



LDES Fact Sheet

The Legacy Disability Evaluation System (LDES) is the Department of the Navy's process for evaluating service members who have medical conditions that may prevent continued, medically unrestricted Service. The LDES process determines whether a service member can stay in the service, separate, or medically retire.

LDES vs. IDES

Faster Separation: LDES is typically a quicker process than Integrated DES (IDES), which processes VA and Military disability determinations concurrently. If you choose LDES, you will have to request your VA benefits separately.

LDES May Be Appropriate for:

- Initial Entry Trainees (IET)
- Service member needing their DD-214 separation document quickly to start school or a new job
- Reservists pursuing medical retirement

Appeal Rights:

You can appeal decisions. Reach out to a DES Counsel Program attorney at the QR code below.

Transition Resources:

If separated, attend the Transition Readiness Seminar (TRS) and check out Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) programs.

KEY STEPS

1

Referral to DES via a Medical Evaluation Board (MEB):

- Your provider will refer you to the DES if they determine you have a Veterans Affairs (VA) ratable condition that will not allow you to return to full duty.
- The MEB will determine if you meet retention criteria and either return you to full duty or submit your case to the PEB.

2

Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) Review:

- The PEB reviews your medical records along with input from your command to assess how your condition impacts your ability to perform your duties.
- If you are found **FIT**, you continue military service.
- If you are found **UNFIT**, you are recommended for separation or medical retirement.

3

VA Benefits:

- You apply for VA disability benefits **after you separate**. Disability benefits do not start immediately and may involve a waiting period.

LDES can help you separate faster, but expect a gap between separation and access to your VA benefits.

Legal Support: DES Counsel Program attorneys are available to help answer your questions and protect your rights.



Need Help? Contact Your...

PEB Liaison Officer (PEBLO): Your PEBLO can guide you through each step of LDES.

Case Manager: Case managers support service members with complex medical conditions and/or diverse support needs.

Recovery Care Coordinator (RCC): An RCC is a non-medical professional who provides support as you go through the DES process, ensuring a smooth transition to full duty or civilian life.