

Scott Walker, Governor

John A. Scocos, Secretary



**STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

30 West Mifflin Street
P.O. Box 7843
Madison, WI 53707-7843

Phone: (608) 266-1311
Toll-free: 1-800-WIS-VETS (947-8387)
Fax: (608) 267-0403
Email: Headquarters@dva.state.wi.us
Website: www.WisVets.com

December 2, 2011

WDVA Bulletin No. 966

TO: County Veterans Service Offices

SUBJECT: Bureau of Claims Updates

Personnel Changes

In July 2011, Russell Peck became the Bureau Director, and Sandra VanZeeland was promoted to Agency Liaison. Joshua Sniegowski left the WDVA in October and continues serving Wisconsin veterans as the Taylor County Veterans Service Officer.

Two vacancies now exist at the Claims Office. It is anticipated one new Claims Officer will begin working in January 2012. The remaining position will be filled early next year.

Workload Redistribution

As WDVA staffing changes, alphabetic assignments are adjusted so everyone has an equal caseload. CVSOs are notified by e-mail and/or by CVSO bulletin when these changes occur. The last change occurred November 16, 2011. Support staff also has their workload sections adjusted to coincide with Claims Officers' changes.

Automation/Scanner

We are continually exploring ways to increase the efficiency of the Claims Office. Currently, we are seeking a means to scan documents via a networked, multifunction device. The goal is to scan documents rather than file them, and rely more on VA databases to keep the electronic files of development letters, rating decisions, and other documentation. It is anticipated scanning will begin in December.

VA Computer Systems

Virtual VA and other VA programs are available to all CVSOs. Many of the "request for status" calls from CVSOs could be answered by checking these systems prior to calling the Claims Office.

Training

Accreditation training was provided at Ft. McCoy November 7 - 9, 2011. Future plans include provision of training twice per year, in Spring and Fall 2012.

End of Month Processing

As stated in CVSO Bulletin No. 922, "In order to ensure a claim is properly filed with the Federal VA to meet the requirements for end of month filing, the claim must be transmitted to the WDVA Claims Office **before noon** on the last work day of the month. WDVA must submit all claims to the VA before 15:00 on the last work day of the month for the veteran to receive credit for that month.

Claims that are submitted after noon may not allow enough processing time to meet the VA deadline; therefore, WDVA cannot ensure that claims submitted after noon will be processed for end of month filing. Priority will be given to those claims filed before noon.”

2012 Travel Board Hearings

The Travel Section of the Board of Veterans Appeals, from Washington, DC, will be at the Milwaukee VA Regional Office April 2 - 6, 2012 and June 11 - 15, 2012. During these weeks, it may be difficult to make contact with Claims Officers, as they will be focused on hearing preparation and their presentations for the judge.

Other Reminders

- There is no need to fax in a claim or informal claim **early in the month** and then submit the hard copy a few days later. This causes double work for the Claims Officers and confusion for VA. Please utilize the informal claims for necessary situations only, at the end of the month.
- Please use WDVA 2352, Claims Fax Transmittal Sheet, when faxing the Claims Office. We receive many faxed documents without a cover sheet, or receive cover sheets with no identifying veteran/claim information provided. Please refer to CVS0 Bulletin No. 946.
- Do not send x-rays through the mail. VA prefers to receive radiology reports, not the actual x-ray films.

If you have any questions, please contact Russ Peck, Director, Bureau of Claims, by email at russell.peck@va.gov or by phone at (414) 902-5763.