

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours for NOFO Respondents: 13,300.
Estimated Successful Applicants: 50.
Estimated Hours for Progress Reporting, per Award per Year: 4.
Estimated Annual Burden Hours for Progress Reporting: 200.
Estimated Total Annual Cost: \$1,728,000.

Total for All Technical Assistance Programs

Estimated Total Hours: 16,700.
Estimated Total Cost: \$2,137,600.
Public Comments Invited: You are asked to comment on any aspect of this information collection, including: (1) Whether the proposed collection is necessary for DOT's performance; (2) the accuracy of the estimated burdens; (3) ways for DOT to enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the collected information; and (4) ways that the burden could be minimized, including the use of electronic technology, without reducing the quality of the collected information. The agency will summarize and/or include your comments in the request for OMB's clearance of this information collection.
Authority: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995; 44 U.S.C. chapter 35, as amended; 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135; and 23 CFR chapter 1, subchapter E, part 450.

Duane Callender,

Director, Build America Bureau, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation.
 [FR Doc. 2026-06009 Filed 3-26-26; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[Docket No. VA-2026-VACO-0001]

Notice of Exception to Date of Receipt Rule

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Beginning November 15, 2024, a strike led by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) resulted in a delay of mail delivery from Canada Post. In response, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) is establishing a temporary exception to the date of receipt provisions to ensure that veterans or claimants residing within the Canada Post mailing jurisdiction do not have an adverse effect to benefits. VBA recognizes the potential impact in the claim process resulting from the inability to send or receive mail. The strike ran from November 15, 2024, through December 17, 2024. On January 6, 2025, Canada

Post returned to full-service levels, and the United States Postal Service (USPS) resumed acceptance of mail and packages to and from Canada.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jadine Piper, Acting Assistant Director, Policy, Compensation Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, (202) 461-9700.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On November 15, 2024, CUPW initiated a national strike affecting Canada's postal system, causing stoppages and significant delays in the processing and delivery of mail. On November 29, 2024, USPS announced an immediate suspension, temporarily halting mail acceptance to and from Canada, affecting the processing or delivery of mail services to millions of Canadian customers. On January 6, 2025, Canada Post reinstated full-service levels for domestic mail and accelerated processing for international mail. In conjunction, on January 6, 2025, USPS resumed the acceptance of mail and packages to and from Canada.

Although Canada Post has resumed regular mail processing and delivery services, VBA understands the negative impact these disruptions may have caused certain veterans or claimants residing within the Canadian postal jurisdiction during the time of the strike. Potential impact includes preventing the timely filing of VBA claims submissions and claim-related evidence or receiving claim-related or other pertinent VBA benefit information. Therefore, VBA is instituting a temporary exception for determining acceptable dates of receipt for correspondence sent through postal or other mail processing services for veterans or claimants residing within the jurisdiction of Canada.

Ordinarily, "date of receipt" means the date on which a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) office receives a claim, information, or evidence. Under 38 CFR 3.1(r), the Under Secretary for Benefits may establish exceptions to VA's rule on the date of receipt of claims, information, or evidence by publishing a notice in the **Federal Register**. Section 3.1(r) states that an exception may be established when a natural or man-made interference with the normal channels through which VBA ordinarily receives correspondence has resulted in one or more VBA regional offices experiencing extended delays in the receipt of claims, information, or evidence to an extent that, if not addressed, would adversely affect veterans and claimants through no fault of their own.

The CUPW national strike significantly disrupted mail services for millions of Canada Post customers. VBA acknowledges that veterans or claimants residing within a Canadian postal jurisdiction may have experienced unusual hardships in submitting correspondence containing a claim, evidence, or other information throughout the course of the strike. VBA further acknowledges that letters sent in the days before the strike may also have been impacted. Therefore, VA has established exceptions to the standard date of receipt rule for correspondence from veterans or claimants affected by the CUPW strike. VA recognizes a disruption in mail services from November 11, 2024, the first business day of the week in which mail service disruptions commenced, through March 10, 2025, 60 calendar days from the date following full reinstatement of Canadian mail services.

Exceptions to Date of Receipt Rule for Claimants Affected by the Canadian Postal Strike

Under 38 CFR 3.109(b), if there is good cause, VA may provide claimants or beneficiaries an extension of time when submitting information applicable to the processing of a claim or a decision. This applies to veterans, claimants, or beneficiaries residing in a Canadian postal jurisdiction during the strike. The disruption in mail services provides good cause to support the need for extending time limits based on mail delays. VBA grants a time limit extension by establishing this exception.

VBA gives notice that, for purposes of determining entitlement to benefits, any correspondence received by VBA, during the period of November 11, 2024, through March 10, 2025, from a veteran or claimant residing within a Canadian postal jurisdiction that contains an impacted claim, information, or evidence, will be considered received on the postmark date or November 15, 2024, whichever is earlier.

In accordance with 38 CFR 3.110, computation of the extended timeframe for receipt of correspondence or other pertinent evidence excludes the first day of the affected period. This means VBA will make exceptions to the date of receipt rule beginning November 15, 2024, extending through March 10, 2025, the next succeeding workday following the 60-day period after full resumption of Canadian mail services.

If VBA solicited submission of information or evidence from a veteran or claimant residing within a Canadian postal jurisdiction any time on or after November 11, 2024, and the date for submission of such information or

evidence expired between November 15, 2024, and March 10, 2025, receipt of such information or evidence will be considered as timely if it is postmarked by March 10, 2025. In the event there is no mail postmark or date stamp by the USPS, VBA will consider any such solicited evidence or information as received no later than March 10, 2025, or the latest date on which a timely response to VBA's request for information could be received. For any decision notification letter sent during the impacted period of November 11, 2024, to March 10, 2025, VA will consider March 10, 2025, as the date of the decision notice for a subsequently submitted decision review option.

Signing Authority

Douglas A. Collins, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, approved this document on March 11, 2026, and authorized the undersigned to sign and submit the document to the Office of the Federal Register for publication electronically as an official document of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Gabriela DeCuir,

*Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer,
Department of Veterans Affairs.*

[FR Doc. 2026-06004 Filed 3-26-26; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-NEW]

Agency Information Collection Activity Under OMB Review: Application for High-Technology Veterans Education, Training and Skills (VET TEC 2.0) Program

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, this notice announces that the Veterans Benefits Administration

(VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs, will submit the collection of information abstracted below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The PRA submission describes the nature of the information collection and its expected cost and burden, and it includes the actual data collection instrument.

DATES: Comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent by April 27, 2026.

ADDRESSES: To submit comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection, please type the following link into your browser: www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain, select "Currently under Review—Open for Public Comments", then search the list for the information collection by Title or "OMB Control No. 2900-XXXX."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: VA PRA information: Dorothy Glasgow, 202-461-1084, VAPRA@va.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Application for Veteran Employment Through Technology Education Courses (VET TEC 2.0) High Technology Program, VA Form 22-10297.

OMB Control Number: 2900-NEW, <https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAsearch>.

Type of Review: New Collection.

Abstract: On January 2, 2025, the Elizabeth Dole Field and Community Based Services for Veterans and Caregivers Act (Pub. L. 118-210) was signed into law. The legislation can be identified as the DOLE Act. This legislation established a new Veteran Technology program titled "High-Technology Veterans Education, Training and Skills (VET TEC 2.0) Program". VET TEC 2.0 allows Veterans to enroll in courses outside the traditional definition of higher education to obtain skillsets highly desired by employers. The DOLE Act authorizes VA to provide educational

assistance for these high technology programs of education that begin prior to September 30, 2027. The eligibility requirements to qualify for the program apply to an individual who is a Veteran under age 62 who has served at least 3 years (36 months) on Active Duty; or a Service member who is within 180 days of discharge who has or will serve 3 years (36 months) by their discharge date; and who has received a discharge under conditions other than dishonorable. The DOLE Act requires VA to develop mechanisms for Veteran application for VET TEC 2.0, to include selection of a specific training provider and program and a Participation Agreement for Training Providers who wish to seek approval for their programs under VET TEC 2.0. It also requires VA to develop enrollment processing mechanisms and the ability to track the number of enrollees in real time due to annual participation limits. Lastly, VA must submit a report to Congress no later than January 2, 2026, and each year thereafter on the operation of the program.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published at 90 FR 58373, December 16, 2025.

Affected Public: Individuals and households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 4,412 hours.

Estimated Average Burden per Respondent: 30 minutes.

Frequency of Response: Once.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 4,412.

Authority: 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*

Shunda Willis,

Alternate, VA PRA Clearance Officer, Office of Information Technology, Data Governance Analytics, Department of Veterans Affairs.

[FR Doc. 2026-05982 Filed 3-26-26; 8:45 am]

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