#### Department of Veterans Affairs M21-1, Part VI, Chapter 2

**Veterans Benefits Administration April 25, 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 VI, “Chapter 18 Benefits,” Chapter 2, “Spina Bifida and Other Covered Birth Defects.”  ***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 * renumber the topics in the section to start with topic 1 * update incorrect or obsolete hyperlink references * update obsolete terminology, where appropriate * reassign alphabetical designations to individual blocks to account for new and/or deleted blocks within a topic * clarify block labels and/or block text, and * bring the documents into conformance with M21-1 standards. |

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| Reason(s) for the Change | Citation |
| To provide updated information on obtaining *VA Form 21-0304, Application for Benefits for Certain Children with Disabilites Born of Vietnam and Certain Korean Service Veterans.* | M21-1, Part VI, Chapter 2, Section B, Topic 1, Block b. (VI.2.B.1.b) |
| * To add material moved from VI.2.C.1 on administrative denial by the Veterans Service Representative (VSR) when elements of basic eligibility cannot be confirmed and exceptions. * To add references. | VI.2.B.2.a |
| * To add step 3 to the table based on material deleted from VI.2.C.1 to indicate that the end result of development is referral for either rating or authorization action. * To add references. | VI.2.B.3.a |
| * To combine material from block b of the same topic an reword for greater consistency with the regulations. * To add references. | VI.2.B.4.a |
| * To revise the step action table to convey the existing material more clearly and accurately. * To add a note previously contained in another block. | VI.2.B.4.d |
| To reword the material for greater consistency with the regulation and to cite the statute instead of just the Act. | VI.2.B.5.a |
| * To reword the material for greater consistency with the regulation. * To clarify that the presumption of exposure is rebuttable. * To remove the list of Korean DMZ units which duplicates another listing in the M2-1 and provide a cross reference in its place. | VI.2.B.5.b |
| * To redesignate the material from prior block d as block c. * To make a parallel change to a cross referenced provision. * To correct the criteria for when development of factual exposure to herbicides is required to clarify that the criteria are disjunctive not conjunctive. | VI.2.B.5.c |
| * To revise the step action table to convey the existing material more clearly and accurately. * To add a note previously contained in another block. | VI.2.B.5.f |
| * To revise the text to focus it on when VA examinations are necessary under 38 CFR 3.814. * To improve consistency with the regulatory text – specifically to clarify that examinations in spina bifida cases are only for the purpose of determining degree of disability, not to determine whether spina bifida exists. * To communicate the policy that staff should not request a magnetic resonance imaging when an exam is necessary under 38 CFR 3.814. | VI.2.B.9.a |
| To add a new Block b to discuss when an examination is necessary under 38 CFR 3.815. | VI.2.B.9.b |
| * To revise the step-action table so that it is focused on 38 CFR 3.814 and consistent with the policy stated in Block a of the topic. * To update the form references for release of private medical records. | VI.2.B.9.c |
| * To add anew Block d focused on 38 CFR 3.815 and consistent with the policy stated in block b of the topic. * To update the form references for release of private medical records. | VI.2.B.9.d. |

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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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