
Section 3-3-37.2. Severe service-connected disability retirement.

- (a) Any member in service may, at any time before his or her normal retirement date, be retired on account of a severe disability which is due to injury by accident and/or disease(s) which arose out of and in the course of the member's service. The Board shall determine whether a member has suffered a severe disability as defined herein due to injury by accident and/or disease(s) which arose out of and in the course of a member's service. In making this determination, the Board shall consult the decisions of the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission, the Court of Appeals of Virginia, and the Supreme Court of Virginia which applied or construed language under the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act. Furthermore, in making this determination, the Board shall consider any medical record or information and/or any further tests or examinations required pursuant to Section 3-3-10.1.
- (b) When a member or his or her employer submits a written application for service-connected disability retirement as set forth in Section 3-3-36, the Board shall determine whether the member meets the requirements for qualification to receive severe service-connected disability as set forth in this Section. Prior to submitting such application, the member shall be required to apply for workers' compensation to which he or she may be entitled. The member shall also be required to submit to the Board copies of the dispositions as made of his or her workers' compensation claim and any subsequent awards or other documents reflecting any modification or termination of such benefits. With respect to the determination of a member's eligibility for retirement under this Section, the Board shall give great weight to the decisions of the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission, the Court of Appeals of Virginia, and the Supreme Court of Virginia on the compensability of his or her disability under the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act; and the Board may modify its prior determination of eligibility under this Section in light of any such decision within 90 days after the date such decision becomes final.
- (c) Any member otherwise eligible for ordinary disability retirement under Section 3-3-34 whom the Board finds to be disabled but not eligible for retirement under this Section, shall be retired pursuant to Section 3-3-34. Any member otherwise eligible for service-connected disability retirement under Section 3-3-36 whom the Board finds to be disabled but not eligible for retirement under this Section, shall be retired pursuant to Section 3-3-36.
- (d) *Severe disability* shall mean an impairment from the list below that permanently incapacitates the member from performing the necessary duties of the position in which he or she had been employed prior to sustaining the impairment.
 - (1) Schedule of impairments:
 - (A) Loss of both hands or both feet;
 - (B) Loss of one hand and one foot;
 - (C) Loss of one hand and the sight of one eye;
 - (D) Loss of one foot and the sight of one eye;
 - (E) Loss of the sight of both eyes;
 - (F) Paralysis, either paraplegia or quadriplegia;
 - (G) Cancers determined to be compensable by the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission which were caused by documented contact with a toxic substance, pursuant to Section 65.2-402(c) of the *Virginia Code*;
 - (H) Loss of speech;
 - (I) Loss of hearing;

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- (J) A mental incapacity that meets the criteria for disability benefits under the Federal Old-Age Survivors' and Disability Insurance Act;
 - (K) Chronic Hepatitis C determined to be compensable by the Workers' Compensation Commission which was caused by documented exposure to HCV-positive blood or other potentially infectious material (OPIM) in the workplace or during work-related activities, as described in Section 65.2-402.1.(a) of the Virginia Code; or
 - (L) Occupational Asthma, Occupational Hypersensitivity Pneumonitis, or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) determined to be compensable by the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission which was caused by documented exposure to a toxic substance in the workplace or during work-related activities, as described in Section 65.2-402(c) of the Virginia Code, or otherwise determined to be compensable as an injury by accident by the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission. This condition, added on {date} is to be applied retroactively to any service-connected disability applications submitted on or after June 1, 2019.
 - (M) Persistent burn injuries caused by documented exposure/injury in the workplace or during work related activities, as described in section 65.2-402 (c) of the Virginia Code which render an employee unable to do meaningful work, including those which involve (1) 3rd degree or higher burns over more than 30% of body surface area, and/or (2) extensive and debilitating skin lesions , and/or (3) burns which result in the loss of meaningful use of more than one limb, and/or (4) multisystem injuries (e.g., severe pulmonary burns with loss of diffusion capacity) and/or (5) conditions that may not meet the precise definitions of above clauses 1-5 but are accompanied by one or more of the following: substantial disfigurement, chronic debilitating pain, or other symptoms of a severity which would substantially limit an employee's ability to routinely and efficiently perform community-based work
- (2) Loss shall mean:
- (A) With respect to a hand or foot, the dismemberment by severance through or above the wrist or ankle joint, or the partial dismemberment resulting in the loss of functional use of the partially dismembered hand or foot.
 - (B) With respect to sight, central acuity of 20/200 or less with the use of correcting lenses or visual acuity greater than 20/200 if accompanied by a limitation in the field of vision that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees. These standards apply to the affected eye if sight loss is claimed for one eye in combination with loss of a hand or foot, or to the better eye if sight loss is claimed for both eyes.
 - (C) With respect to hearing, a severe and irreversible bilateral loss of hearing that is not correctable with either the use of hearing aids or with corrective surgery.
- (e) For the purpose of this Section only, *member in service* shall include a member who has not reached his or her normal retirement date and who has been retired on account of a service-connected disability pursuant to the terms of Section 3-3-36.
 - (f) A member for whom an application for severe service-connected disability is approved by the Board shall not be required to submit to medical re-evaluations as required by Section 3-3-40. (48-96-3; 19-01-3; 7-03-3; 34-04-3; 3-16-3; 22-18-3; 04-20-3.)
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