

**VA**U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# News Release

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Media RelationsWashington, DC 20420  
(202) 461-7600  
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## VA's Board of Veterans' Appeals Using Innovative Tools to Make a Record Number of Decisions

**WASHINGTON** — Strengthened by innovative tools, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently issued a record number of decisions for Veterans appealing their disability benefits claims.

As of July 11, VA's Board of Veterans' Appeals has issued more than 64,025 decisions for fiscal year 2018, a record high tied to several efficiency innovations, including a new interactive decision template and a specialty case team, which have allowed the Board to serve more Veterans.

"Decisions made by the Board affect Veterans' lives and it's up to VA to keep improving this process," said VA Acting Secretary Peter O'Rourke. "We will continue to innovate throughout VA even while employing the new tools that are already making the process better for service to Veterans."

Some examples of those important decisions made by the Board include:

- Collaborating with the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), within 24 hours of a Board hearing, to begin disbursement of nearly \$50,000 in benefits to a homeless widow of a retired Veteran;
- Saving a Veteran from foreclosure due to quick action from VBA, the Board, and a local Veterans Service Organization; and
- Ensuring that a terminally ill Veteran on life support received qualifying benefits quickly after the Board was able to draft, issue and dispatch a decision-granting benefits expeditiously.

"Our goal is to provide answers to Veterans and their families," said Chairman Cheryl L. Mason, Board of Veterans' Appeals. "We will continue to do so as expeditiously as possible with improved customer service while employing every efficiency."

The mission of VA's Board of Veterans' Appeals is to conduct hearings and deliver decisions on appeals in a timely manner. Final decisions on such appeals are made by the Board based on all of the evidence, including the Veteran's medical records, and consideration of applicable provisions of law and regulation.

For more information about the Veterans appeals process, visit [www.bva.va.gov/](http://www.bva.va.gov/).

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