

potential violation of civil or criminal law or regulation;

(2) To disclose information to any source from which additional information is requested in the course of processing a claim, to the extent necessary to identify the individual whose claim is being adjudicated, inform the source of the purpose(s) of the request, and identify the type of information requested;

(3) To disclose information to a Federal agency, in response to its request, in connection with the hiring or retention of an individual, the issuance of a security clearance, the conducting of a security or suitability investigation of an individual, the classifying of jobs, the letting of a contract, or the issuance of a license, grant, or other benefit by the requesting agency, to the extent that the information is relevant and necessary to requesting the agency's decision on the matter;

(4) To provide information to a congressional office in response to an inquiry made at the request of the individual to whom the record pertains;

(5) To disclose information which is necessary and relevant to the Department of Justice or to a court when the Government is party to a judicial proceeding before the court;

(6) To provide information to the National Archives and Records Administration for use in records management inspections conducted under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2908;

(7) To disclose information to officials of the Merit Systems Protection Board, the Office of the Special Counsel, the Federal Labor Relations Authority, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or the Office of Personnel Management when requested in performance of their authorized duties;

(8) To disclose information to a court, magistrate, or administrative tribunal in the course of presenting evidence, including disclosures to opposing Counsel or witnesses in the course of civil discovery, litigation or settlement negotiations in response to a subpoena where relevant or potentially relevant to a proceeding, or in connection with criminal law proceedings; and

(9) To provide information to officials of labor organizations recognized under the Civil Service Reform Act when relevant and necessary to their duties of exclusive representation concerning personnel policies, practices, and matters affecting work conditions.

POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR STORING, RETRIEVING, ACCESSING, RETAINING, AND DISPOSING OF RECORDS IN THE SYSTEM:

STORAGE:

File folders and electronic media.

RETRIEVABILITY:

By the names of the individuals on whom they are maintained.

SAFEGUARDS:

Lockable metal filing cabinets to which only authorized personnel have access. Automated databases are password protected.

RETENTION AND DISPOSAL:

Disposed of after closing of the case in accordance with General Records Schedule 1, Civilian Personnel Records, Category 7d.

SYSTEM MANAGER(S) AND ADDRESS:

Director, Office of Personnel Policy, Room 6018-Metropolitan Square, Department of the Treasury, Washington, DC 20220.

NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE:

It is required that individuals submitting claims be provided a copy of the record under the claims process. They may, however, contact the agency personnel or designated office where the action was processed, regarding the existence of such records on them. They must furnish the following information for their records to be located and identified: (1) Name, (2) date of birth, (3) approximate date of closing of the case and kind of action taken, (4) organizational component involved.

RECORD ACCESS PROCEDURES:

It is required that individuals submitting claims be provided a copy of the record under the claims process. However, after the action has been closed, an individual may request access to the official copy of the claim file by contacting the system manager. Individuals must provide the following information for their records to be located and identified: (1) Name, (2) date of birth, (3) approximate date of closing of the case and kind of action taken, (4) organizational component involved.

CONTESTING RECORD PROCEDURES:

Review of requests from individuals seeking amendment of their records which have been the subject of a judicial or quasi-judicial action will be limited in scope. Review of amendment requests of these records will be restricted to determining if the record accurately documents the action of the agency ruling on the case, and will not include a review of the merits of the

action, determination, or finding. Individuals wishing to request amendment to their records to correct factual errors should contact the system manager. Individuals must furnish the following information for their records to be located and identified: (1) Name, (2) date of birth, (3) approximate date of closing of the case and kind of action taken, (4) organizational component involved.

RECORD SOURCE CATEGORIES:

Information in this system of records is provided: (1) By the individual on whom the record is maintained, (2) by testimony of witnesses, (3) by agency officials, (4) from related correspondence from organizations or persons.

EXEMPTIONS CLAIMED FOR THE SYSTEM:

None.

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Means Test Thresholds

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: As required by law, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is hereby giving notice of cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) for means test income limitations. These adjustments are based on the rise in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) during the one-year period ending September 30, 2000.

DATES: These rates are effective January 1, 2001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Roscoe Butler, Chief Policy and Operations, Health Administration Service, (10C3), Veterans Health Administration, VA, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420, (202) 273-8302. (This is not a toll-free number.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Title 38 United States Code 1722(c), requires that on January 1 of each year, the Secretary increase the means test threshold amounts by the same percentage the maximum rates of pension benefits were increased under 38 U.S.C. 5312(a) during the preceding calendar year. Under the provisions of 38 U.S.C 5312 and section 306 of Public Law 95-588, VA is required to increase the benefit rates and income limitations in the pension and parents' indemnity compensation (DIC) program by the same percentage, and effective the same date, as increases in the benefit amount

payable under Title II of the Social Security Act.

On October 24, 2000, for the period beginning December 1, 2000, the Social Security Administration announced at 65 FR 63663 of the **Federal Register**, a 3.5 percent cost-of-living increase in Social Security Benefits under Title II of the Social Security Act. The Veteran Benefits Administration has indicated Pension benefits will be increased by a 3.5 percent cost-of-living increase effective December 1, 2000. Therefore, applying the same percentage and rounding up in accordance with 38 CFR 3.29, the following income limitations for the Means Test Thresholds will be effective January 1, 2001.

TABLE 1.—MEANS TEST THRESHOLDS

(1) Veterans with no dependents:	
(a) Means Test Co-payment Exempted Category	\$23,688
(b) Means Test Co-payment Required Category	23,689
(2) Veterans with 1 dependent:	
(a) Means Test Co-payment Exempt Category	28,429
(b) Means Test Co-payment Required Category	28,430
(3) Veterans with 2 dependents:	
(a) Means Test Co-payment Exempt Category	30,015
(b) Means Test Co-payment Required Category	30,016
(4) Veterans with 3 dependents:	
(a) Means Test Co-payment Exempt Category	31,601
(b) Means Test Co-payment Required Category	31,602
(5) Veterans with 4 dependents:	
(a) Means Test Co-payment Exempt Category	33,187
(b) Means Test Co-payment Required Category	33,188
(6) Veterans with 5 dependents:	
(a) Means Test Co-payment Exempt Category	34,773
(b) Means Test Co-payment Required Category	34,774
(7) Child Income Exclusion is:	7,450
(8) The Medicare deductible is:	792
(9) Maximum annual Rate of Pension effective December 1, 2000 are:	
(a) The base rate is	9,304
(b) The base rate with one dependent is	12,186
(c) Add 1,586 each additional dependent.	

Approved: January 5, 2001.

Hershel W. Gober,

Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Privacy Act of 1974; System of Records

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Report of New System of Records—Consolidated Data Information System—VA (97VA105).

SUMMARY: The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552(e)(4)) requires that all agencies publish in the **Federal Register** a notice of the existence and character of their system of records. Notice is hereby given that VA is adding a new system of records entitled “Consolidated Data Information System—VA” (97VA105).

DATES: Comments on the establishment of the new system of records must be received no later than February 15, 2001. If no public comment is received during the period allowed for comment or unless otherwise published in the **Federal Register** by VA, the system will become effective February 15, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be submitted to Director, Office of Regulations Management (02D), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420. Comments will be available for public inspection at the above address in the Office of Regulations Management, Room 1176, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Veterans Health Administration Privacy Act Officer (193B2), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420, (727) 320-1839.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under Section 527 of Title 38, U.S.C., and the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, Pub. L. 103-62, VA is required to measure and evaluate, on an ongoing basis, the effectiveness of VA benefit programs and services. In performing this required function, VA must collect, collate and analyze full statistical data regarding participation, provision of services, categories of beneficiaries, and planning of expenditures for all VA programs. For this reason, VA is establishing a new system of records, which combines information from several existing systems of records with information from non-VA sources. This combined database is necessary for VA to accurately and timely assess the current health care usage by the patient population served by VA, to forecast

future demand for VA medical care by individuals currently eligible for service by VA medical facilities, and to understand the numerous implications of cross-utilization between VA and non-VA health care systems.

Records from the Patient Medical Record System (24VA136), the Patient Fee Basis Medical and Pharmacy Records (23VA136), Veterans and Beneficiaries Identification and Records Location Subsystem (38VA23), Compensation, Pension, Education and Rehabilitation Records (58VA21/22), and Automated Medication Processing Records (56VA119) will be incorporated into this new system of records. Specific request files will be created for use in submitting requests for veteran-specific data from the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), the Department of Defense (DoD), and other non-VA data sources including state Medicaid databases. The new database will be created by including Medicare data records on utilization and enrollment for all VA users, enrollees and special category veterans. Utilization and enrollment data will also be extracted from the DoD military personnel system of records in order to supplement VA’s database. This system will not be used by VA to make any determinations as to individual veteran’s benefits. Because the exchange of data among VA, HCFA, DoD, and any other non-VA agencies will be only for the purpose of identifying current health care usage and forecasting future health care usage by VA beneficiaries, the computer matching provision of the Privacy Act does not apply.

VA will maintain the system of records in electronic form at VA Management Science Group, Bedford, Massachusetts, and VA Information Resource Center, Hines, Illinois. Copies or parts of these records may be maintained at VA Automation Center, Austin, Texas, and VA Allocation Resource Center, Braintree, Massachusetts. Multiple sites are needed because VA data files will be drawn from multiple locations and merged data files will be very large. Data in the system of records will include names, social security numbers (SSNs), demographic and health services utilization data for all VHA users and special veteran populations; inpatient, outpatient, physician supplier, nursing home, hospice, home care, and durable medical equipment data from HCFA; and utilization and enrollment data from DoD. The new database will be used to produce reports for statistical analyses on, for example: (1) The number of Medicare-eligible users who obtain health care services from VA,