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

**Veterans Benefits Administration May 13, 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 IV, “Compensation, DIC, and Death Compensation Benefits,” Subpart ii, “Compensation.”  ***Notes***:   * The term “regional office” (RO) also includes pension management center (PMC), where appropriate. * The term “Veterans Service Center Manager” (VSCM) also includes Pension Management Center Manager (PMCM), 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 * 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 references regarding presumptive service connection and the evidentiary threshold in Former Prisoner of War (FPOW) ratings. | M21-1, Part IV, Subpart ii, Chapter 2, Section E, Topic 2, Block a (IV.ii.2.E.2.a) |
| To clarify language regarding the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA’s) liberal approach when processing FPOW claims. | IV.ii.2.E.2.b |
| To delete language regarding close scrutiny of facts and circumstances of confinement. | IV.ii.2.E.2.c |
| * To add language clarifying the requirements for current examinations and the need for an FPOW Protocol Disability Benefits Questionnaire (DBQ) for all FPOW Veterans. * To add a reference to VAOPGCPREC 11-95. | IV.ii.2.E.2.d |
| To add instructions to contact the Veteran directly for clarification of any discrepancies in FPOW statements. | IV.ii.2.E.2.e |
| To add language clarifying the requirements for establishing service connection (SC) for disabilities reasonably connected to Prisoner of War (POW) detainment. | IV.ii.2.E.2.g |
| To delete old Block a and add a new Block a with information regarding presumptive SC for FPOWs under 38 CFR 3.309(c). | IV.ii.2.E.3.a |
| * To delete language regarding presumptive disabilities for FPOWs who were detained any period of time. * To clarify the application of presumptive SC for residuals of frostbite and osteoporosis if a diagnosis of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is present. | IV.ii.2.E.3.b |
| To delete old Block c and table. | -- |
| To delete language regarding denying SC for presumptive disabilities due to the absence of evidence in service treatment records showing treatment or observation of a disability.. | IV.ii.2.E.3.c |
| To add language regarding granting SC on a presumptive basis when there is historical evidence of a compensable evaluation, even when a disability is currently noncompensable. | IV.ii.2.E.3.d |
| To clarify the requirements to evaluate peptic ulcer disease. | IV.ii.2.E.4.b |
| * To clarify when peripheral neuropathy is not subject to a presumption of SC for FPOWs. * To add language regarding the need to review the circumstances of the Veteran’s internment to determine exposure to infectious agents. | IV.ii.2.E.4.c |
| To add language regarding requesting medical opinions to distinguish between post-traumatic and degenerative arthritis. | IV.ii.2.E.4.d |
| To delete old Block f. | -- |
| To add a reference regarding completing the rating decision narrative. | IV.ii.2.E.5.a |
| To add language to clarify the requirements when citing disabilities in an FPOW claim in the Veterans Benefits Management System-Rating (VBMS-R). | IV.ii.2.E.5.b |
| To delete the old Block c. | -- |
| To add language to clarify the use of diagnostic codes when evaluating peripheral neuropathy. | IV.ii.2.E.5.d |
| To remove language regarding annotation and signature requirements on rating decisions no longer required in VBMS-R. | IV.ii.2.E.5.e |
| To add language to clarify the history behind the length of confinement requirement for POWs with regards to when claims were filed. | IV.ii.2.E.6.a |

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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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