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# News Release

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## VA's Rapid Appeals Modernization Program to end ahead of implementation of new Veteran appeals law

**WASHINGTON** — Today, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced it will discontinue the [Rapid Appeals Modernization Program \(RAMP\)](#), which provided eligible Veterans with early resolutions to their appealed claims, ahead of full implementation of the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 that takes effect Feb. 19, 2019.

VA will not accept RAMP elections from Veterans with a legacy appeal after Feb. 15, 2019; however, RAMP claims pending on or after Feb. 15 will continue to be processed until the inventory is complete.

Beginning Feb. 19, Veterans who appeal a VA decision will have three decision review choices: Higher-Level Review, Supplemental Claim, and appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals. VA will now offer Veterans greater choice in how VA reviews their claim is committed to ensuring the claims process is accurate, timely and fair.

"VA has been preparing for full implementation of the Appeals Modernization Act over the past 18 months to ensure the new, streamlined process is available to Veterans who have long sought reform of the broken legacy system," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "We encourage Veterans whose appeal is currently in the legacy system to [opt in](#) to RAMP before February 15 to take full advantage of the benefits of the new process."

VA initiated RAMP in November 2017 to provide some of the benefits of the new law's streamlined process before full implementation. Participation in RAMP is voluntary. However, processing times under the program have been faster than legacy appeal processing times. Under the legacy process, decisions currently average three to seven years. Veterans who have a legacy appeal after Feb. 15 will be able to opt in to the process when they receive a Statement of the Case or a Supplemental Statement of the Case after the new law is effective Feb. 19.

Veterans who participate in RAMP can choose to have their VA decision reviewed in either the Supplemental Claim or Higher-Level Review lanes. In the Higher-Level Review lanes, a more experienced adjudicator will conduct a new look at the previous decision based on the evidence considered in the previous decision. Participants who select the Supplemental Claim option may submit new and relevant evidence, and VA will assist in developing new evidence under its duty to assist. VA's goal is to complete Supplemental Claims and Higher-Level Reviews in an average of 125 days.

For more information on Appeals Modernization, visit <https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/appeals.asp> and <https://www.bva.va.gov/>.

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