

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

WEEKLY UPDATE

Week Ending — 03/14/2025

Division Operations

Meetings:

- March 10: Director attended the Oracle EGRM Briefing.
- March 11: Director attended the Briefing Focused on Food is Medicine in the Veteran Health Administration.
- March 11: Director attended the House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity Legislative Hearing titled: "[Legislative Hearing on: H.R. 913, Streamlining Aviation for Eligible Veterans Act of 2025, H.R. 980, the Modernizing the Veterans On-Campus Experience Act of 2025, H.R.1364, the Automotive Support Services to Improve Safe Transportation Act of 2025, H.R. 1458, the Veterans Education and Technical Skills Opportunity Act of 2025, H.R. 1960, the Simplifying Veterans Assistance Act of 2025, H.R. 1527, the Reforming Education for Veterans Act, H.R. 1793, the Veterans Readiness and Employment Transparency Act of 2025, H.R. 1872, Fairness in Veterans' Education Act, H.R. 1815, VA Home Loan Program Reform Act, H.R. 1814, Restoring the VA Home Loan Program in Perpetuity Act of 2025, H.R. 1957, the End Veteran Homelessness Act of 2025, H.R. 1423, Guard and Reserve Parity Act of 2025, Discussion Draft, To amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the conditions under which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is required to redevelop the individualized vocational rehabilitation plan for a veteran, and for other purposes, and H.R. 1803, the Fair Access to Co-ops for Veterans Act of 2025.](#)"
- March 11: Director attended the Senate Veteran Affairs Committee (SVAC) [Legislative Hearing to Consider Pending Legislation](#).
- March 11: Director Attended the Army Caucus Military Lending Act (MLA) Lunch and Learn.
- March 11: Director attended the House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) Subcommittee on Health Legislative Hearing titled: "[Legislative Hearing on: Discussion Draft, Standardizing Treatment and Referral Times Act; Discussion Draft, No Wrong Door for Veterans Act; Discussion Draft, Providing Veterans Essential Medications Act; Discussion Draft, Veterans Supporting Prosthetics Opportunities and Recreational Therapy Act; Discussion Draft, To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Comptroller General of the United States to report on certain funding shortfalls in the Department of Veterans Affairs; H.R. 217, CHIP IN for Veterans Act \(Rep. Bacon\); H.R. 1107, Protecting Veteran Access to Telemedicine Services Act of 2025 \(Rep. Womack\); H.R. 1336, The Veterans National Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment Act \(Rep. Murphy\); H.R. 658, To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish qualifications for](#)

the appointment of a person as a marriage and family therapist, qualified to provide clinical supervision, in the Veterans Health Administration; Discussion Draft, Copy Fairness for Veterans Act; Discussion Draft, Saving Our Veterans Lives Act; and Discussion Draft, Women Veterans Cancer Care Coordination Act."

- March 12: Division Director attended a meeting to discuss Veteran 2nd Amendment Protection Act.
- March 12: Director attended The American Legion National Headquarters (TAL NHQ) Briefing with Department Adjutants.
- March 12: Division Director attended the Social Security Disability Insurance SSDI Claims Assistance Discussion.
- March 13: Director had Lunch with Red Duke Strategies Team to discuss opportunities and how the Legion can get more involved with VA's office of innovation.

Health Policy Team (HPT) Operations

Meetings:

- March 14: Health Policy Team (HPT) met with Eugene Luskin from Sync MD to discuss community care inefficiencies and their innovative solution to address them.

Products:

- HPT Provided technical support to responses for the American Legion Impact Survey.
- HPT Analyzed cancelled contracts at VHA to determine potential impacts to veterans.

Legislative Bill Reviews:

- **H.R. X – Putting Veterans First Act of 2025**
- Reinstates veterans, military spouses, survivors, veteran caregivers, and members of the Guard or Reserves who were federal employees until they were illegally fired, demoted, or suspended between January 20,2025 and the enactment of this act with full backpay and benefits.

Position: **Support**

Supporting Resolutions:

[Resolution No. 115: Department of Veterans Affairs Recruitment and Retention](#)

RESOLVED, That the Veterans Health Administration continue to develop and implement

staffing models for critical need occupations

[Resolution No. 81: Military Spouse Employment](#)

RESOLVED, That The American Legion reminds employers, both public and private sectors, of their moral obligation to hire, not only veterans, but their civilian spouses as well.

[Res. No. 346: Support an Investigation of Hiring Practices in the Federal Government](#)

RESOLVED, That The American Legion encourages Congress to conduct an investigation into the employment of veterans by the various agencies of the federal government

RESOLVED, That The American Legion supports remedial legislation, as may be needed, to increase the percentage of veterans hired in all agencies; specifically, the Department of Veterans Affairs to 50 percent or above.

Claims & Appeals Team Operations

Accreditations

- Applications Received from TAL Departments	28
- Certifications Submitted by TAL Washington Office	28
- Certifications Approved by VA's Office of General Counsel	21

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

- AMA Appeals Pending (125+ Days)	0
- Informal Hearing Presentations (IHPs) Prepared	228
- Memos Generated	2
- Phone Inquiries	169
- Internal Quality Reviews	3
- Individual Training	5 hour
- Team Training	0 hours
- Hearings	1
- Board Dispositions	59
o Appeals Granted	11 (18.6%)
o Remanded	38 (64.4%)
o Denied	8 (13.6%)
o Other	2 (3.4%)
 Retroactive Awards Won for Veterans	 \$1,868,385

National Veterans Service Office

- Phone Calls	115
- Emails	32
- Referrals	13
- Discharge Upgrades	1
- Written Correspondence	4
- Claims Submitted	8
- Evidence Submitted	0
- POA Submitted	7
- Training Hours	0
- HLR Informal Conference Calls	3
- In -Person Conference	0

Pension & Debt Management

- New Compensation Claims	7
- New Pension Claims	6
- Supporting Submissions	0
- Sensitive Claims	7
- File Reviews	174
- Phone Contacts/E-Mails/Inquiries	330
- Debt Notices Received	425
- Insurance Actions	0

- Waivers Requested	15
- Waivers Granted	27
- Walk-Ins	12
- Hearings	0
- Misc. Notification Letters Processed	4
- Debt Waiver Granted	\$490,286

Benefits Policy Team (BPT) Operations

Meetings:

- March 6: Policy & Legislative teams conducted consultation with Rep. Beyer's staff concerning *H.R. 10386* to call for earlier VA Solid Start outreach to transitioning servicemembers.
- March 9-11: The Policy team conducted a Regional Office Action Review (ROAR) site visit at San Juan Regional Office (RO) with American Legion Department of Puerto Rico leadership and learned about this region's challenges and best practices when providing veterans claims and benefits to a catchment area of insular islands.
- March 10: Policy team virtually attended House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC)'s Weekly Call-In to learn about upcoming hearings and pending legislation about to be introduced.
- March 11: Virtually observed Senate Veteran Affairs Committee (SVAC) on pending legislation affecting the Veterans Benefits Administration and Veterans Health Administration (VBA/VHA).

Projects

- Resolution drafting -- Consulted with Department of Latin America to better shape a Foreign Medical Program (FMP) resolution.
- Resolution drafting – Drafted a VA fiduciary protections resolution to better safeguard beneficiaries' rights when a victim to fraud.

Legislative Activities

- ***S. 892, Veterans' Claims Act of 2025***
 - To amend title 38 USC, to improve the repayment by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs of benefits misused by a fiduciary, and for other purposes. – **Support.**
- ***S.478, Veterans Second Amendment Protection Act of 2025***
 - To amend title 38 USC, to prohibit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (SECVA) from transmitting certain information to the Department of Justice for use by the national instant criminal background check system (NICS). – **Support.**
- ***H.R. 1404 / S. 605, CHAMPVA Children's Care Protection Act of 2025***
 - To amend title 38 USC, to increase the maximum age for children eligible for medical care under the CHAMPVA program, and for other purposes. – **Support.**
- ***H.R. xx, Veterans Transition Support Act of 2024***
 - To amend title 38 USC, to improve the Solid Start program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes. -- **Support.**

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Director

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End of VA&R weekly update – 03/14/2025