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|  | Training ScenarioVeteran’s appeal is for service connection for acquired psychiatric disability, to include posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression, as secondary to service-connected left hand/scar disability. The key portion of the Board remand is highlighted below.  |
|  | Board RemandSchedule the Veteran for an examination to assess the nature and etiology of the claimed psychiatric disability, to include depression. The examiner must review the claims file and note it was reviewed. The examiner must consider the Veteran’s lay statements regarding the incurrence of the disability and continuity of symptomatology since service. The examiner should opine whether it is at least as likely as not (50 percent or greater probability) that any psychiatric disability is related to any aspect of active service. The examiner should also opine whether it is at least as likely as not (50 percent or greater probability) that any psychiatric disability is caused or aggravated by any service-connected disability, to explicitly include the left hand/scar disability.The medical opinion request properly asked for an opinion in accordance with the Board remand instructions. Medical Opinion from ExaminerBased on review of the medical records, there is no diagnosis of PTSD but Veteran has a diagnosis of persistent depressive disorder. There is no evidence that this diagnosis is related to or caused by military service. Veteran does not have a mental health diagnosis that is related to or caused by military service. In other words, there is no service-connected mental health diagnosis, therefore, there is no aggravation of a service connected condition.Based on that response from the examiner, the DRO issued a supplemental statement of the case (SSOC) denying the mental health condition |
|  | Classroom Discussion1. Based on the medical opinion response from the examiner, was the claim ready for decision? Why or why not?*The claim was not ready for decision. The medical opinion response from the examiner did not provide a secondary or aggravation opinion on the mental health condition due to any service-connected condition.*2. If the appeal was not ready for decision, what was needed to make it ready?*An addendum is needed to ask the examiner to provide a secondary and aggravation opinion for the mental health condition due to a service-connected condition.* |
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