



Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Veterans Outreach Ministries Claims

Objective:

To facilitate Veterans in securing all eligible benefits through efficient claims management and communication.

Veterans Service Representative Division

1. Initiate Contact:

Reach out to the Veteran to explain the claims process clearly.

Establish expectations and provide an overview of the steps involved.

- Ensure the Veteran has submitted a statement of understanding to Veterans Outreach Ministries confirming their commitment to donate three months of any increase in benefits obtained due to the Ministry's work. Ensure the Veteran understands that Veterans Outreach Ministries follows Florida state law governing assisting Veteran's with compensation claims for VA benefits. During appeals, they operate independently from our organization and will request a fee agreement of 20% of any past-due benefits awarded as a result of a successful appeal. This fee structure applies only to accredited representation during the appeals process.

2. Enter Veterans Demographics into Electronic Systems:

Obtain the Veterans power of representation by having them complete and return the Power of Representation form (VA Form 21-22a).

- Submit an Intent to File claim (VA Form 21-0966) on behalf of the Veteran to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), establishing a backpay date for the compensation claim.

Direct Veteran to the US Elite Medical Services website to sign up as a established patient for future services if needed.

3. Gather Information:

- Contact the Veteran to collect relevant information regarding their past VA claims history.
- Assist the Veteran in completing medical release forms (VA Forms 21-4142 and 21-4142a).
- Gather medical documentation and personal statements related to the Veteran's medical conditions stemming from military service from the Veteran and other sources.

Claims Support Specialist Division

4. Access VBMS:

- Obtain access to the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) electronic database.
- Contact the Veteran to schedule a telephone interview to review medical conditions to be claimed for compensation.

5. Conduct a Medical Documentation Review:

- Retrieve military and VA medical documents, rating decision code sheets, Tera memorandum, and prior claims decision documents from VBMS.
- Generate a medical (AI) report through Super Insight to assist in reviewing military service treatment records, personnel records, and VA medical records.
- Identify all illnesses, injuries, and diseases treated during the Veteran's service.

6. Assess Presumptive Illnesses:

- Evaluate if the Veteran shows symptoms or has a diagnosis of presumptive illnesses related to military service due to specific exposures.

- Educate the Veteran on what constitutes a presumptive illness and discuss symptoms that may not be initially recognized.

7. Diagnosis Guidance:

- If symptoms are present without a diagnosis, recommend the Veteran schedule a Tele-Health appointment with US Elite Medical Services for diagnosis.
- Inform the Veteran that these telehealth appointments are their financial responsibility.

8. Prepare Support Statement:

- Compile medical information from the initial interview, service treatment records, private medical treatment records, and telehealth medical documentation showing diagnosis.
- Prepare an AI-generated statement supporting the claim, linking pertinent medical information to substantiate the connection between conditions and military service.
- Forward the support statement to the Claims Support Specialist Division.

9. Final Review:

- The Claims Support Specialist Division will conduct a final review of all compiled information and statements.

Claims Agent and Attorneys Division

10. Submit Claim:

- Electronically submit a fully developed claim through the Department of Veterans Affairs Benefits system.

Claims Support Specialist Division (Post-Submission)

11. Provide Coaching Videos:

- Send VA compensation exam coaching videos to the Veteran to help them understand and respond appropriately to exam questions.

12. Guidance on Pain:

- Send videos highlighting VA laws regarding pain and frozen joints to assist the Veteran in effectively communicating symptoms and avoiding exacerbating activities during the compensation exam.

13. Mental Health Conditions:

- Send videos ensuring the Veteran understands how to connect their mental health condition to military service or related service-connected medical conditions.

14. Discuss Decision:

- After the claim decision, contact the Veteran to discuss the outcome and explain the next phase of the claims process.

15. New Intent to File:

- Immediately initiate a new Intent to File to establish a backpay date once a claim decision has been made, setting a new backpay date for any new claims.

16. Review for Appeals:

- Review the claim to identify conditions that may warrant an appeal.

17. High-Level Review:

- Submit a VA Form 20-0996 for a high-level review if errors in law have been discovered on VA claims decisions.

- Remember that approximately 70% of all claims are decided incorrectly by the VA.

18. Supplemental Claim:

- If conditions were denied due to lack of medical diagnosis or disbelief in the relationship to military service, submit a Supplemental Claim (VA Form 20-0995) with new and material evidence.

- Include telehealth documentation from US Elite Medical Services, a qualified medical provider, providing a Nexus letter and diagnosis linking the conditions to military service.

19. Re-interview Veteran:

- Re-interview the Veteran to identify new and secondary medical conditions after receiving new medical evidence and a Nexus letter.

20. Create New AI Medical Support Statement:

- Prepare a new AI medical support statement incorporating the new evidence.

21. File New Claim:

- File a new claim for secondary conditions related to primary service-connected conditions and any newly identified medical conditions.

22. Repeat Process:

- Continue the claims process until the Veteran achieves a 100% service-connected permanent and total rating or the highest possible rating.

Compliance

- Adherence to all legal and ethical guidelines is essential throughout the process to ensure Veterans receive the benefits they are entitled to.