#### Department of Veterans Affairs M21-1, Part I, Chapter 1

**Veterans Benefits Administration June 29, 2015**

**Washington, DC 20420**

#### Transmittal Sheet

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| Changes Included in This Revision | The table below describes the changes included in this revision of Veterans Benefits Manual M21-1, Part I, “Claimants Rights and Responsibilities,” Chapter 1, “Duty to Assist.”***Notes***: Minor editorial changes have been made to * update incorrect or obsolete references
* update the term “veteran” to “Veteran”
* update the term “VCAA notice” to “section 5103 notice”
* update obsolete terminology, where appropriate
* reassign alphabetical designations to individual blocks, where necessary, to account for new and/or deleted blocks within a topic
* update section and topic titles to more accurately reflect their content
* clarify block labels and/or block text, and
* bring the document into conformance with M21-1 standards.
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| Reason(s) for the Change | Citation |
| To delete general text regarding VA’s duty to assist and add text detailing the changes amended by *Public Law (PL) 106-475*, *Veterans Claims Assistance Act of 2000*. | Part I, Chapter 1, Section A, Topic 1, Block a (I.A.1.a) |
| * To delete text regarding the elimination of the requirement of the *Morton v. West* decision which was included in the detailed changes in I.A.1.a.
* To add text regarding *PL 106-475* and its effect on 38 U.S.C. 5102.
 | I.A.1.b |
| * To delete text describing the changes made by *PL 106-475* which were detailed in I.A.1.a.
* To add text regarding *PL 106-475* and its effect on 38 U.S.C. 5103.
 | I.A.1.c |
| * To add text regarding *PL 106-475* and its effect on 38 U.S.C. 5103A.
* To add text replacing duty to obtain examinations/medical opinions from old Block 2.d.
 | I.A.1.d |
| To add a new Block a regarding *PL 112-154*, *Honoring America’s Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012*, *Section 504*, and its effect on 38 U.S.C. 5103. | I.A.2.a |
| To add a new Block a regarding *PL 112-154*, *Section 505*, and its effect on 38 U.S.C. 5103A. | I.A.2.b |
| To delete old Block f regarding contacting Central Office (CO) about duty to assist questions. | I.A.2.f (old) |
| To add Topic 3 entitled “Definitions Related to Duty to Notify and Duty to Assist.” | I.A.3 |
| To add a new Block a replacing old Blocks 2.b and 2.c with a definition of *relevant records* and a cross-reference to I.1.C.1 and I.1.C.2 for more information. | I.A.3.a |
| To relocate and revise old Block 2.e regarding when to refrain from or discontinue assistance. | I.A.3.b |
| To add a new Block c which relocated information from III.iv.2.A regarding claims that are inherently incredible or lack merit | I.A.3.c |
| To add a new Block d that defines *competent medical evidence*. | I.A.3.d |
| To add a new Block e that defines *competent lay evidence*. | I.A.3.e |
| To add a new Block f replacing old Block 2.a with a definition of *substantially complete applications*. | I.A.3.f |
| To add a new Block g that defines *event*. | I.A.3.g |
| To add a new Block h that defines *information*. | I.A.3.h |
| To add a new Block i that defines *reopened claims*. | I.A.3.i |

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| Rescissions | None |

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| Authority | By Direction of the Under Secretary for Benefits |

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| Signature | Thomas J. Murphy, DirectorCompensation Service |

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