

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

WEEKLY UPDATE

Week Ending — 03/08/2024

Division Operations

Meetings:

- March 4-8: VA&R Division prepared for National Commander's testimony to Congress on March 13th.
- March 5: VA&R Director met with Maxim Healthcare Services to discuss their long-term/end-of-life care for veterans.
- March 6: VA&R Director met with Glenn Bergmann of Bergmann and Moore law firm and the Honorable Judge Michael Allen from the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to discuss his participation in The American Legion's DSO Symposium scheduled for October, 2024.

Something you should know...

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All materials and presentations provided during the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission and TBI/PTSD/Suicide Prevention Committee meetings at the 2024 Washington Conference are posted to the following website:

[Washington Conference Presentations | The American Legion](#)

Health Policy Team Operations

Meetings:

- March 4: Health Policy Team (HPT) attended the Women Veterans Veteran Service Organization Working breakfast with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to discuss women veteran issues, priorities, and upcoming changes.
- March 5: HPT virtually attended the VSO Monthly Health Care and Mental Health Suicide Prevention meeting to discuss recently introduced legislation, upcoming testimony, and pressing matters within the veteran space.
- March 6: HPT virtually attended the Legislative presentation of Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and Multiple VSOs: PVA, WWP, NASDVA, MRC, BSF, IAVA, BVA, SWAN, SVA, AMVETS at the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs. This presentation discussed how congress and VSOs can work together to improve the lives of veterans.
- March 7: HPT virtually attended the Legislative presentation of Disabled American Veterans at the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs. This presentation discussed ways that congress and the DAV can work together in efforts to assist the veteran community.
- March 7: HPT virtually attended Vet Resources Community Network Gaming Partner War Room 3rd Quarter meeting hosted by the Department of Veterans Affairs as a way to convene gaming partners and organizations to strategize on the best ways to reach Veterans and offer VA services and benefits.

Legislative Bill Reviews:

- H.R.5633 - Veteran Suicide Prevention Act - Support

- To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a review of the deaths of certain veterans who died by suicide, and for other purposes.

Supporting Resolutions:

- Resolution No. 6: Minority Veterans
- Resolution No. 9: Appointment of TBI/PTSD Committee
- Resolution No. 17: Continuum of Care and Mental Health Supports
- Resolution No. 20: Suicide Prevention Program
- Resolution No. 37: Improvements to Department of Veterans Affairs Women Veterans Programs
- Resolution No. 52: Antidepressant Harms Analysis

Benefits & Claims Team Operations

Meetings:

- March 4: Deputy Director of Benefits & Claims attended House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) Majority Staff check-in meeting. The meeting discussed the upcoming HVAC hearing and the Star Act Hill Day activities.
- March 4: Veterans Benefits Policy Team attended VSO-VBA roundtable featuring speaker from New York City Department of Veterans Services Commissioner and his Senior Advisor
- March 5: DDBC and Legislative Staff attended lunch meeting with other VSOs and MSOs at the Capitol Hills Club discussing the Star Act Hill Day event.
- March 6: Benefits Policy Team monitored the testimony presented by the Veterans of Foreign Wars and other VSOs before a joint session of the Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committees in preparation for next week's testimony by the National Commander before the same committees.

Claims & Appeals Team Operations

Accreditations:

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| - Applications received from TAL Departments | 37 |
| - Certifications submitted by TAL Washington Office | 23 |
| - Certifications approved by VA's Office of General Counsel | 23 |

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

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| - AMA appeals pending (125+ days) | 10 |
| - Informal Hearing Presentations (IHPs) prepared | 193 |
| - Memos generated | 2 |
| - Phone inquiries | 280 |
| - Internal quality reviews | 9 |
| - Individual training | 7 hours |
| - Team training | 0 hours |
| - Hearings | 4 |
| - Board dispositions | 133 |
| o Appeals granted | 52 (39.1%) |
| o Remanded | 64 (48.1%) |
| o Denied | 14 (10.5%) |
| o Other | 3 (2.3%) |
| - Largest retroactive awards won for veteran | \$333,771 |

Senior Veterans Disability Claims Specialist:

- Compensation & Pension Claims	125
- Other Issues	3
- Contacts	128

Pension & Debt Management:

- New Claims	36
- Supporting Submissions	28
- Sensitive Claims	12
- Rating Reviews/Audits	48
- Contacts	297
- Debt Notices Received	10
- Insurance Questions	6
- Waivers Granted	2
- Pension Notification Letters Processed	187
- Largest debt waiver won for veteran	\$178,305

Tiffany Ellett

Director

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Division

(202)-263-2981

End of VA&R weekly update – 03/08/2024