

Table of Contents

Chapter 4. Personal Interview Procedures	3
1. Waiting and Personal Interview Area	3
Introduction.....	3
Change Date.....	3
a. Waiting and Interview Area Hours of Operation	3
b. Waiting Area Requirements.....	3
c. Interview Area Requirements	4
d. Security Procedures	4
2. Tracking and Timeliness for Personal Interview Activity	5
Introduction.....	5
Change Date.....	5
a. VA Form 21-7288a	5
b. Personal Interview Timeliness.....	5
3. The Intake Process	6
Introduction.....	6
Change Date.....	6
a. Steps to Conduct Intake	6
b. Use of Visitor Intake Sheet.....	6
c. Identification Protocol.....	7
d. Referring Visitor for Personal Interview	7
e. Action Taken if the Visitor Must Leave Before an Interview	7
f. Address Changes	8
4. Interview Process	9
Introduction.....	9
Change Date.....	9
a. Steps to Conduct a Personal Interview.....	9
b. Review the Visitors Electronic File	9
c. Visitor Requests a Copy of Requests	9
4. Interview Process, Continued	10
d. Claim Submission.....	10
e. Veteran’s Assistance Inquiry (VAI).....	10
5. Reporting Work Credit for Personal Interview Activity.....	11
Introduction.....	11

M27-1, Part I, Chapter 4

Change Date.....	11
a. DOOR Reporting	11
b. DOOR WID 7121.00 & 7534.15	11
c. DOOR WID 7534.16	11
d. DOOR WID 7122.00	11
e. Out-based Employees.....	11

Chapter 4. Personal Interview Procedures

1. Waiting and Personal Interview Area

Introduction	This topic contains requirements for ROs' waiting and personal interview area.
---------------------	--

Change Date	October 2014
--------------------	--------------

a. Waiting and Interview Area Hours of Operation	<p>The operational requirements for the RO waiting and interview area are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to the public for at least 7.5 hours, Monday through Friday excluding federal holidays; • Consistent hours of operation opening no earlier than 7:30 am and no later than 9:00 am and closing no earlier than 4:00 pm; and • Allocate adequate staffing to ensure area remains open during employee breaks and lunch.
---	--

b. Waiting Area Requirements	<p>The RO waiting area will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be ADA compliant and accessible to the public; • Posted hours of operation outside the entrance of the waiting area; • Include a directory or lobby sign that will list the location of the wait area if not visible from the building entrance; • Provide employee greeting visitors access to the full range of VBA computer applications (for example, standard VBA workstation, access to VBMS, Virtual VA, Share, MAP-D, VACOLS, BDN etc) in the reception area; • Provide ample space to accommodate visitor traffic and is comfortably furnished;
-------------------------------------	---

Continued on next page

1. Waiting and Personal Interview Area, Continued

b. Waiting Area Requirements (continued)

- Include a display area stocked with current VBA publications or fact sheets when pamphlets are unavailable. These materials will be replenished daily; please review “List of Approved Pamphlets,” and “VBA Factsheets” for a list of current publications: <http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/BAS/index.asp> ;
 - Display the WVC poster in the waiting area. The poster includes the name and telephone number of the RO’s WVC. The poster template can be found at: <http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/BAS/index.asp>
-

c. Interview Area Requirements

The requirements for the RO interview area are as follows:

- Will be ample distance away from both the waiting area and other work areas to minimize disruption of the interview process while maximizing privacy;
 - Will have a computer with VBA applications and internet access for eBenefits registration and electronic claims submission. Will include telephones with an unpublished telephone number; and
 - Will include adequate access to information needed to conduct interviews at each interview station.
-

d. Security Procedures

The RO will establish security procedures to allow for expedient response by building security personnel in the event of an emergency.

The RO will ensure employees are aware of the local procedures in place to appropriately respond to an emergency.

2. Tracking and Timeliness for Personal Interview Activity

Introduction This topic provides tracking personal interview activity and timeliness requirements

Change Date October 2014

a. VA Form 21-7288a ROs are required to use the most recent version of VA Form 21-7288a, *Daily Record of Veterans Assistance Interviews*, to record personal interview activity. The electronic version of this form automatically captures and calculates all interview activity data for 100 percent of all interviews conducted. No other version of this form is acceptable.

ROs will use a separate VA Form 21-7288a each month for tracking interviews conducted at the following locations:

- RO
- each out-based locations
- each VAMC

You may obtain the form with complete instructions from this link: [Personal Interview Activity](#)

b. Personal Interview Timeliness The interview must begin within 20 minutes or less from the time the visitor signs in for RO interviews only.

3. The Intake Process

Introduction This topic contains information on the intake process

Change Date October 2014

a. Steps to Conduct Intake Follow the steps below to for intake:

Step	Action
1	Greet the visitor.
2	Provide the visitor with a visitor intake sheet to complete.
3	Meet requirements for identification protocol listed within 38 C.F.R. § 3.217. Please see " Identification Protocol " prior to allowing visitors requesting information or submitting information about benefits.
4	Is the visitor a Veteran who is requesting information? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If <i>yes</i>, provide the information per identification protocol guidelines. • If <i>no</i>, provide information as appropriate to a third party request.
5	After determining purpose of visit, use available computer applications to obtain as much information related to the visit.
6	Record information for every interview on VA Form 21-7288a and properly dispose of intake sheet following VBA privacy compliance found in VBA Letter 20-08-63.

b. Use of Visitor Intake Sheet The protection of a visitor's privacy and personal data is extremely important. We must continue to be proactive in protecting the integrity of all information exchanges between VA and our visitors.

The RO is responsible for creating a visitor intake sheet which will be used for RO personal interviews and will:

- Privately identify visitors, and
 - Allow for the visitor to provide a purpose of the visit.
-

Continued on next page

3. The Intake Process, Continued

**b. Use of
Visitor Intake
Sheet**
(continued)

All visitors will be asked to complete a visitor intake sheet prior to the interview.

**c. Identification
Protocol**

Visitors are required to provide acceptable positive identification when requesting beneficiary personally identifiable information. Prior to sharing information with anyone other than the Veteran or beneficiary, ensure appropriate release of information has been completed by the Veteran for the individual requesting access.

Visitors can provide physical identification to verify his or her identity such as a driver's license or military ID card. Visitors can also verify his or her identity by matching the following information to VA systems:

- Full name
 - Social Security number or claim number
 - Branch of service
-

**d. Referring
Visitor for
Personal
Interview**

Triage the reason for the visit and make full use of computer systems prior to referring the visitor for an interview.

**e. Action Taken
if the Visitor
Must Leave
Before an
Interview**

The table below shows the appropriate action if the visitor must leave before referral for an interview:

If the visitor requests...	Then ...
A telephone call	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • record the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – visitor's name – visitor's telephone number – associated VA claim number, and – nature of the inquiry, and • Refer this information to the next available representative.

Continued on next page

3. The Intake Process, Continued

e. Action Taken if the Visitor Must Leave Before an Interview
(continued)

If the visitor requests...	Then ...
To schedule an interview and/or return at a later time/date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule interview with available public contact representative for future date and time; • Inform the visitor of the time/day that wait times are usually shorter.

f. Address Changes

The employee conducting intake is responsible for entering address changes into the Veteran or beneficiary's records except in the cases shown below:

If the address change involves a(n)...	Then refer the case to the...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nursing home • hospital • penal institution, or • recipient of vocational rehabilitation under U.S.C. Chapter 31 	Intake Processing Center (IPC) on <i>VA Form 27-0820, Report of General Information</i>
Beneficiary with a VA Fiduciary	Fiduciary Hub via an IRIS Veterans Assistance Inquiry (VAI).

4. Interview Process

Introduction This topic contains information on the interview process.

Change Date October 2014

a. Steps to Conduct a Personal Interview The following are the steps for the interview process:

Step	Action
1	Greet the visitor and document the time of arrival on the intake sheet.
2	Review the intake sheet and verify the reason for the visit.
3	Review the electronic record.
4	Conduct interview. Complete a VA Form 27-0820, for all interviews with Veterans and beneficiaries or relating to a Veteran or beneficiary's file.
5	Ask the visitor if they have any additional questions and close the interview.
6	Return completed intake sheet to the employee responsible for completing <i>VA Form 21-7288a, Daily Record of Veterans Assistance Interviews</i> to record timeliness of the interview. Send VA Form 27-0820 for uploading in the Veteran or beneficiary's electronic record.

b. Review the Visitors Electronic File Every effort should be made to complete the interview utilizing the electronic record and VBA applications. Only retrieve the legacy file if requested by the visitor and the electronic record does not fulfill the visitor's request.

c. Visitor Requests a Copy of Requests If during the interview the visitor requests a copy of any records in VA possession, the visitor must complete a VA Form 21-4138, *Statement in Support of Claim*, and sign and date the form.

Continued on next page

4. Interview Process, Continued

c. Visitor Requests a Copy of Requests
(continued)

Follow the requirements of M27-1, Part 1, Chapter 7, for completing PA/FOIA requests.

d. Claim Submission

If the visitor is filing a claim:

- Encourage and assist the visitor in filing an electronic fully developed claim.
 - Assist the visitor in completing the application or any other required forms, which can be found on the [VA Forms website](#).
 - Collect any additional information or documentation provided; make copies of any originals submitted and certify copy prior to returning original to the visitor.
 - Promptly forward the forms, information, or documentation to the *Intake Processing Center* to ensure that it is filed timely.
-

e. Veteran's Assistance Inquiry (VAI)

Make full use of computer based application capabilities to resolve issues *before* completing a Veteran's Assistance Inquiry (VAI).

Note: For guidance on when to issue a VAI please refer to M27-1 Part I, Chapter 3

5. Reporting Work Credit for Personal Interview Activity

Introduction This topic provides guidance reporting work credit for personal interview activity in DOOR.

Change Date October 2014

a. DOOR Reporting All personal interview activity is reported in DOOR on a monthly basis in the appropriate DOOR workload identifier (WID). To follow are all required DOOR WIDs related to interview activity.

b. DOOR WID 7121.00 & 7534.15 Report total at-office personal interviews for the reporting month in DOOR WID 7121.00 and 7534.15. The total at-office personal interviews is from Column “C” on the “Totals” line of VA Form 21-7288a for the reporting month.

c. DOOR WID 7534.16 Report total at-office personal interviews for the reporting month exceeding the 20 minute timeliness requirement in DOOR WID 7534.16. The total at-office personal interviews exceeding the 20-minute timeliness requirement is from Column “K” on the “Totals” line of the VA Form 21-7288a for the reporting month.

d. DOOR WID 7122.00 Report total away from office personal interviews for the reporting month in DOOR WID 7122.00. The total away from office personal interviews is from Column “C” on the “Totals” line of VA Form 21-7288a for the reporting month.

e. Out-based Employees Report personal interviews for out-based employees into the appropriate WIDs as defined in [DOOR WID Definitions](#).
