

## CHAMPVA POLICY MANUAL

CHAPTER: 1  
SECTION: 1.1  
TITLE: CHAMPVA OVERVIEW

---

---

**AUTHORITY:** Public Law 93-82, effective September 1, 1973; 38 CFR 17.270 - 17.278

**RELATED AUTHORITY:** 10 USC, Chapter 55

---

---

### I. DESCRIPTION

A. In 1973 the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) was established as a health benefits program for dependents of permanently and totally disabled veterans, survivors of veterans who died from service-connected conditions, or who at the time of death, were rated permanently and totally disabled from a service-connected condition. Under CHAMPVA, VA shares the cost of covered medical services and supplies with eligible beneficiaries worldwide.

B. From FY 1973 through FY 1986, VA Medical Centers processed all CHAMPVA applications and determined if applicants were eligible for the program. In June 1986, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) established the CHAMPVA Center in Denver and transferred the responsibility of determining beneficiary eligibility to the CHAMPVA Center.

C. VA contracted with the Department of Defense's (DoD's) Office of Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services formerly (OCHAMPUS) to process all CHAMPVA claims from FY 1973 to FY 1990. In December 1990, DoD began transferring claims processing responsibilities from OCHAMPUS to the CHAMPVA Center. By January 1, 1994, the Center was fully operational and processed all claims, beneficiary eligibility determinations and payments for beneficiaries residing in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the US territories (Palau, Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, Guam and Puerto Rico). The transition was complete January 1, 1996, when the Center assumed responsibility for all foreign CHAMPVA claims processing and payments.

D. The role of the CHAMPVA Center continued to expand and in 1996 the CHAMPVA Center was officially renamed the Health Administration Center (HAC).

## **II. POLICY**

A. The CHAMPVA program is administered by the Director, Health Administration Center (HAC) and programmatically assigned to the Chief Financial Office, Veterans Health Affairs (VHA) Headquarters. HAC administers all CHAMPVA activities including the verification of eligibility of benefits, authorization of benefits and services, vendor certification and approval, payment methodologies and the authorization of medical services and supplies.

B. Medical treatment/services, authorized and paid from appropriated funds under CHAMPVA, are subject to the same or similar provisions and limitations as medical treatment/services provided by the Department of Defense (DoD) TRICARE program under Chapter 55 of Title 10.

## **III. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

A. While CHAMPVA is similar to TRICARE, it is not identical. Differences exist in the coverage of some medical services, payment methodologies and constituent population.

B. Although CHAMPVA information may be available at other VA facilities, only the HAC is authorized to process CHAMPVA applications, determine eligibility, authorize benefits, and process claims.

**\*END OF POLICY\***