



**Department of
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News Release

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VA Pilots Expedite Payments to Disabled Veterans *'Quick Pay' and 'Express Lane' Initiatives Work to Cut Processing Time*

WASHINGTON – VA has launched two pilot programs to test new procedures that will speed the payment of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) compensation benefits to Veterans with disabilities connected to their military service. These new programs are part of Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki's effort to “break the back” of the disability claims backlog.

“A fundamental goal in the transformation of VA's claims processing is to make sure that Veterans receive in a timely manner the benefits they earned through their service to our Nation,” Shinseki said. “VA's ambitious tests of numerous innovations reflect our commitment to constantly improving how we meet our mission of responsiveness to Veterans, their families and survivors.”

The “Quick Pay” Disability Program at the St. Petersburg, Fla., Regional Office and the “Express Lane” Pilot, based at the Seattle, Wash., Regional Office, are among a number of new initiatives using reengineered and streamlined claims processes to provide Veterans with faster claims decisions and benefit payments.

Secretary Shinseki established as one of VA's highest priority goals the elimination of the disability claims backlog by 2015, so that all Veterans receive a quality decision on their claim in no more than 125 days.

The “Quick Pay” Disability initiative is designed to speed disability compensation to Veterans who provide sufficient evidence at the time of claim submission to decide all or part of their claim. Since program launch, “Quick Pay” has paid more than \$2 million in benefits to 1,656 Florida Veterans. These payments averaged \$1,236 monthly and were made three months faster than the department's 125-day goal.

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Claims Pilots 2/2/2/2

Under the “Express Lane” Pilot program based in the Seattle Regional Office, staff members are realigned to address disability claims based on claim complexity.

Like a supermarket check-out “express lane,” small employee teams focus on rapidly processing numerous less complex claims that typically involve only one disability, thus freeing their co-workers to process the more complex and multiple-disability claims that demand the greatest level of unilateral effort.

The “Express Lane” Pilot, while managed from Seattle, is also being tested at three additional VA regional offices: Nashville, Tenn.; St. Paul, Minn.; and Muskogee, Okla.

The St. Petersburg and Seattle pilots are among more than three dozen VA initiatives exploring optimal ways to organize and deliver benefits and improve service to Veterans.

For additional information on VA’s claims transformation activities, visit <http://www.vba.va.gov/transformation>. Questions about benefits for Veterans may be directed to VA’s toll free benefits number at 1-800-827-1000.

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