- VA Medical Center (VAMC) treatment records
- Private medical records (PMRs)
- Disability benefits questionnaires (DBQs)

Resource:

Medical EPSS. See below for navigation to the tool.

- **Miscellaneous**
 - [Calendar](#)
 - [VSCM Call Agendas](#)
- **Directories:**
 - [Compensation Service Directory](#)
 - [Employment Opportunities](#)
 - [Voluntary Leave Transfer](#)
 - [Coordinator Lists](#)
- **Publications**
 - [Fast Letters](#)
 - [Training Letters](#)
 - [M21-1 Adjudication Procedures Manual](#)
 - [M21-1 \(Archive\)](#)
 - [M21-3](#)
 - [M21-4](#)
 - [e-CFRs \(Parts 3, 4, 13, 14 & 20\)](#)
 - [Rate Tables](#)
 - [WARMs](#)
- **Rating Job Aids**
 - [Exam Worksheets](#)
 - [PTSD Rating Job Aid](#)
 - [Stressor Verification Site](#)
- **Search Compensation Service Intranet**
- **Search WARMs**
- **Work Credit Measurement Study (WCMS)**

From the Compensation Service Intranet Home Page, Select Rating Job Aids under the Miscellaneous section.

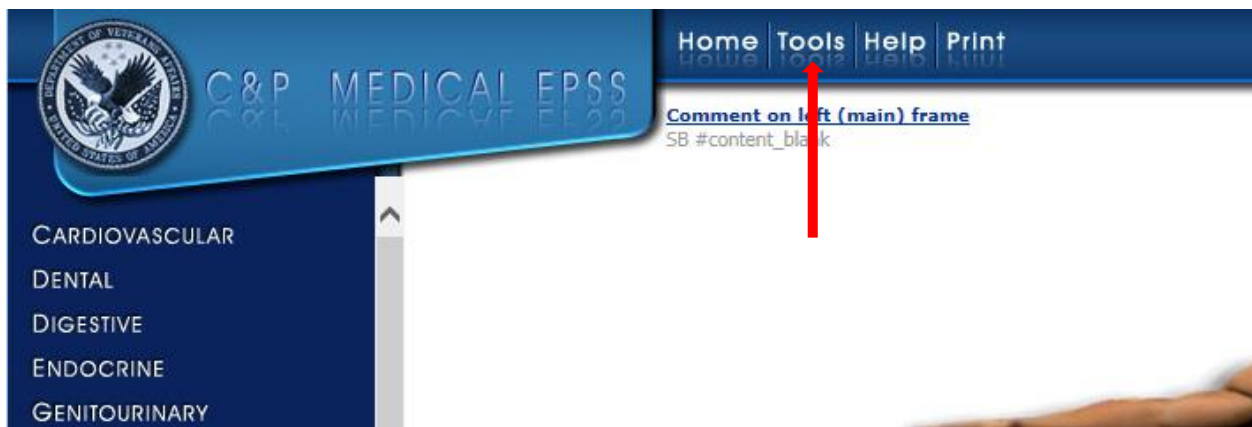
Select the Medical EPSS book.

Medical EPSS

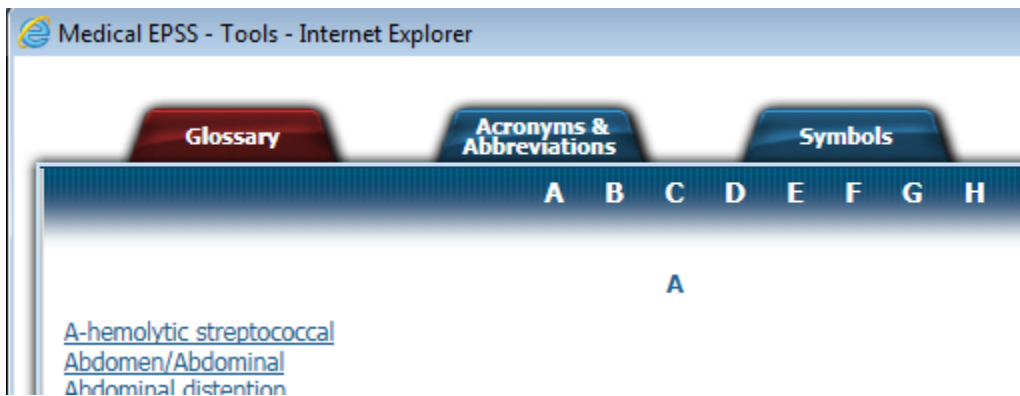
Medical Electronic Performance Support System

Compensation Service's Medical Electronic Performance Support System (Medical EPSS) is an online job reference and information tool. It is also a valuable training resource. The Compensation Service Medical EPSS provides medical information, tutorial information related

Click on Medical Electronic Performance Support System link. A new window will open.



Select "Tools" from the top menu bar. A new window will open.



These three tabs are what has been covered in the lesson.

TOPIC 3: MILITARY TERMINOLOGY AND RESOURCES

Though not used as commonly as VA or medical terminology, RVSRs must have some familiarity with military terms. Most military terminology can be learned on the job, however, some RVSRs prefer to have a reliable resource they can use to find definitions. Military terminology would be applied when an RVSR is reviewing military personnel records (i.e. to verify exposure for a presumptive claim, or to verify a stressor event for PTSD).

Resources:

- [DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms](#)
- [Separation Codes](#)
- [Military Abbreviations](#)

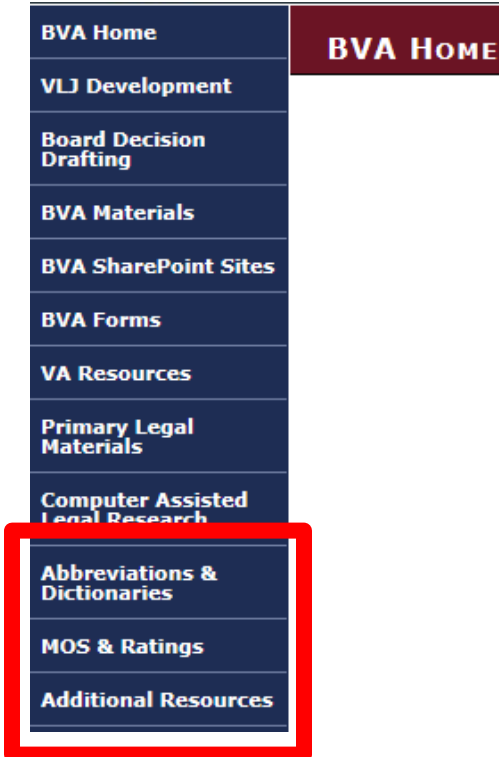
See below for navigation to the links.



From the Compensation Service Intranet Website, select VA Intranet



Select Board of Veterans' Appeals



The three options on the left side menu are where you can find the three references mentioned:

Abbreviations and Dictionaries – this is where the DoD Dictionary of Military Terms link and Separation Codes link is located

MOS & Ratings – contains links about Military Occupational Specialties and Awards and Decorations

Additional Resources – contains the Military Abbreviations link

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 1

Look up the following terms and acronyms using the online VA Acronym Lookup Site and the Medical Abbreviation Site to find the terms and fill in the blanks below. The first one is completed for you.

VA and VBA Terms	
VBA - Veterans Benefits Administration	VARO or RO
VHA	VACO
DMA	BVA
Compensation Terms	
SC	IU
NSC	PTSD
P&T	STR
AO	SMC
POA	GW
Computer Terms	
ERRA	PIES
BIRLS	VOR
VBMS	VVA
CPKM	CAPRI
Medical Terms	
GERD	TBI
CA	DM
HT	SOAP

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 2

Identify the acronyms found in the statements below. In the space below write the acronym followed by the words for the acronym.
Statement 1: The Veteran filed a claim for SC for PTSD and DM due to AO exposure. The DOC is 11-09-2014.
1. Ex. SC – Service-connected
2.
3.
4.
5.
Statement 2: The Veteran’s DD214 shows his discharge was HON and he had VE service. The Veteran’s RAD was 06-19-72.
1.
2.
3.
Statement 3: The Veteran’s POA is MOPH. The Veteran’s claim has an EP of a 110.
1.
2.
3.
Statement 4: The Veteran met the disability criteria for P&T, but we still have to deny the NSC claim.
1.
2.

Statement 5: The Veteran's HBP and CAD, which suggest the presence of CHF, may eventually lead to a fatal MI.

1.

2.

3.

4.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 3

Instructions: Using the sample letter shown on the following page, find the corresponding item number in the letter on the previous page. Place the acronym or abbreviation in the blank along with a definition for it.

The first item has been provided as an example.

Patient Information			
1. VA	Veterans Affairs	4.	
2.		5.	
3.		6.	
Examination Information			
7.		19.	
8.		20.	
9.		21.	
10.		22.	
11.		23.	
12.		24.	
13.		25.	
14.		26.	
15.		27.	
16.		28.	
17.		29.	
18.		30.	

¹VA Terminology Practice Example

²VAMC San Francisco

General Medical Exam

Name: Boyles, Lance

Address: 22 Baker Street

City: Chico, California 98765

³SSN: 123-45-6789

⁴C-File: 123-45-6789

⁵DOB: June 26, 1964

Entered Active Service: July 9, 1986

⁶RAD: July 1, 2005

Residence Phone: 555-555-5555

Business Phone: 555-555-5555

Priority of exam: Original ⁷SC

Examiner: Churchill

Examined on: September 20, 2006

Examination Results:

Medical History:

38 year old, ⁸WM, served in ⁹U.S. Army and worked as combat engineer.

In 1986, in basic training, Veteran dislocated his ¹⁰lt. shoulder. He has noted pain in the shoulder ever since with overexertion or cold weather. In 1991 he received surgical treatment for a torn rotator cuff. He takes aspirin ¹¹prn. Also, reports having ¹²LBP after lifting injury in 2000. No respiratory complaints. No GU complaints.

Examination Data:

¹³Ht: 67 in. ¹⁴Wt: 156 lb. ¹⁵Temp: 98 ¹⁶BP: 122/76

Well-developed, well-nourished male. ¹⁷Rt. handed.

Skin: Two operative scars over the anterior aspect of the left shoulder. Nontender and measure approximately 14 ¹⁸cm. long and 3 ¹⁹mm wide.

²⁰Lt. Shoulder: ²¹ROM 45 degrees elevation, 80 degrees internal and external rotation. Crepitus and slight tendency to subluxation with external rotation. Muscle strength in ²²LUE is slightly diminished. 5-degree loss of elevation with repetitive use.

²³L-S spine ²⁴ROM: flexion 80 degrees, extension 30 degrees, bilateral flexion 15 degrees each, bilateral rotation 30 degrees each. ²⁵MRI degenerative disc disease ²⁶L1-L3.

²⁷DX: Chronic ²⁸lt. shoulder strain

²⁹DDD, L1-L3

Note: efolder/³⁰STRs were not available for review.