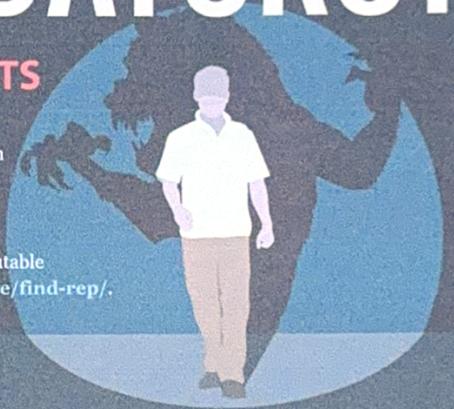


WATCH OUT FOR CLAIMS PREDATORS!

THEY WANT TO PREY ON YOUR BENEFITS

Claims predators are *"bad actors"* who try to unlawfully charge Veterans a fee to "help" them process their claims with VA. They advertise their ability to expedite claim processing times and/or guarantee higher disability ratings in exchange for their paid services. Remember VA accredited attorneys, claims agents, and VSO representatives provide free help. For more information about VA-accredited representatives visit, <https://www.va.gov/get-help-from-accredited-representative/>. To find reputable assistance visit <https://www.va.gov/get-help-from-accredited-representative/find-rep/>.



THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS CAN BE SIGNS OF CLAIMS PREDATORS:

CHARGING HIGH FEES: Never pay anyone a fee to prepare, consult on or to help file an initial claim for benefits.

MAKING DISHONEST PROMISES: Do not trust anyone who claims they can accelerate the claims process or guarantee you will obtain a 100% disability rating. Only VA can determine disability rating levels.

PRESSURE TO SIGN: Never sign a contract agreeing to pay an individual or company a fee in exchange for help with your initial VA claim.

PROTECT YOUR VA BENEFITS FROM CLAIMS PREDATORS

- **Only share sensitive information** with VA-accredited attorneys, claims agents and Veterans Service Organization representatives.
- **VA-accredited attorneys or claims agents may charge a reasonable fee** for services provided for the review or appeal of a claim. You may use a VSO representative for free assistance.
- **You do not have to make the fee payments yourself.** You can enter into a direct payment agreement. If someone is unwilling to be paid by VA, you should question why.
- **Always review forms** and do not work with someone who will not sign a VA representation form (21-22 or 21-22a).
- **Protect your personal identifiable information** and never provide login credentials to access personal information, such as those for VA.gov.
- **Attend exams ordered by VA.** Veterans are entitled to a no-cost disability examination by VA if an examination is deemed necessary to decide their claim for benefits.

If you suspect a representative acted unlawfully or unethically while assisting you in filing a VA benefits claim, file a report at www.vsafe.gov or by calling 833-38V-SAFE.



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs