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

**Veterans Benefits Administration July 11, 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 iii, “General Development and Dependency Issues.”***Notes***: * At some point in the past, instructions pertaining to award adjustments involving a beneficiary’s dependents were added to a section of M21-1 (Part III, Subpart iii, Chapter 5, Section F) that contained the requirements for establishing a child’s age and his/her relationship to a Veteran. These instructions, which were contained in topics 5, 6, and 7 of Section F, clearly belong in a section of their own. Section L has been created as a new location for these topics.
* Minor editorial changes have been made to (old) topics 5, 6, and 7 to
* reorganize blocks and topics into a more logical order.
* split (old) Topic 6 into two separate topics: one that discusses decision notices and another that discusses effective dates
* update incorrect or obsolete references
* renumber each topic based on the standard that the first topic in each section is Topic 1
* remove references to specific claims-processing systems, where doing so does not affect the clarity of the instructions or information provided
* 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 add a block that refers the reader to M21-1, Part III, Subpart iii, Chapter 5, Section A, Topic 1, Block h (III.iii.5.A.1.h) for instructions pertaining to the up-front development (for evidence required to add a dependent to a Veteran’s award) of claims for disability compensation. | M21-1, Part III, Subpart iii, Chapter 5, Section L, Topic 1, Block a (III.iii.5.L1.a) |
| To provide instructions for notifying a Veteran of a decision to deny his/her claim for recognition of an individual as a dependent for VA purposes. | III.iii.5.L.1.b |
| To add a new block containing instructions for using Automated Development Letter (ADL) to meet the notification requirements described in III.iii.5.L.1.b. | III.iii.5.L.1.c |
| To update instructions for requesting/obtaining information regarding a Veteran’s dependent(s) by telephone. | III.iii.5.L.1.d |
| To add a note instructing readers that action to add a dependent to a Veteran’s award should *not* be delayed pending resolution of outstanding issues that require a rating decision. | III.iii.5.L.1.e |
| To update instructions for requesting/obtaining information regarding a Veteran’s dependent(s) by telephone. | III.iii.5.L.4.e |
| To add a block that discusses a claimant’s/beneficiary’s right to renounce benefits. | III.iii.5.L.4.i |
| To delete III.iii.5.L.3.b because it might encourage readers to deny claims based on a claimant’s failure to prosecute his/her claim, which is an approach that is no longer appropriate. | --- |

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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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