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VA achieves major milestone in effort to modernize claims processing

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently completed a significant modernization effort in which more than 7.8 million paper files were removed from 60 locations in fewer than 22 months, enabling rapid scanning into VA's electronic claims processing system by multiple third-party vendors. This will lead to faster claims decisions for Veterans.

"Improving the delivery of benefits and services to Veterans is central to our mission," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "This significant effort will not only improve VA's claims process, it will also lead to quicker decisions for Veterans because millions more records will be available electronically."

This milestone was part of a long VA effort to improve the Veteran experience and streamline claims processes.

- In 2013, VA began removing paper records from its regional offices to save space and taxpayer money.
 - The effort expanded in 2016 when the agency launched the [File Bank Extraction initiative](#).
 - This initiative removed more than 1.7 million paper claims files across 59 VA locations and contributed to reduced claims processing time by establishing more electronic records.
- Additionally, in Nov. 2017, VA began extracting nearly 6.1 million paper records held within the Records Control Division (RCD) of the [Records Management Center \(RMC\)](#) in St. Louis.
 - VA is currently working with the General Services Administration (GSA), which owns the [Goodfellow Federal Center complex](#) that houses the RMC, to return the RCD's leased warehouse space back to GSA. As a result, VA will save nearly \$1.8 million per year.
 - The other areas of the RMC remain open and operational.
 - The 6.1 million paper records extracted from the RCD are temporarily stored in a secure facility certified by the National Archives and Records Administration where they are inventoried, prioritized and sent to multiple VA vendors for rapid scanning into VA's Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS).
 - Records removed during File Bank Extraction will also be scanned and uploaded to VBMS.

VA continues to take steps to operate in a digital environment and modernize the way it processes compensation and pension claims — moving from a cumbersome, paper-intensive process to an efficient, electronic process — resulting in a faster, more accurate and transparent claims process.

For more information about VA benefits, visit <https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/>.

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