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## Program Operations Manual System (POMS)

Effective Dates: 10/14/2010 - Present

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# DI 24510.060 Mental Residual Functional Capacity Assessment

## A. Operating Policy

### 1. Special Form

Because of the complexity of mental disorder evaluation, a **special Form SSA-4734-F4-SUP** is to be used to document the mental residual functional capacity (RFC) decision, i.e., what an individual can do despite his /her impairment.

### 2. Medical Consultant Completion

#### a. Unfavorable and Partially Favorable Decisions

In decisions that are not fully favorable, only a psychiatrist or psychologist is to perform the analysis and decide the mental functional capacity.

#### b. Fully Favorable Decisions

In fully favorable determinations, the medical consultant (MC) who completes the mental RFC assessment, to the extent possible, should be a psychiatrist or psychologist.

#### c. When Physical Impairment Involved

Refer the claim to a physician of the appropriate medical specialty after all mental RFC considerations have been accomplished.

## B. Description of Form SSA-4734-F4-SUP

Form SSA-4734-F4-SUP is divided into four sections:

- Heading,
- Section I, Summary Conclusions,
- Section II, Remarks,
- Section III, Functional Capacity Assessment and MC signature.

### 1. Heading

The **Heading** provides space to record claimant and claim identification data.

## 2. Section I

**Section I—Summary Conclusions** is designed to record the MC's analysis of the evidence and his/her conclusions about:

- the presence and degree of specific functional limitations, and
- the adequacy of documentation.
  - a. **Section I is merely a worksheet** to aid in deciding the presence and degree of functional limitations and the adequacy of documentation and **does not constitute the RFC assessment**.
  - b. **Twenty mental function items** are grouped under **four main categories**:
    - Understanding and Memory,
    - Sustained Concentration and Persistence,
    - Social Interaction, and
    - Adaptation
  - c. **To the right of each of the items** is a series of **decision checkblocks** under the headings:
    - Not Significantly Limited
    - Moderately Limited
    - Markedly Limited
    - No Evidence of Limitation in This Category, and
    - Not Ratable on Available Evidence

## 3. Section II

**Section II - Remarks**, provides for discussion of evidence needed to rate particular items in section I.

## 4. Section III

- a. **Section III—Functional Capacity Assessment**, is for recording the mental RFC determination. It is in this section that the **actual mental RFC assessment is recorded**, explaining the conclusions indicated in section I, in terms of the extent to which these mental capacities or functions could or could not be performed in work settings.
- b. The **discussion** of all mental capacities and limitations in this section **must be in narrative format**.  
The MC must also include any other information that he/she believes is necessary to present a complete picture of mental RFC.
- c. The **Narrative must not** present estimates of capacities for mental functions that **could not be rated** because of insufficient evidence. Such would represent speculation.
- d. The completed SSA-4734-F4-SUP must be signed by the MC who conducted the analysis and prepared the mental RFC assessment.

To Link to this section - Use this URL:

<http://policy.ssa.gov/poms.nsf/lnx/0424510060>

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