

quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology.

*Title:* Direct Deposit Enrollment, VA Form 24-0296.

*OMB Control Number:* 2900-0564.

*Type of Review:* Revision of a currently approved collection.

*Abstract:* VA Form 24-0296 is used to gather the necessary information required to enroll VA Compensation and Pension beneficiaries in the DD/EFT program for recurring benefits payments. The information will be used to process the payment data from VA to the beneficiary's designated financial institution.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households.

*Estimated Annual Burden:* 6,600 hours.

*Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent:* 2 minutes.

*Frequency of Response:* Generally one time.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 198,000.

**By direction of the Secretary.**

Dated: November 1, 1999.

*Sandra S. McIntyre,*

*Program Analyst, Information Management Service.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

[OMB Control No. 2900-0573]

**Proposed Information Collection Activity: Proposed Collection; Comment Request**

**AGENCY:** Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), is announcing an opportunity for public comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, Federal agencies are required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of a currently approved collection, and allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice. This notice solicits comments on the information needed to extend the eligibility period of a spouse or surviving spouse to use Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA).

**DATES:** Written comments and recommendations on the proposed collection of information should be received on or before January 28, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written comments on the collection of information to Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20S52), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0573" in any correspondence.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Nancy J. Kessinger at (202) 273-7079 or FAX (202) 275-5947.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Under the PRA of 1995 (Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C., 3501-3520), Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. This request for comment is being made pursuant to Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA.

With respect to the following collection of information, VBA invites comments on: (1) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of VBA's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of VBA's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) ways to enhance the

quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology.

*Title:* Application for Extension of Eligibility Period under Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (Title 38 CFR 21.3047).

*OMB Control Number:* 2900-0573.

*Type of Review:* Extension of a previously approved collection.

*Abstract:* VA is required by statute (Title 38, U.S.C., Section 3512) to extend the period of eligibility a spouse or surviving spouse has to use Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) if during that period she or he was prevented from initiating or completing a program of education due to a physical or mental disability. VA has no way of knowing who needs such an extension unless the individual applies for it. In order for VA to make the proper decision on such an application, VA requires that the claimant provide medical evidence to support the claim that the disability exists. If VA doesn't collect supporting medical evidence, the department may give this extension to someone who doesn't meet the criteria for an extension, or, conversely, the department may deny the extension to someone who meets the criteria for an extension.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households.

*Estimated Annual Burden:* 120 hours.

*Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent:* 60 minutes.

*Frequency of Response:* On occasion.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 120.

By direction of the Secretary.

Dated: November 2, 1999.

**Barbara H. Epps,**

*Management Analyst, Information Management Service.*

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