

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

WEEKLY UPDATE

Week Ending — 12/06/2024

Health Policy Team (HPT) Operations

Meetings:

- November 22: HPT participated in the Program for Comprehensive Assistance for Caregivers (PCAFC) Veteran Service Organization (VSO) workgroup.
- December 2: HPT attended the 119th Congressional Session Legislative ideas meeting.
- December 3: HPT attended the American Legion Holiday Award Ceremony.
- December 3: HPT virtually attended the last Center for Women Veterans meeting of the year.

Legislative Bill Reviews:

- **H. R. 9478: Veterans SPORT Act**

- *To include adaptive prosthesis and terminal devices for sports and other recreational activities in the medical services furnished to eligible veterans by VA.*

Position: **Support**

Supporting Resolutions:

- [Resolution No. 15](#): *Dept of Veterans Affairs Prosthetic Program*

- **H. R. 214: Veteran's Choice Act**

- *To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to improve the ability of veterans to access medical care in medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs and in the community by providing the veterans the ability to choose health care providers.*

Position: **No Support**

Supporting Resolutions:

- [Resolution No. 7](#): *Ensuring VA Remain the Center of Care*

- **H. R. 3176: Veterans Health Care Freedom Act**

- *To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to improve the ability of veterans to access medical care in medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs and in the community by providing the veterans the ability to choose health care providers.*

Position: **No Support**

Supporting Resolutions:

- [Resolution No. 372](#): *Oppose Closing or Privatization of Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care System*

- **H. R. 5287: Veterans Access to Direct Primary Care Act**

- *To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a pilot program to provide veteran health savings accounts to allow veterans to receive primary care furnished under non-Department direct primary care service arrangements, and for other purposes.*

Position: **No Support**

Supporting Resolutions:

- [Resolution No. 372](#): *Oppose Closing or Privatization of Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care System*

- **H. R. 6333: Veterans Emergency Care Reimbursement Act of 2023**

- *To amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the limitation on reimbursement for emergency treatment of amounts owed to a third party or for which the veteran is responsible under a health-plan contract.*

Position: **Support**

Supporting Resolutions:

- [Resolution No. 182](#): *Non-Department of Veterans Affairs Emergency Care.*

- **H. R. 8347: Improving Menopause Care for Veterans Act of 2024**

- *To direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on menopause care furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.*

Position: **Support**

Supporting Resolutions:

- [Resolution No. 147](#): *Women Veterans*

- **H. R. 8481: Emergency Community Care Time Adjustment Act of 2024**

- *To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish an extended deadline for the submission of applications regarding emergency treatment furnished in non-Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities, and for other purposes.*

Position: **Support**

Supporting Resolutions:

- [Resolution No. 377](#): *Support for Veteran Quality of Life*

- **H. R. 9924: What Works for Preventing Veteran Suicide Act**
 - *To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish standard practices for a grant or pilot program administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs through the Veterans Health Administration, and for other purposes.*

Position: **Support**

Supporting Resolutions:

- [Resolution No. 1](#): *Be the One Mental Wellness Committee*

- **H. R. 10012: What Works for Preventing Veteran Suicide Act**
 - *To amend title 38, United States Code, to include eyeglass lens fittings in the category of medical services authorized to be furnished to veterans under the Veterans Community Care Program, and for other purposes.*

Position: **Support**

Supporting Resolutions:

- [Resolution No. 14](#): *Access to Care*

- **H.R. X – House Resolution To Amend Title 38, US Code to authorize a joint scholarship program under which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs pays for medical education of an officer of the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service at the Uniformed Services University in return for a period of obligated service by such officer at a medical facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.**

Position: **Support with change**

Supporting Resolutions:

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

- **H. R. X: Complete the Mission Act of 2024**
 - *To improve the provision of care and services under the Veterans Community Care Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.*

Position: **Support some sections other sections are no support**

Supporting Resolutions:

- [Resolution No. 377](#): *Support for Veteran Quality of Life*
- [Resolution No. 182](#): *Non-Department of Veterans Affairs Emergency Care*

Claims & Appeals Team Operations

Accreditations

- Applications received from TAL Departments	14
- Certifications submitted by TAL Washington Office	14
- Certifications approved by VA's Office of General Counsel	0

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

- AMA Appeals Pending (125+ Days)	0
- Informal Hearing Presentations (IHPs) Prepared	130
- Memos Generated	1
- Phone Inquiries	114
- Internal Quality Reviews	3
- Individual Training	2 hours
- Team Training	0 hours
- Hearings	1
- Board Dispositions	35
o Appeals Granted	11 (31.4%)
o Remanded	16 (45.7%)
o Denied	8 (22.9%)
- Retroactive Awards Won for Veterans	\$522,567

National Veterans Service Office

- Phone Calls	52
- Emails	11
- Referrals	2
- Discharge Upgrades	0
- Written Correspondence	3
- Claims Submitted	8
- Evidence Submitted	0
- POA Submitted	2
- Training Hours	0
- HLR Informal Conference Calls	3

Pension & Debt Management

- New Claims	23
- Supporting Submissions	1
- Sensitive Claims	3
- Rating Reviews/Audits	90
- Contacts	169
- Debt Notices Received	513
- Insurance Questions	0
- Waivers Granted	29
- Hearings	0
- Pension Notification Letters Processed	11
- Debt Waiver Granted	\$596,382

Benefits Policy Team (BPT) Operations

Meetings:

- November 21: BPT attended a Congressional Joint Veterans Affairs Committee Staff roundtable with legal scholars and VA Office of General Counsel, to discuss systemic root causes to the high remand rates from Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC) back to the BVA court, and the possible legislative or internal fixes for Duty to Assist, better tracking of remands, and ability to grant veteran courts the option to bring class action suits.
- November 21: BPT attended VBA Equity Leadership Collaboration Council to discuss strategies addressing the backlog of claims for travel reimbursement filed with the Veterans Health Administration, and for other purposes.
- November 25: BPT virtually attended a meeting with VA leadership addressing 3 key major issues:
 - VA's aggressive push to house more Veterans, which exceeds the 22% goal set earlier this year.
 - How Hurricane Baxter flooding in North Cove, NC affected the U.S. hospital IV fluid supply chain.
 - The FY 2025 VA Budget Shortfall.
 - 37% increase in enrollment due to PACT Act and 127.5 million appointments made.
 - VA exceeded the budget by only 2 % despite the emergency funding infusion request earlier in the last FY.
- December 2: Deputy Director for Benefits & Claims (DDBC) met with Board of Veterans Appeals VSO Liaison to discuss current Board inventory issues.
- December 3: DDBC attended VBA VSO biweekly check-in meeting for updates from the Office of Under Secretary for Benefits.
- December 3: BPT attended DC HQ's annual ceremony recognizing milestones and new hires. Claims and Benefits teams heard directly from National Adjutant Rodney Rolland on his vision moving forward.
- December 4: DDBC and National Be The One Chair met with Stop Soldier Suicide to discuss potential partnership with Department Service Officers.
- December 4: BPT and Claims Team attended American Legion annual Congressional Reception.
- December 5: BPT monitored HVAC Hearing on VA Budget Shortfalls.

Meetings (continued):

- December 6: BPT attended VA Debt Management Center Quarterly Update meeting. VA DMC is updating VSOs on the recent rule change on debt waiver timeline.

Legislative Bill Reviews:

- **S. 5325 -Veterans Claim Education Act of 2024**
 - *To promote assistance form persons recognized by SECVA for individuals who file certain claims under laws administered by the Secretary, and for other purposes.*

Position: **Support**

Other Projects:

- Drafting public comment for the federal register on VA debt repayment.
- Drafting revisions to The American Legion's Service Officer Conde of Procedures (CoP).
- Compiling ROAR report data for presentation delivery at upcoming 2025 Washington Conference.



Veterans Affairs
& Rehabilitation

The American Legion Accreditation & Training School 2025 Calendar

Last updated: 11/25/2024

Green = Nomination

Blue = Grades Release

Purple = Registration

DECEMBER 2024

12/20 Nomination for January Beginner/101 Class Begins

JANUARY

1/6 Nomination for January Beginner/101 Class ends

1/13 – 1/27 **January Beginner/101 Class**

1/20 Nomination Period for February Beginner/101 Class

1/30 January Beginner/101 Class grades released

FEBRUARY

2/5 Nomination Period for February Beginner/101 Class ends

2/5 – 2/10 Registration period for February 101 Class

2/11 – 2/25 **February Beginner/101 Class**

2/20 Nomination for March Advance/201 class Begins

2/28 February Beginner/101 Class grades released

MARCH

3/5 Nomination for March Advance/201 class ends

3/5 – 3/10 Registration period for Advance/201 class

3/11 – 3/25 **March Advance/201 Class and Training**

3/20 Nomination for April Beginner/101 Class

3/31 March Advance/201 class grades released

APRIL

- 4/4 Nomination for April Beginner/101 Class Ends
- 4/4 – 4/10 Registration period for April Beginner/101 Class
- 4/11 – 4/25 **April Beginner/101 Class and Training**
- 4/20 Nomination for May Beginner/101 Class
- 4/30 April Beginner/101 Class grades released

MAY

- 5/5 Nomination for May Beginner/101 Class Ends
- 5/5 – 5/9 Registration period for May Beginner/101 Class
- 5/12 – 5/26 **May Beginner/101 Class and Training**
- 5/20 Nomination for June Appeals/202 Class
- 5/30 May Beginner/101 Class grades released

JUNE

- 6/5 Nomination for June Appeals/202 Class Ends
- 6/5 – 6/10 Registration Period for June Beginner/202 Class
- 6/11 – 6/25 **June Appeals/202 Class and Training**
- 6/20 Nomination for July Beginner/101 Class Begins
- 6/30 June Beginner/202 Class grades released

JULY

- 7/3 Nomination for July Beginner/101 Class Ends
- 7/3 – 7/10 Registration period for July Beginner/101 Class
- 7/11 – 7/25 **July Beginner/101 Class and Training**
- 7/30 July Beginner/101 Class Grades released

AUGUST

- 8/20 Nomination for September Beginner/101 Class

SEPTEMBER

- 9/3 – 9/21 **DSO Symposium Registration (Tentative)**
- 9/5 Nomination for September Beginner/101 Class Ends
- 9/5 – 9/10 **Registration period for September Beginner 101 Class**
- 9/11 – 9/25 ***September Beginner/101 Class and Training***

OCTOBER

- 10/20 Nomination for November Beginner/101 Class
- 10/26 – 10/31** **DSO Symposium Training (Tentative)**

NOVEMBER

- 11/5 Nomination for November Beginner/101 Ends
- 11/5 – 11/10 **Registration period for November Beginner/101 Class**
- 11/11 – 11/25 ***November Beginner/101 Class and Training***
- 11/28 November Beginner/101 Class Grades Released

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End of VA&R weekly update – 12/06/2024