



WOUNDED WARRIOR REGIMENT

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

INTEGRATED DISABILITY EVALUATION SYSTEM (IDES)

What you should know!

Within the Department of the Navy there are two different uses of the term Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officer (PEBLO):

1. Military Treatment Facility (MTF) Medical Boards Section Clerks who develop and process IDES case files and, in some MTF's, perform all aspects of IDES counseling.
2. Navy Council of Review Boards (CORB) field level Disability Evaluation System Counselors (DESC) are permanently assigned to the eight largest Navy Medical Centers, Hospitals, and Clinics, and work IDES counseling but do NOT work directly on the development of the IDES case file. They are often referred to as the back end of the process PEBLO's.

Whether serving in combat operations or in training, individual Marines can incur a wound, injury, or illness that may have a long-term impact on their lives and ability to continue their career. With the aid of exceptional medical care and adequate time to heal, most wounded, ill or injured (WII) Marines recover and return to full and unrestricted duty. Unfortunately, some do not. In this case, it is appropriate for them to be referred to the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) process that will determine their fitness for continued military service.

What is IDES?

IDES is a joint program of the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The goal is to close the gap between separation from active duty and receipt of VA benefits and compensation. The VA performs one medical exam that meets the needs of DoD in determining fitness for continued military service and also provides the basis for the VA to rate the Marine's disabilities if they have been determined to be Unfit. The VA determined disability rating, for the specifically military unfitting condition(s), is used by DoD as the basis for determining eligibility for military separation and retirement benefits.

When is a WII Marine referred to IDES?

The mere presence of a medical condition or impairment is not enough to decide that a Marine should be referred to the IDES or to determine that they are Unfit and entitled to disability benefits if referred. A WII Marine should be referred to IDES when:

- The medical impairments impact the ability to perform military duties appropriate to their office, grade, rank or rating.

What happens after the referral?

Medical Evaluation Board Phase (100 day goal)

The WII Marine will be assigned a Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officer (PEBLO), located in the Medical Boards section of the military treatment facility (MTF), who will develop the VA Claim (Part 1 of the VA Claim Form 21-0819). PEBLOs will consult with all medical specialists to determine which medical condition(s) should be included. The Marine will be referred to a VA claims development representative, the Military Service Coordinator (MSC) who counsels them on the VA portion of IDES and assists them in completing parts II-IV of the claim. Additionally, the MSC will schedule all VA medical exams required for the IDES process.



Physical examination, specialty examination, diagnostic testing, laboratory test

Examinations (including laboratory and diagnostic tests) are completed by a combination of military, VA, or authorized civilian medical providers. Results are summarized in a Narrative Summary (NARSUM). The DoD MTF is responsible for the production of the NARSUM and Medical Evaluation Board Report (also referred to as the IDES case file). The PEBLO oversees the final assembly of all components of the case file and delivers to the local MTF convened Medical Evaluation Board (MEB).

Documents contained IDES case file

Typical Medical Evidence:

- A narrative summary (NARSUM)
- History and treatment of the specific injury or illness
- Laboratory results
- All referrals to doctors and sick call (health record)
- Type and frequency of medication
- Results of physical exam completed within past six months

Typical Non-Medical Evidence:

- Non-medical Assessment from the member's unit commander (impact of medical condition(s) on normal military duties)
- Line of duty (misconduct) investigations
- Personnel Casualty Report (PCR), as applicable

Medical Evaluation Board Determination

The MEB consists of two to three medical officers appointed by the local MTF Commander. They review the IDES case file to determine appropriate diagnosis and ability to return to full, unrestricted duty. If the Marine is expected to recover and return to full duty, the MEB may recommend placing them on Temporary Limited Duty (TLD) for a specific time frame, after which the Marine must return to full duty. Otherwise, the Marine will be referred to the Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) phase.

Physical Evaluation Board Phase (120 day goal)

Informal Physical Evaluation Board

The Informal Physical Evaluation Board (IPEB) reviews all the evidence contained in the IDES case file, to include the Marine's entire medical record to make a fitness determination and record their finding on the following:

- Determine if the medical condition(s) was incurred in the line of duty
- Determine if Marine is Fit or Unfit for continued service
- Recommend return to duty if found Fit; or if found Unfit:
 - Identify the specifically military unfitting medical condition(s)
 - Recommend separation from active duty with final disposition based on the degree of disability (percentage awarded by VA) for the military unfitting medical conditions
 - Determine if the military unfitting conditions were incurred as the result of a combat related event, and/or in a combat zone
 - Forward the case to the VA Disability Rating Activity Site (D-RAS) to determine degree of disability for each condition claimed.

Veterans Administration Disability Rating Activity Site (D-RAS)

The Veterans Administration Disability Rating Activity Site (D-RAS) thoroughly evaluates the Marine's referred and claimed conditions to produce a rating letter that explains the disability rating applied. Each condition is rated from zero to 100% and results are submitted to IPEB. The IPEB and D-RAS findings are merged and submitted to the PEBLO for delivery to the WII Marine.

If the Marine is found Unfit, they have three options:

- Accept the findings of the IPEB
- Accept the findings of the IPEB and request to remain on active duty in Permanent Limited Duty/Expanded Permanent Limited Duty (PLD/EPLD) status; or
- Disagree with the findings and request or demand an Formal Physical Evaluation Board

Permanent Limited Duty

A request to remain on active duty in a Permanent Limited Duty/Expanded Permanent Limited Duty (PLD/EPLD) status is NOT a part of the MEB/PEB process. A Marine must coordinate with their Limited Duty Coordinator to complete the request through their chain of command. Final approval for PLD/EPLD is granted by HQMC. To be eligible for PLD/EPLD a Marine must first accept the Unfit finding of the PEB. Marines determined Fit can NOT request PLD/EPLD.

Reconsideration of the VA D-RAS Determinations

If a Marine believes that an error was made in determining their rating, they may notify their PEBLO and request a one-time reconsideration by the VA. The rating reconsideration will be processed through the PEB. The VA D-RAS will only reconsider the evaluation of a rating if new medical evidence is received, or the Marine is able to provide sufficient evidence of an error to warrant reconsideration. Only one reconsideration is made for each military unfitting condition. If a new condition is found to be unfitting, by the PEB during the Formal PEB phase, reconsideration can be requested; even if other conditions have been previously reconsidered.

Formal Physical Evaluation Board (FPEB) (if requested)

All Marines found Unfit by the IPEB have the right to a formal hearing. Upon approval and scheduling, the Navy will assign a Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps attorney to the Marine. The Marine may choose a non-military attorney, but they will be responsible for any costs. The attorney will prepare the petition, gather evidence and present their case to the FPEB. Once the case has been presented, the board deliberates and prepares a findings letter with written rationale. The findings and rationale are reviewed by the Department of Navy PEB President before being released to the Marine. These findings become the decision of record.

Why would a Marine request FPEB review?

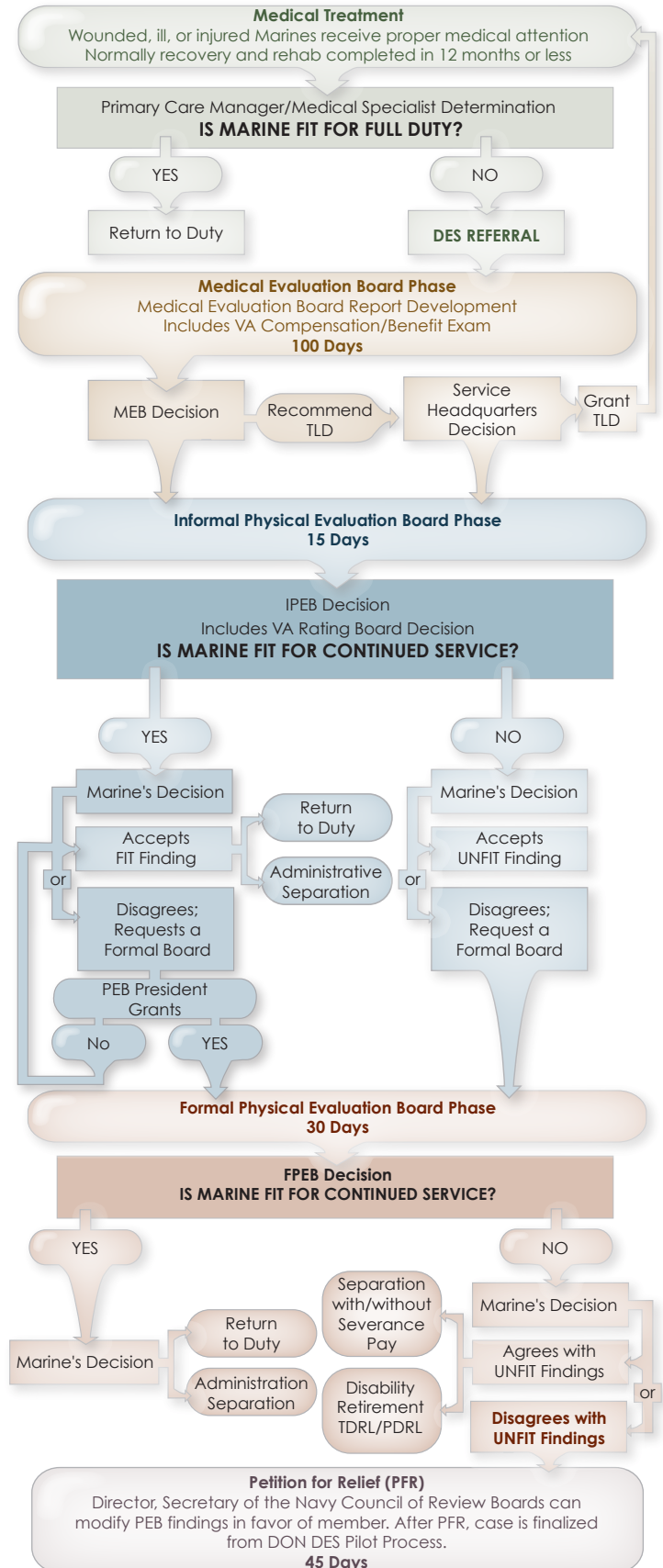
Generally Marines request the FPEB for two reasons:

1. To challenge their Fitness determination.
2. To add other medical conditions to the list of military unfitting conditions (which may result in a higher combined disability rating that could qualify the Marine for disability retirement vice a disability separation).

Petition for Relief (if requested)

If the Marine disagrees with the FPEB findings, he or she has 15 days to submit a Petition for Relief (PFR) to the Director, Secretary of the Navy Council of Review Boards through their legal counsel. The Director has the authority to modify the PEB finding such as overturning a finding of Unfit to Fit. This is the last opportunity for an in-service appeal. The Marine should expect a 30-day turn around for appeal processing.

IDES Process Chart



TRANSITION PHASE (45 day goal)

Transition begins after the Marine accepts the PEB finding or completes formal and military appeals. At this point, the VA is informed of the final disposition, receives a copy of the separation orders and DD Form 214, and conducts a final interview with the Marine, their dependents, or other representatives to determine entitlement to benefits; gather supporting documentary evidence, and file claims on behalf of the Marine for benefits allowable under state and federal law. The MSC will meet with the Marine and their family to explain options and what the Marine should expect from the VA upon separation.

VA Disability Compensation Delivery Phase (30 day goal)

The goal of the IDES is to ensure Marines and their families receive a seamless transition from DoD to VA benefits, resources, and care. After the Marine's DD Form 214 is received and processed, benefits are typically received within 30 days of the actual discharge date. Disability compensation varies with the degree of disability and the number of veteran's dependents, and is paid monthly.

IDES Timeline



WWR Attorneys

The Marine Corps has dedicated attorneys to assist Marines throughout the IDES process (in some cases, even as early as the Medical Evaluation Board stage). Such assistance may be limited, depending on the circumstances.

To request assistance, call:

East Coast: (910) 451-1680

West Coast: (760) 725-6172

Wounded Warrior Call Center: 1-877-487-6299

THE WOUNDED WARRIOR REGIMENT

The Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR) stood up in April 2007 and immediately began to assume responsibilities for non-medical Wounded Warrior care. **The mission of the WWR is to provide and facilitate assistance to Wounded, Ill and Injured (WII) Marines, Sailors attached to or in direct support of Marine units, and their family members, throughout the phases of recovery.** The Regimental Headquarters element, located in Quantico, Va., coordinates the operations of two Wounded Warrior Battalions located at Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Camp Lejeune, N.C. The Regimental Headquarters provides unity of command and unity of effort through a single Commander who provides guidance, direction, and oversight to the Marine Corps WII non-medical care process and ensures continuous improvements to care management and the seamless transition of recovering Marines.



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