

### § 3.354

### 38 CFR Ch. I (7-1-10 Edition)

rating decision of incompetency. Failure or refusal of the beneficiary after proper notice to request or cooperate in such a hearing will not preclude a rating decision based on the evidence of record.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501(a))

[36 FR 19020, Sept. 25, 1971, and 40 FR 1241, Jan. 7, 1975, as amended at 42 FR 2069, Jan. 10, 1977; 58 FR 37856, July 14, 1993; 60 FR 55792, Nov. 3, 1995; 66 FR 48560, Sept. 21, 2001; 67 FR 46868, July 17, 2002; 68 FR 34542, June 10, 2003]

#### § 3.354 Determinations of insanity.

(a) *Definition of insanity.* An insane person is one who, while not mentally defective or constitutionally psychopathic, except when a psychosis has been engrafted upon such basic condition, exhibits, due to disease, a more or less prolonged deviation from his normal method of behavior; or who interferes with the peace of society; or who has so departed (become antisocial) from the accepted standards of the community to which by birth and education he belongs as to lack the adaptability to make further adjustment to the social customs of the community in which he resides.

(b) *Insanity causing discharge.* When a rating agency is concerned with determining whether a veteran was insane at the time he committed an offense leading to his court-martial, discharge or resignation (38 U.S.C. 5303(b)), it will base its decision on all the evidence procurable relating to the period involved, and apply the definition in paragraph (a) of this section.

[26 FR 1589, Feb. 24, 1961]

#### § 3.355 Testamentary capacity for insurance purposes.

When cases are referred to a rating agency involving the testamentary capacity of the insured to execute designations or changes of beneficiary, or designations or changes of option, the following considerations will apply:

(a) Testamentary capacity is that degree of mental capacity necessary to enable a person to perform a testamentary act. This, in general, requires that the testator reasonably comprehend the nature and significance of his act, that is, the subject and extent of his disposition, recognition of the

object of his bounty, and appreciation of the consequence of his act, uninfluenced by any material delusion as to the property or persons involved.

(b) Due consideration should be given to all facts of record, with emphasis being placed on those facts bearing upon the mental condition of the testator (insured) at the time or nearest the time he executed the designation or change. In this connection, consideration should be given to lay as well as medical evidence.

(c) Lack of testamentary capacity should not be confused with insanity or mental incompetence. An insane person might have a lucid interval during which he would possess testamentary capacity. On the other hand, a sane person might suffer a temporary mental aberration during which he would not possess testamentary capacity. There is a general but rebuttable presumption that every testator possesses testamentary capacity. Therefore, reasonable doubts should be resolved in favor of testamentary capacity.

[26 FR 1590, Feb. 24, 1961]

#### § 3.356 Conditions which determine permanent incapacity for self-support.

(a) *Basic determinations.* A child must be shown to be permanently incapable of self-support by reason of mental or physical defect at the date of attaining the age of 18 years.

(b) *Rating criteria.* Rating determinations will be made solely on the basis of whether the child is permanently incapable of self-support through his own efforts by reason of physical or mental defects. The question of permanent incapacity for self-support is one of fact for determination by the rating agency on competent evidence of record in the individual case. Rating criteria applicable to disabled veterans are not controlling. Principal factors for consideration are:

(1) The fact that a claimant is earning his or her own support is prima facie evidence that he or she is not incapable of self-support. Incapacity for self-support will not be considered to exist when the child by his or her own efforts is provided with sufficient income for his or her reasonable support.