#### Department of Veterans Affairs M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii

**Veterans Benefits Administration July 16, 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 III, “General Claims Process,” Subpart ii, “Initial Screening and Determining Veterans Status.”***Notes***: * The term regional office (RO) also includes pension management center (PMC), where appropriate.
* Minor editorial changes have also been made to
* update incorrect or obsolete references
* update obsolete terminology, where appropriate
* renumber each topic based on the standard that the first topic in each section is Topic 1 and to account for deleted topics
* reassign alphabetical designations to individual blocks and repaginate, 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 remove old Topic 12 and relocate information on general policies related to permanent transfer of claims folders new Topic 1, General Policies for Permanent Transfer of Claims Folders | M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii, Chapter 5, Section D, Topic 12 (old)(III.ii.5.D.12) |
| * To remove unnecessary information regarding pending examinations in relation to permanently-transferred claims folders.
* To provide guidance that Pittsburgh Regional Office (RO) assumes permanent jurisdiction when evidence indicates that the Veteran with a compensation claim resides outside of the United States and its territories.
* To provide guidance that exclusive jurisdiction resides with the Philadelphia Pension Management Center (PMC) when evidence indicates that a beneficiary resides outside of the United States and its territories and action involves a pension or survivors benefit determination.
* To remove outdated information on jurisdiction with the White River Junction RO for Veterans residing in Canada.
* To provide guidance not to routinely permanently transfer claims folders from the station of jurisdiction (SOJ) when the claim has been redistributed from the station of origination (SOO) as part of a national workload redistribution strategy.
* To provide guidance that ROs should not transfer claims to another RO’s jurisdiction solely based on where the Veteran resides unless directed otherwise by the Office of Field Operations (OFO).
* To add exceptions to the general guidance not to transfer claims to another RO’s jurisdiction to include a pending claim or appeal that requires a personal hearing and claims of appeals for homeless Veterans.
* To add note that if a claim is received and the physical claims folder is located at another RO, the RO in possession of the claims folder must be notified immediately to ship the claims folder to the appropriate scanning vendor.
* To add a note that any resulting end products (EPs) from working and/or clearing work items must be retained at the RO in which the work item was assigned.
 | III.ii.5.D.1.a |
| * To add a new guidance on sending paper claims folders to authorized scanning facilities and list exceptions.
* To provide guidance to use Control of Veterans Records (COVERS) for controlling the physical location of a paper claims folder within an RO and/or for jurisdictional updates not possible through other applications.
* To remove outdated guidance related to RO processing of a claim based on geographical location.
 | III.ii.5.D.1.b |
| To remove old Block c with guidance on permanent transfer of folders with loan default indebtedness as subject matter experts have confirmed that transfer is not required in such case. | III.ii.5.D.1.c |
| To add a new Block c providing guidance on the records to accompany claims folders whenever transferring a claims folder. | III.ii.5.D.1.c |
| To relocate and update guidance on permanent transfer of claims folders for insurance purposes from the previous location in old Topic 12. | III.ii.5.D.1.d |
| To clarify the transfer procedures for employee-Veteran claims folders. | III.ii.5.D.1.e |
| To remove old Block f information on forwarding correspondence to the claims folder or eFolder location. | III.ii.5.D.1.f |
| To remove old Topic 14 on Principal Guardianship Folders (PGFs) since all PGFs are now electronic and managed in Virtual VA by the Fiduciary Hubs. | -- |
| To add a note with guidance to reverse file *VA Form 3797, Cross Reference to Confidential Report*, on the inside left flap of the paper claims folder to identify the existence of confidential records stored at VA Regional Office (VARO) Roanoke. | III.ii.5.D.2.a |
| To delete old Block b after incorporating the guidance into Block a. | III.ii.5.D.15.b (old) |
| To remove old Topic 16 related to Employee-Veteran records as this has been incorporated at III.ii.5.D.1. | III.ii.5.D.16 (old) |
| To remove old Topic 17 related to transfer of claims folders or eFolders following Pre-Discharge claims processing as there are instructions related to this subject in III.i.2.D. | III.ii.5.D.17 (old) |

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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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