

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION WEEKLY

UPDATE

Week Ending — 03/24/2023

Veterans Benefits and Claims Services

Meetings

- March 16: Biweekly meeting with law firm Bergman & Moore to discuss new Service Officer School. Attendees included Director of VA&R Tiffany Ellett and Benefits Policy Analyst Quandrea Patterson along with Carlos Gonzalez-Pabon and Gabriel Vargo of the BVA Unit.
- March 20: DMC monthly stakeholder call attended by Benefits Policy Analyst Quandrea Patterson.
- March 20: Benefits Policy Analyst Quandrea Patterson participated in the biweekly VSO meeting on VBA claims, appeals and legislative concerns.

Accreditations

- Applications received from TAL Departments 14
- Certifications submitted by TAL Washington Office 12
- Certifications approved by VA's Office of General Counsel 12

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

- AMA appeals pending (125+ days) 5
- Informal Hearing Presentations (IHPs) prepared 258
- Memos generated 6
- Phone inquiries 349
- Internal quality reviews 1
- Individual training 0 hours
- Team training 1 hour
- Hearings 3
- Board dispositions 329
 - Appeals granted 82 (24.9%)
 - Remanded 184 (55.9%)
 - Denied 44 (13.4%)
 - Other 19 (5.8%)

Senior Veterans Disability Claims Specialist

- Compensation & Pension Claims 21
- Other Issues 8
- Contacts 29

Pension & Debt Management

- New Claims (all types)	38
- Supporting Submissions	126
- Sensitive Claims	5
- Rating Reviews/Audits	62
- Contacts	146

Health Policy

Meetings

- March 20: Health Policy Analyst, Kenneth Harman, attended the VA Health Services R&D cyber webinar series entitled, Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias among Aging Veterans: Examining Gene-by-Environment Interactions with PTSD.
- March 20: Health Policy Analyst, Joshua Hastings, held a meeting with Kerry Puckett, VA Point of Contact for System Worth Saving (SWS) Visit, to discuss the details of our upcoming SWS site visit at the Cheyenne VA Health Care System.
- March 21: Health Policy Analysts, Matthew Cardenas, and Josh Hastings met with American Legion Legislative Associate, Chris Fletcher, to discuss VA cannabis policy and possible requests the American Legion might have in furthering research on medical cannabis.
- March 21: Deputy Director for Health Policy, Tiffany Ellett, and Health Policy Analyst, Marie Black attended the women veterans VSO working group to discuss upcoming priorities for 2023.
- March 21: Health Policy team assisted in compiling inputs for the upcoming HVAC Subcommittee on Health hearing on March 29th.
- March 22: Health Policy Analyst, Marie Black, attended a meeting hosted by Minority Veterans of America. This meeting discussed upcoming events that will occur during sexual assault awareness month.
- March 22: Health Policy Analyst, Joshua Hastings, attended Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Program Update. The meeting provided an opportunity for Veterans Service Organization staff to learn more about the important work that VHA program offices are doing.
- March 22: Deputy Director for Health Policy, Tiffany Ellett, met with Wellhive to discuss the updates on their integrated scheduling system currently deployed in Dorn VA, Columbia, SC.
- March 23: Deputy Director for Health Policy, Tiffany Ellett, met with the Office of Inspector General for Veteran Affairs to discuss their upcoming priorities for the year, current reports, future reports, and concerns that The American Legion has.
- March 23: Deputy Director for Health Policy, Tiffany Ellett, met with Bergmann & Moore Law firm to discuss a current Amicus brief involving the veteran community.
- March 24: Deputy Director for Health Policy, Tiffany Ellett, attended the VHA update for the Office of Rural Health covering the status of current programs, new pilot programs, and future goals of the office.

Legislative Bill Reviews

- H.R. XX -- the Rural Veterans Travel Enhancement Act
- S. 216 -- the RESPECT Act of 2023

Tiffany Ellett

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End of VA&R weekly update – 03/24/2023