

information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and (e) estimates of capital or start-up costs and costs of operation, maintenance, and purchase of services to provide information.

Approved: May 17, 2001.

Garrick R. Shear,

*IRS Reports Clearance Officer.*

[FR Doc. 01-13065 Filed 5-22-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830-01-P

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0300]

### Agency Information Collection Activities Under OMB Review

**AGENCY:** Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C., 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs, has submitted the collection of information abstracted below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The PRA submission describes the nature of the information collection and its expected cost and burden; it includes the actual data collection instrument.

**DATES:** Comments must be submitted on or before June 22, 2001.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR A COPY OF THE SUBMISSION CONTACT:** Denise McLamb, Information Management Service (045A4), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, (202) 273-8030, FAX (202) 273-5981 or e-mail [denise.mclamb@mail.va.gov](mailto:denise.mclamb@mail.va.gov). Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0300."

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

**Title:** Veterans Application for Assistance in Acquiring Special Housing Adaptations, VA Form 26-4555d.

**OMB Control Number:** 2900-0300.

**Type of Review:** Extension of a currently approved collection.

**Abstract:** VA Form 26-4555d is used by disabled veterans in applying for special housing and adaptations to dwellings. Grants are available to assist disabled veterans in making adaptations

to their current residences or one, which they intend to live in as long as the veteran or a member of the veteran's family owns the home. It also provides information for use in approving or disapproving a veteran's application for a grant.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published on October 17, 2000, on page 61380.

**Affected Public:** Individuals or households.

**Estimated Annual Burden:** 25 hours.

**Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent:** 20 minutes.

**Frequency of Response:** On occasion.

**Estimated Number of Respondents:** 75.

Send comments and recommendations concerning any aspect of the information collection to VA's OMB Desk Officer, OMB Human Resources and Housing Branch, New Executive Office Building, Room 10235, Washington, DC 20503, (202) 395-7316. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0300" in any correspondence.

Dated: May 4, 2001.

Donald L. Neilson,

*Director, Information Management Service.*

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BILLING CODE 8320-01-P

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN AFFAIRS

### Office of Research and Development; Department of Veterans Affairs Human Research Protection Accreditation Program

**AGENCY:** Department of Veterans Affairs.

**ACTION:** Notice of draft accreditation standards.

**SUMMARY:** This notice informs interested parties that draft standards for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Human Research Protection Accreditation Program (VAHRPAP) will be available for public comment on the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) Web site: [www.ncqa.org](http://www.ncqa.org).

**DATES:** The public comment period will start May 16, 2001, and will continue through June 1, 2001.

**ADDRESS:** The preferred method for receiving comments is as a Microsoft Word file attached to an e-mail message. The e-mail message should be sent to [VAHRPAP@ncqa.org](mailto:VAHRPAP@ncqa.org) and have "Public

Comment" in the subject line. Please include your name, organizational affiliation and telephone number in any e-mail correspondence.

Mail written comments (one original and three copies) to the following address: NCQA, Attn: VAHRPAP, 2000 L Street, NW., Suite 500, Washington, DC 20036. If you sent your comments by e-mail, please do not send duplicate comments by mail.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Department of Veterans Affairs awarded a five-year contract to the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) to conduct an accreditation program, the first of its kind, to help to ensure that VA medical centers are complying with VA and other applicable Federal regulations for the protection of human subjects of research. NCQA is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to improving health care quality, with 10 years of experience in accrediting and certifying health care programs. NCQA will partner with Medical Care Management Corporation (MCMC) to design the program and to recruit, credential and schedule surveyors. MCMC has established a large panel of experienced clinical researchers who evaluate the appropriateness of experimental treatments, conduct technology assessments and review research protocols.

VA conducts biomedical, health services, and rehabilitation research to improve the health care delivered to the Nation's veterans. The Office of Research and Development (ORD) has developed policies, consistent with the Common Rule and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations, to safeguard human subjects in research. Also, as part of its responsibilities in protecting human subjects, VA's Office of Research Compliance and Assurance (ORCA) collaborates with the Office of Research and Development in carrying out this accreditation contract, and will analyze trends from the accreditation reports for continuing quality improvement. The VA Human Research Protection Accreditation Program (VAHRPAP) will provide a routine external evaluation of compliance with VA and other Federal policies.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:** For further information about the accreditation program, contact NCQA Customer Service, at (202) 955-5697. For questions about the Department of Veterans Affairs human subjects protection policies or programs, call Brenda Cuccherini, PhD, VA Office of Research and Development, at (202) 408-3614.

Dated: May 16, 2001.

**Anthony J. Principi,**

*Secretary of Veterans Affairs.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### Adjustments for Service-Connected Benefits

**AGENCY:** Department of Veterans Affairs.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** As required by the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2000, Public Law 106-413, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is hereby giving notice of adjustments in certain benefit rates. These adjustments affect the compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) programs.

**DATES:** These adjustments are effective December 1, 2000, the date provided by Public Law 106-413.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Paul Trowbridge, Consultant, Compensation and Pension Service (212A), Veterans Benefit Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420, (202) 273-7218.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Section 2 of Public Law 106-413 provides for an increase in each of the rates in sections 1114, 1115(1), 1162, 1311, 1313, and 1314 of title 38, United States Code. VA is required to increase these benefit rates by the same percentage as increases in the benefit amounts payable under title II of the Social Security Act. In computing increased rates in the cited title 38 sections, fractions of a dollar are rounded down to the nearest dollar. The increased rates are required to be published in the **Federal Register**.

The Social Security Administration has announced that there will be a 3.5 percent cost-of-living increase in Social Security benefits. Therefore, applying the same percentage, the following rates for VA compensation and DIC programs will be effective December 1, 2000:

### DISABILITY COMPENSATION (38 U.S.C. 1114)

Disability Evaluation (percent)	Monthly rate
10 .....	\$101
20 .....	194
30 .....	298
40 .....	427
50 .....	609

### DISABILITY COMPENSATION (38 U.S.C. 1114)—Continued

Disability Evaluation (percent)	Monthly rate
60 .....	769
70 .....	969
80 .....	1,125
90 .....	1,266
100 .....	2,107

38 U.S.C. 1114(k) through (s)	Monthly rate
38 U.S.C. 1114(k) .....	\$78; \$2,621; \$78; \$3,677
38 U.S.C. 1114(l) .....	\$2,621
38 U.S.C. 1114(m) .....	\$2,891
38 U.S.C. 1114(n) .....	\$3,290
38 U.S.C. 1114(o) .....	\$3,677
38 U.S.C. 1114(p) .....	\$3,677
38 U.S.C. 1114(r) .....	\$1,578; \$2,350
38 U.S.C. 1114(s) .....	\$2,359

### Additional Compensation for Dependents (38 U.S.C. 1115(1))

38 U.S.C. 1115 (1)	Monthly Rate
38 U.S.C. 1115(1)(A) .....	\$121
38 U.S.C. 1115(1)(B) .....	\$208; \$63
38 U.S.C. 1115(1)(C) .....	\$82; \$63
38 U.S.C. 1115(1)(D) .....	\$98
38 U.S.C. 1115(1)(E) .....	\$229
38 U.S.C. 1115(1)(F) .....	\$192

Clothing Allowance (38 U.S.C. 1162)—\$565 per year.

### DIC TO A SURVIVING SPOUSE (38 U.S.C. 1311)

Pay grade	Monthly rate
E-1 .....	\$911
E-2 .....	911
E-3 .....	911
E-4 .....	911
E-5 .....	911
E-6 .....	911
E-7 .....	942
E-8 .....	995
E-9(1) .....	1,038
W-1 .....	962
W-2 .....	1,001
W-3 .....	1,031
W-4 .....	1,090
O-1 .....	962
O-2 .....	995
O-3 .....	1,063
O-4 .....	1,125
O-5 .....	1,239
O-6 .....	1,396
O-7 .....	1,509
O-8 .....	1,653
O-9 .....	1,771
O-10(2) .....	1,943

(1) If the veteran served as sergeant major of the Army, senior enlisted advisor of the Navy, chief master

sergeant of the Air Force, sergeant major of the Marine Corps, or master chief petty officer of the Coast Guard, the surviving spouse's monthly rate is \$1,119.

(2) If the veteran served as Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chief of Staff of the Army, Chief of Naval Operations, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Commandant of the Marine Corps, or Commandant of the Coast Guard, the surviving spouse's monthly rate is \$2,083.

### DIC TO A SURVIVING SPOUSE (38 U.S.C. 1311(A) THROUGH (D))

38 U.S.C. 1311(a) through (d)	Monthly rate
38 U.S.C. 1311(a)(1) .....	\$911
38 U.S.C. 1311(a)(2) .....	197
38 U.S.C. 1311(b) .....	229
38 U.S.C. 1311(c) .....	229
38 U.S.C. 1311(d) .....	110

### DIC TO CHILDREN (38 U.S.C. 1313)

38 U.S.C. 1313	Monthly rate
38 U.S.C. 1313(a)(1) .....	\$386
38 U.S.C. 1313(a)(2) .....	\$556
38 U.S.C. 1313(a)(3) .....	\$723
38 U.S.C. 1313(a)(4) .....	\$723; \$140

### SUPPLEMENTAL DIC TO CHILDREN (38 U.S.C. 1314)

38 U.S.C. 1314	Monthly rate
38 U.S.C. 1314(a) .....	\$229
38 U.S.C. 1314(b) .....	\$386
38 U.S.C. 1314(c) .....	\$194

Section 304 of Public Law 106-419 replaces the previous 38 U.S.C. 5503(b)(1)(A) estate limitation threshold of \$1,500 for withholding of benefits, and \$500 for resumption of benefits.

The provision affects certain incompetent, hospitalized or institutionalized veterans who do not have a dependent spouse or child.

The new estate value limit for withholding of benefits is increased to five times the 100 percent service-connected disability rate for a veteran who does not have dependents. The estate value amount at which benefits may be resumed is now one half of that rate. This new formula will cause the estate limitation threshold to change with each change to basic compensation rates.

As a result, and effective November 1, 2000, the estate limitation threshold is increased to \$10,180 for withholding of benefits, and \$5,090 for resumption of benefits. This is based on compensation