



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

News Release

Office of Public Affairs
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 4, 2018

VA Offers Early Participation in a Faster New Claims Decision Review Process

WASHINGTON — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced it is offering two opportunities for early participation in the new, more efficient claims decision review process outlined in the historic [Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017](#).

These two opportunities will allow eligible Veterans to receive a review of a decision on a claim much faster than the current appeals process.

“VA is committed to transforming the appeals process,” said VA Acting Secretary Robert Wilkie. “This is evidenced by the success of Rapid Appeals Modernization Program which has seen over 12,000 Veterans opt-in. In addition, the Board of Veterans’ Appeals has issued approximately 46,000 decisions this fiscal year — nearly 23,000 more decisions than last year at this time. We are on pace to reach a historical fiscal goal of 81,000 decisions.”

First, VA will expand the Rapid Appeals Modernization Program (RAMP) by removing the requirement that Veterans first receive an invitation from VA in order to elect participation in the program.

RAMP, which was initially launched in November 2017 as an invitation only program, allows eligible Veterans with a disability compensation appeal early access to the Higher-Level Review and Supplemental Claim Lanes outlined in the Appeals Modernization Act. By removing the invitation requirement, Veterans will have the opportunity to benefit from the new, more efficient decision review process, versus continuing to wait in the legacy appeal process. As of March 31, RAMP reviews were completed in an average of 52 days.

Second, in May, the Board of Veterans’ Appeals will launch its Early Applicability of Appeals Modernization (BEAAM) pilot project. Under this project, the Board will partner with the National Organization of Veterans’ Advocates, Paralyzed Veterans of America and the California Department of Veterans Affairs to identify 50 Veterans who are dissatisfied with a recent decision on their benefits claim.

These Veterans will participate in a study that allows them the option of appealing directly to the Board or seeking a review in RAMP. In this study, the Board will collect preliminary data about Veteran choices and experiences.

In October, the Board will begin deciding appeals from RAMP decisions using the features of the Appeals Modernization Act, specifically its new, separate Direct, Evidence and Hearing dockets.

The expansion of RAMP, combined with the BEAAM, will allow VA to collect valuable data about implementation of the Appeals Modernization Act.

###