

# **VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION**

## **WEEKLY UPDATE**

Week Ending — 02/02/2024

### ***Division Operations***

#### **Meetings:**

- January 22-26: VA&R Division continues to prepare for Washington Conference
- January 29: VA&R Director attended the In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) Working Group to discuss the changes to IFV policies within Veterans Health Administration (VHA). Associated news article can be viewed [HERE](#).
- January 31: VA&R Director attended the Medical Disability Examinations quarterly with multiple other veteran service organizations (VSO) to hear about recent changes in disability claim examinations and ways of enhancing the examination process for veterans.
- January 31: VA&R Director attended an update discussion from VHA leadership on veteran care in the Philippines.

## ***Health Policy Team Operations***

### **Meetings:**

- January 29: Health Policy Team (HPT) attended the monthly IVF Working Group meeting to discuss group principles, policy, and legislative updates.
- January 30: HPT attended “The One Percent: Supporting America’s Surviving Military Family Community” HVAC Committee Meeting virtually and in person where survivor benefits and support resources were discussed. HPT also attend a post-testimony VSO meeting.
- January 31: HPT confirmed Warrior Canine Connection and Mutts with a Mission as service dog resources for Washington Conference.
- February 1: HPT virtually attended suicide prevention training led by Columbia University in support of the Be the One mission.
- February 1: HPT virtually attended the Women Veterans VSO Working Group meeting for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) updates on implementation of the Deborah Sampson Act.

### **Legislative Bill Reviews:**

- **S. 1125 – EHR Program RESET Act of 2023 - Support**
  - To authorize an electronic health record modernization program of the Department of Veterans Affairs and increase oversight and accountability of the program to better serve veterans, medical professionals of the Department, and taxpayers, and for other purposes.

#### **Supporting Resolutions:**

- Resolution No. 14: Electronic Health Record | Digital Archive ([legion.org](https://legion.org))
- Resolution No. 83: Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record | Digital Archive ([legion.org](https://legion.org))

- **S.R.XXX – Rural Veterans Transportation to Care Act - Support**

- To expand and modify the grant program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide 2 innovative transportation options to veterans in highly rural areas, and for other purposes.

#### **Supporting Resolutions:**

- Resolution No. 119: Support More Service Programs Benefiting the Rural Veteran | Digital Archive ([legion.org](https://legion.org))
- Resolution No. 62: Veterans Transportation System and Benefits Travel | Digital Archive ([legion.org](https://legion.org))

## ***Claims & Appeals Team Operations***

### **Accreditations**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| - Applications received from TAL Departments                | 9 |
| - Certifications submitted by TAL Washington Office         | 9 |
| - Certifications approved by VA's Office of General Counsel | 9 |

### **The American Legion Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) Unit**

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| - AMA appeals pending (125+ days)                | 7          |
| - Informal Hearing Presentations (IHPs) prepared | 165        |
| - Memos generated                                | 4          |
| - Phone inquiries                                | 229        |
| - Internal quality reviews                       | 7          |
| - Individual training                            | 3 hours    |
| - Team training                                  | 16 hour    |
| - Hearings                                       | 3          |
| - Board dispositions                             | 146        |
| o Appeals granted                                | 45 (30.8%) |
| o Remanded                                       | 80 (54.8%) |
| o Denied   | 15 (10.3%) |
| o Other  | 6 (4.1%)   |

### **Senior Veterans Disability Claims Specialist**

- |                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| - Compensation & Pension Claims | 15 |
| - Other Issues                  | 1  |
| - Contacts                      | 16 |

### **Pension & Debt Management**

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| - New Claims                             | 22  |
| - Supporting Submissions                 | 39  |
| - Sensitive Claims                       | 10  |
| - Rating Reviews/Audits                  | 74  |
| - Contacts                               | 215 |
| - Debt Notices Received                  | 84  |
| - Insurance Questions                    | 1   |
| - Waivers Granted                        | 1   |
| - Pension Notification Letters Processed | 506 |

### **Tiffany Ellett**

Director

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Division

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End of VA&R weekly update – 02/02/2024