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

**Veterans Benefits Administration May 1, 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.”  ***Note***: Minor editorial changes have also been made to   * update incorrect or obsolete references * update obsolete terminology, where appropriate * remove references to specific claims-processing systems, where doing so does not affect the clarity of the instructions or information provided * renumber each topic based on the standard that the first topic in each section is Topic 1 * 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 text and reference for acceptable statements of changes in dependency per 38 CFR 3.213. | M21-1, Part III, Subpart iii, Chapter 5, Section H, Topic 1, Block b (III.iii.5.H.1.b) |
| To remove the term “opposite sex” due to *VBA Letter 20-14-08,* Administration of Same-Sex Spousal Benefits, which authorized processing of same-sex spousal benefit claims and recognized that the definition of spouse or surviving spouse no longer refers to person “of the opposite sex.” | III.iii.5.H.1.c |
| To delete old Block d which discussed when to stop a married child’s award because the instructions are repeated in an If/Then table in old Block g. | -- |
| To delete old Block e which provided instructions for stopping a married child’s award using legacy system Benefits Delivery Network (BDN) which is no longer applicable. | -- |
| To relocate content about adjusting a married child’s award in death cases from old Block f for better flow and clarity of claims processing. | III.iii.5.H.1.e |
| To insert requirements for reestablishing a dependent child following termination of marriage prior to November 1, 1990 per 38 CFR 3.55(b)(2). | III.iii.5.H.2.a |
| To insert text to solicit for evidence of a voided marriage from the claimant. | III.iii.5.H.2.b |
| To insert a reference for more information on determining whether a marriage is void. | III.iii.5.H.2.c |
| To add an introduction sentence explaining effective dates for an award should be determined based on whether the marriage was determined to be void or annulled. | III.iii.5.H.2.e |

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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, Director  Compensation Service |

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