

## **YOUR RIGHTS UNDER THE EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS PROGRAM**

No person shall be subjected to discrimination under any Department of Veterans Affairs' program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

### **WHAT IS VA'S EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS PROGRAM?**

The External Complaints Program receives and refers for investigation, complaints from individuals who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of their race, color, national origin (limited English proficiency), age, sex, disability, or reprisal in Federally conducted and Federally assisted programs or activities. Federally conducted programs are those that are directly administered by the Department, such as healthcare and other VA benefits. Federally assisted programs are those programs that receive Federal financial assistance.

### **HOW CAN I FILE A DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT?**

If you believe that you have been discriminated against you may file a complaint through the External Complaints Program. A signed, written complaint should be filed within 180 days of the date of the alleged discrimination at the following address:

**Office of Resolution Management (ORM)**  
**External Complaints Program**  
**Attention: Sterling Akins**  
**1575 I Street, NW, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor**  
**Washington, DC 20420**

### **YOUR COMPLAINT SHOULD INCLUDE:**

- VA Form 10-0831 "Civil Rights Discrimination Complaint" (which can be downloaded and printed from this current page). In the event that the form is not accessible, please ensure to write or type on separate paper, the following information:
  - 1) Name, address, and telephone number. If you are filing on behalf of another person, include your name, address telephone number, and your relation to that person.
  - 2) Name and address of the facility where you believe the discrimination occurred.
  - 3) How, why, and when you believe you were discriminated against. Include as much background information as possible about the alleged acts of discrimination against you, to include the basis(es)of discrimination.
  - 4) Names of any persons, if known, that the investigator could contact for additional information to support or clarify your allegations.

### **WHAT WILL VA DO WITH YOUR EXTERNAL COMPLAINT?**

Once a written complaint is received, it will be reviewed for procedural sufficiency and then referred to the primary Administration (Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration or

National Cemetery Administration) for further processing, including the investigative process (which will address those issues that were raised in the complaint) and the findings or resolution of those issues involved.