

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

WEEKLY UPDATE

Week Ending — 05/03/2024

Division Operations

Meetings:

- May 1: VA&R Director and Legislative Director met with Chairman Bost's staff to discuss the upcoming legislative bills addressing various veteran issues.

Health Policy Team Operations

Meetings:

- April 26: Health Policy Team (HPT) attended the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) listening session hosted by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Center for Minority Veterans (CMV), to listen to minority Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) about unique barriers to care LGBT veterans experience.
- April 29: HPT conducted a Town Hall at Post 1 in Phoenix, Arizona to identify challenges, areas of improvement, and potential solutions to VA care.
- April 30-May 1: HPT conducted a System Worth Saving (SWS) site visit at the Carl T. Hayden Veterans' Administration Medical Center to identify facility challenges and best practices.
- May 1: HPT met with the Patriot PAWS Veteran Coordinator Team to discuss the application process and challenges that veterans face in obtaining a service dog, as well as potential attendance at National Convention in August.
- May 1: HPT attended the VA Center for Women Veterans (CWV) National Partners and Stakeholder Meeting to discuss unique challenges that homeless women veteran face, 2024 VA homelessness goals, available resources, and organizational updates.

Legislative Bill Reviews:

- **H.R. X – Setting the Table for Transition Act**
 - This legislation would lower a family's income threshold for the purposes of determining SNAP eligibility by counting only the veteran's income for the family when determining eligibility.

Position: **Support**

Supporting Resolutions: [Resolution No. 19](#): **Resource and System Provisions for Food Insecurity Among Veterans**

- **H.R. 8140** –
 - To authorize the Attorney General to make grants for the creation and operation of veterans response teams within law enforcement agencies, and for other purposes.

Position: **Support**

Supporting Resolutions: [No. 59](#): **Establish Green Alert System Interagency Group Or Committee For Veterans In Crisis**

Benefits Policy Team Operations

Meetings:

- April 25: Benefits Policy Team (BPT) met with Bergmann & Moore for the biweekly TAL-DSO planning meeting to include regularly scheduled service officer training and the October DSO Symposium.
- April 26: BPT, along with Deputy Director Claims and Benefits, participated in a virtual listening session with the Board of Veterans' Appeals regarding veterans' concerns surrounding letters sent by the Board that cause distress or confusion.
- April 29: BPT and Deputy Director Claims and Benefits attended the bi-weekly VSO meeting on VBA Claims, Appeals and Legislative Issues.
- April 30-May 1: Deputy Director Claims and Benefits and Benefits Policy Team conducted a Region Office Action Review (ROAR) visit at the Phoenix VA Regional Office.

Claims & Appeals Team Operations

Accreditations

- Applications received from TAL Departments 19
- Certifications submitted by TAL Washington Office 19
- Certifications approved by VA's Office of General Counsel 7

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

- AMA appeals pending (125+ days) 1
- Informal Hearing Presentations (IHPs) prepared 199
- Memos generated 5
- Phone inquiries 228
- Internal quality reviews 8
- Individual training 3 hours
- Team training 0 hours
- Hearings 5
- Board dispositions 120
 - o Appeals granted 35 (29.2%)
 - o Remanded 52 (43.3%)
 - o Denied 25 (20.8%)
 - o Other 8 (6.7%)
- Retroactive awards won for veteran \$479,344

Senior Veterans Disability Claims Specialist

- Compensation & Pension Claims 107
- Other Issues 1
- Contacts 108

Pension & Debt Management

- New Claims 23
- Supporting Submissions 19
- Sensitive Claims 0
- Rating Reviews/Audits 55
- Contacts 125
- Debt Notices Received 96
- Insurance Questions 3
- Waivers Granted 9
- Pension Notification Letters Processed 13
- Debt waivers granted \$210,784

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Director

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End of VA&R weekly update – 05/3/2024