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

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VA achieves historic goal by delivering 81,000 appeals decisions to Veterans in fiscal 2018

WASHINGTON — On Sept. 14, two weeks ahead of schedule, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) exceeded its goal to deliver 81,000 appeals decisions of disability benefits and services to Veterans in fiscal year 2018 — 28,000 more decisions than the previous year.

In doing so, VA's [Board of Veterans' Appeals](#) provided thousands of Veterans with critical, life-changing decisions.

"The Board's historic achievement delivering results to Veterans and their families reflects VA's hard work and commitment to getting it right for our Veterans under the leadership of President Trump," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "Together, we have achieved significant results for our nation's Veterans, as each of the more than 81,000 decisions produced by the Board can make a real difference in their lives and for their families."

The achievements come amid focused Board efforts to prepare for the full implementation of the [Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017](#), which is transforming a historically complex appeals process into a simple, timely and transparent process providing Veterans with increased choice and control. Veterans who disagree with the initial claim decision have [three options](#) under the Act:

1. Higher Level Review at the office of original jurisdiction
2. Supplemental Claim with the office of original jurisdiction
3. Appeal to the Board

Once a Veteran appeals to the Board, he or she remains in control of the process by choosing one of [three dockets](#) best suited to the appeal:

1. Direct Review Docket
2. Evidence Docket
3. Hearing Docket

To support the various organizations preparing to help Veterans navigate the new appeals process, the chairman of the Board and her staff led numerous training sessions and panels held by national, state and local Veteran Service Organizations and private legal organizations.

To maintain its momentum, the Board hired 186 new attorneys this fiscal year, and plans to add 30 more to the team by Sept. 30. Additionally, the Board is joining the [Military Spouse Employment Partnership](#) in October, and looks forward to participating in a program that helps bring the valuable insights and tremendous talent of military spouses to the Board.

For more information about the Board and its progress on appeals modernization, visit <https://www.bva.va.gov>.

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