

VA



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VA strengthens PTSD claims process training

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) started implementing in March steps to improve its posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) claims processing.

During the next six months, VA will provide training, guidance and process updates to ensure claims processors better understand evidence gathering and stressor verification requirements for PTSD claims.

“The updated training for employees is being incorporated and implemented immediately,” said VA Acting Under Secretary for Benefits Thomas Murphy. “I want to ensure our programs consistently evaluate all Veterans effectively and fairly.”

The updated training was developed partly in response to a VA [Office of Inspector General](#) (OIG) internal review of approximately 118,000 claims completed during fiscal year 2019 involving Veterans’ entitlement to service connection for PTSD. While most claims for service connection related to PTSD were accurately processed, OIG found claims processors did not follow all task-based procedures when deciding the claim. OIG reviewed a statistical sample of 150 claims and determined the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) claims processors inaccurately processed 24 of the 150 claims.

Part of VA’s improvement is to assess the reorganization of procedural guidance to ensure claims processors make both accurate decisions and follow the required policies. This will include determining any necessary procedural manual changes for accurate processing of claims involving entitlement to Veterans with service-connected PTSD.

The full report can be found [here](#).

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