

**CIVILIAN HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
VETERANS AFFAIRS (CHAMPVA)**

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook updates Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) information regarding medical care for survivors and dependents of certain Veterans under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of VA (CHAMPVA) program.
- 2. SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES:** Updates name of office responsible for CHAMPVA administration to the Chief Business Office Purchased Care.
- 3. RELATED ISSUES:** VHA Directive 1601.
- 4. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Chief Business Office (10NB) is responsible for the contents of this VHA Handbook. Questions may be addressed to 303-331-7500.
- 5. RESCISSION:** VHA Handbook 1601D.05, dated September 29, 2009, is rescinded.
- 6. RECERTIFICATION:** This VHA Handbook is scheduled for recertification on or before the last working day of November 2020.

David J. Shulkin, MD  
Under Secretary for Health

**DISTRIBUTION:** Emailed to the VHA Publications Distribution List 11/04/2015.

**CONTENTS**

**CIVILIAN HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
VETERANS AFFAIRS (CHAMPVA)**

1. PURPOSE: ..... 1

2. BACKGROUND: ..... 1

3. SCOPE: ..... 1

4. ELIGIBILITY: ..... 2

5. APPLICATION FOR BENEFITS: ..... 2

6. RESPONSIBILITIES: ..... 3

## CIVILIAN HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (CHAMPVA)

**1. PURPOSE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook provides informational procedures regarding health care benefits for survivors and dependents of certain Veterans under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA). **AUTHORITY:** 38 U.S.C. 1781, 38 CFR 17.270 through 17.278.

### 2. BACKGROUND:

a. CHAMPVA is a health benefits program in which the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) shares costs of covered medical care for survivors and dependents of certain Veterans in the same or similar manner and subject to the same or similar limitations as medical care that is furnished under TRICARE. For purposes of this program, VA interprets the terms "same or similar" broadly because the original CHAMPUS program was replaced by the TRICARE program, which differs significantly from its predecessor. TRICARE's current benefit structure offers varying degrees of medical benefits under multiple plan options. As a result of these differences, CHAMPVA has coverage variations from TRICARE.

b. CHAMPVA is administered by the Deputy Chief Business Officer (DCBO), Chief Business Office Purchased Care (CBOPC), Denver, CO, under the administrative and programmatic direction of the Chief Business Office (CBO), Veterans Health Administration, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420.

### 3. SCOPE:

a. CHAMPVA is authorized to provide medical benefits for the spouses, surviving spouses, and children of certain Veterans in the same or similar manner and subject to the same or similar limitations as medical care that is furnished under Title 10 United States Code (U.S.C.) Chapter 55, TRICARE. CBOPC is responsible for all aspects of administering the program.

b. CHAMPVA covers most medical services and supplies required to meet the health care needs of eligible beneficiaries. There are some limitations to benefits, which include, but are not limited to, services that are not medically necessary or those that are cosmetic in nature, investigational, experimental. **NOTE:** *A more specific list of exclusions can be located at Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 17.272.* In addition to excluding certain medical services and supplies, there is also a limitation on the claim filing deadline.

(1) Claims for medical services must in general be filed with the CBOPC no later than 1 year after the date of service (see 38 CFR 17.275).

(2) An appeal or reconsideration on a denied benefit must be submitted to CBOPC within 1 year from the date of the initial determination (see 38 CFR 17.276).

**4. ELIGIBILITY:**

a. The following persons are eligible for CHAMPVA benefits so long as they are not otherwise eligible for TRICARE:

(1) The spouse or child of a veteran who has a total disability, permanent in nature, resulting from a service-connected disability;

(2) The surviving spouse or child of a veteran who died as a result of a service-connected disability;

(3) The surviving spouse or child of a veteran who at the time of death had a total disability permanent in nature, resulting from a service-connected disability;

(4) The surviving spouse or child of a person who died in the active military, naval, or air service in the line of duty and not due to such person's own misconduct; or

(5) An individual designated as a primary provider of personal care services under 38 U.S.C. 1720G(a)(7)(A) who is not entitled to care or services under a health-plan contract (as defined in 38 U.S.C. 1725(f)).

b. A child who is between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three who is eligible for benefits as described in paragraph a. above and is pursuing a full-time course of instruction at an educational institution approved under chapter 36 of title 38, and who, while pursuing such course of instruction, incurs a disabling illness or injury (including a disabling illness or injury incurred between terms, semesters, or quarters or during a vacation or holiday period) which is not the result of such child's own willful misconduct and which results in such child's inability to continue or resume such child's chosen program of education at an approved educational institution shall remain eligible for benefits until the end of the six-month period beginning on the date the disability is removed, the end of the two-year period beginning on the date of the onset of the disability, or the twenty-third birthday of the child, whichever occurs first.

c. When verifying eligibility for the CHAMPVA program the CBOPC utilizes several databases for verification of a Veteran sponsor status.

**5. APPLICATION FOR BENEFITS:** To apply for medical benefits under the CHAMPVA program, beneficiaries must submit a completed application for benefits which include the following documents:

a. VA Form 10-10d, Application for CHAMPVA Benefits at: <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/vha-10-10d-fill.pdf>;

b. VA Form 10-7959c, CHAMPVA Other Health Insurance (OHI) Certification when applicable; at <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/vha-10-7959c-fill.pdf>; and

c. A copy of the applicant's Medicare Card, when applicable.

**6. RESPONSIBILITIES:**

a. **Chief Business Officer.** The Chief Business Officer is responsible for:

- (1) Maintaining oversight of CHAMPVA program management;
- (2) Establishing centralized reporting requirements as needed; and
- (3) Reviewing recommendations of the Deputy Chief Business Officer (DCBO) for Purchased Care.

b. **Chief Business Office Purchased Care.** The Chief Business Office Purchased Care (CBOPC) is responsible for:

- (1) The daily management of all CHAMPVA activities, including planning, organizing, budgeting, directing, coordinating, evaluating, and improving administrative operations;
- (2) Representing VA as the CHAMPVA program official and exercising a controlling influence in all matters of executive level involvement in CHAMPVA program matters;
- (3) Providing liaison support to the DCBO, CBO, VA Central Office staff, and other Federal agencies;
- (4) Establishing and maintaining CHAMPVA operational policy consistent with applicable public laws, regulations, and established program requirements;
- (5) Developing and implementing a comprehensive Quality Assurance Program;
- (6) Developing and implementing internal controls to ensure beneficiary eligibility, authorization of benefits, and payment of claims;
- (7) Providing customer service using a designated call center;
- (8) Processing applications;
- (9) Verification of eligibility;
- (10) Authorizing benefits and services;
- (11) Processing claims;
- (12) Processing appeals and reconsiderations; and
- (13) Managing an active Fraud Waste and Abuse Program.