

TOOL 1

Start Here: Quick Start Checklist

Your first job isn't to analyze everything. Your first job is to know what you have.

Use this checklist to create one organized starting point for the records already in your possession. You do not need to have every record before you begin.

- ☐ Create one location for your VA-related records.
- ☐ Gather the medical records already in your possession.
- ☐ Identify healthcare providers who have treated the conditions or health concerns you are organizing.
- ☐ Identify records you know exist but do not currently have.
- ☐ Gather relevant military or service records already in your possession.
- ☐ Gather previous VA correspondence, decisions, examinations, and submissions already in your possession.
- ☐ Create a list of current medications and treatments.
- ☐ Create a backup copy of your records.
- ☐ Begin the Medical Records Inventory.

Don't have everything?

That's normal. Don't delay getting organized because your collection is incomplete. Record what you have, identify what is missing, and use the Records Request Tracker later to follow up on records you decide you need.

Before You Start Analyzing

- ☐ I have created a central location for my records.
- ☐ I know what records I currently have.
- ☐ I have identified major sources of records I don't have.
- ☐ My original records are preserved.
- ☐ I am working from copies rather than altering original documents.
- ☐ I have a backup.

NEXT TOOL

02 Medical Records Inventory