

# Wounded Warrior Battalion-West



## Our Commitment

Wounded Warrior Battalion-West (WWBn-W) is located at Camp Pendleton, California, where it operates a Warrior Hope and Care Center that offers campus-style access to a full complement of services, such as rehabilitation, counseling, recovery care coordinators (RCC), medical case managers, and athletic reconditioning. WWBn-W is committed to the successful recovery and transition of each Marine and family receiving care and services. The battalion shares the mission and objectives of the Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR) and focuses on the whole Marine – mind, body, spirit, and family – in addressing recovery needs.

## Referring A Marine

**Accessing WWR Support:** Commanders and Marines who are facing a complex medical recovery may be eligible for support through the assignment of a RCC or assignment to a Wounded Warrior Battalion location.

### Recovery Care Coordination (External)

- Recovery care coordination
- Contact center outreach
- Non-Medical Care Manager outreach
- Adaptive reconditioning activities
- Disability Evaluation System Advocacy

### Joined/TAD

#### In addition to external resources:

- Medical case management and advocacy
- ADA - compliant barracks
- Family readiness programs
- Specialized administrative support
- Careers, education, and transition assistance
- Maintaining unit structure

## Locations

- **WWBn-West, Camp Pendleton, Calif.**
- Naval Medical Center San Diego, Calif.
- VA Polytrauma Center Palo Alto, Calif.
- Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms, Calif.
- Marine Corps Base Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii
- Camp Butler Okinawa, Japan

## Contact Us

If you need further information about referring a Marine or the support available through WWBn-W please contact us:

### WWBn-W Operations

[wwbnw\\_referrals@usmc.mil](mailto:wwbnw_referrals@usmc.mil)

### Wounded Warrior Call Center

*Available every day, 24/7*

Ph. 1-877-487-6299

### WWBn-W Contact Center

*Available Mon- Fri, 0800-2000*

Ph. 888-738-7044

Ph. 760-763-6689

Ph. 760-763-6793

## Connect With Us

[www.woundedwarrior.marines.mil](http://www.woundedwarrior.marines.mil)

[www.facebook.com/wwbnw.usmc](https://www.facebook.com/wwbnw.usmc)

[www.twitter.com/usmcwwr](https://www.twitter.com/usmcwwr)



# The Basics of the Disability Evaluation System (DES)

## Understanding the Basics of the Disability Evaluation System

The DES is the **mechanism for determining return to duty, separation, or retirement** of recovering service members (RSMs) because of a disability. The two most common DES processes are the **integrated disability evaluation system** and **legacy disability evaluation system**.

### Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES)

A joint VA/ DoD program which evaluates a service member's fitness for duty and eligibility for DoD-VA disability compensation and benefits. The goal of the IDES is to close the gap between separation from active duty and the receipt of VA benefits and compensation. Most RSMs who receive care from the WWR go through this process.

### Legacy Disability Evaluation System (LDES)

The LDES was reintroduced as an option in 2016; in the LDES, DoD determines whether eligible RSMs are fit to return to duty and determines appropriate disability rating for those who are separated or retired and determined unfit. Active duty RSMs who opt for LDES will not concurrently receive a VA disability rating, but should file a claim with the VA as soon as possible.

#### Medical Evaluation Board Phase

The MEB determines the RSM's fitness for duty by reviewing the case file. If the RSM is expected to recover, he/she will return to duty after a period of temporary limited duty. If not, the case is referred to the IDES. All VA claims and DoD referred medical conditions are examined during a VA Compensation and Pension examination.

#### Physical Evaluation Board Phase

The Informal Physical Evaluation Board (IPEB) reviews the MEB case file to make a fitness determination. If the RSM is found fit, the RSM will return to duty.

If the RSM is found unfit, the case is forwarded to the VA Disability Rating Activity Site (D-RAS) to determine the degree of disability for each medical condition.\*

#### Transition Phase

After the RSM accepts the unfit PEB findings or completes formal and military appeals, 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 RSM, their dependents, or other representatives to determine entitlement to benefits.

#### VA Disability Benefits Delivery Phase

The goal of the IDES is to provide VA benefits within 30 days of discharge.

#### Did You Know?

The Office of the Secretary of Defense continuously seeks to improve the timeliness of the IDES process. In July 2018, the processing goal was reduced from 295 days to 230 days. The vision is to further reduce the timeline to a 180 day goal by October 2019.

#### Findings

The Navy Office of the Judge Advocate General has dedicated attorneys to assist Marines and Sailors throughout the DES process. Remember that the DES attorneys and Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officers (PEBLOs) are resources to help RSMs to review their findings. Refer to the IDES pocket guide for more information. Visit the IDES Toolkit on the WWR website: [www.woundedwarrior.marines.mil](http://www.woundedwarrior.marines.mil) for additional information.

**\*The RSM, if determined unfit by the IPEB, has the right to demand a formal hearing from the Formal Physical Evaluation Board (FPEB). If the RSM is found fit by the IPEB they may request a FPEB. A hearing may or may not be granted. The FPEB findings become the decision of record.**