

## § 5.20

(3) Significant guidance documents must comply with the applicable requirements set forth in Executive Orders 12866, 13563, and 13609.

[85 FR 72570, Nov. 13, 2021, as amended at 86 FR 30184, June 7, 2021]

### § 5.20 Procedures for petition for the withdrawal or modification of a guidance document.

*Petitions for withdrawal or modification of a guidance document.* The following procedures apply for the public to petition for withdrawal or modification of a guidance document.

(a) A member of the public wishing to petition for withdrawal or modification of a guidance document may submit such petition via email to: *OEIDMO@va.gov*. Petitions may also be mailed to the following address: Office of Policy and Interagency Collaboration, Office of Enterprise Integration, 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20420.

(b) A petition for withdrawal or modification of a guidance document must contain the following information:

(1) The petitioner's name and address;

(2) Information identifying the guidance document to which the petition pertains;

(3) A statement of the reasons the petitioner believes the document should be withdrawn or modified.

(c) VA will seek to provide a response to a petition within 90 days of receipt of the request.

[85 FR 72570, Nov. 13, 2021, as amended at 86 FR 30184, June 7, 2021]

### § 5.25 Guidance website.

VA has a guidance website that contains, or links to, guidance documents that are currently in effect. The website can be found at the following address: [www.va.gov/orpm/va\\_guidance\\_documents.asp](http://www.va.gov/orpm/va_guidance_documents.asp).

[86 FR 30184, June 7, 2021]

## PART 6—UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT LIFE INSURANCE

### AGE

Sec.

6.1 Misstatement of age.

## 38 CFR Ch. I (7-1-25 Edition)

### PREMIUMS

6.2 Premium rate.

### POLICIES

6.3 Incontestability of United States Government life insurance.

### BENEFICIARY OF UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT LIFE INSURANCE

6.4 Proof of age, relationship and marriage.  
6.5 Conditional designation of beneficiary.  
6.6 Change of beneficiary.  
6.7 Claims of creditors, taxation.

### OPTIONAL SETTLEMENT

6.8 Selection, revocation and election.  
6.9 Election of optional settlement by beneficiary.  
6.10 Options.

### DIVIDENDS

6.11 How dividends are paid.  
6.12 Special dividends.

### LOANS

6.13 Policy loans.

### CASH VALUE

6.14 Cash value; other than special endowment at age 96 plan policy.  
6.15 Cash value; special endowment at age 96 plan policy.  
6.16 Payment of cash value in monthly installments.

### INDEBTEDNESS

6.17 Collection of any indebtedness.

### TOTAL PERMANENT DISABILITY BENEFITS

6.18 Other disabilities deemed to be total and permanent.

### DEATH BENEFITS

6.19 Evidence to establish death of the insured.

### DETERMINATION OF LIABILITY UNDER SECTIONS 302 AND 313, WORLD WAR VETERANS' ACT, 1924, SECTIONS 607 AND 602(v)(2), NATIONAL SERVICE LIFE INSURANCE ACT, 1940, AS AMENDED, AND SECTIONS 1921 AND 1957 OF TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE

6.20 Jurisdiction.

### APPEALS

6.21 Guardian: definition and authority.

AUTHORITY: 38 U.S.C. 501, 1940–1963, 1981–1988, unless otherwise noted.

**Department of Veterans Affairs****§ 6.6****AGE****§ 6.1 Misstatement of age.**

If the age of the insured under a United States Government life insurance policy has been understated, the amount of the insurance payable under the policy shall be such exact amount as the premium paid would have purchased at the correct age; if overstated, the excess of premiums paid shall be refunded without interest. Guaranteed surrender and loan values will be modified accordingly. The age of the insured will be admitted by the Department of Veterans Affairs at any time upon satisfactory proof.

[13 FR 7089, Nov. 27, 1948. Redesignated at 61 FR 29024, June 7, 1996]

**PREMIUMS****§ 6.2 Premium rate.**

Effective January 1, 1983, United States Government Life Insurance policies, and total disability income provisions, on a premium paying status are paid-up and no premiums are required to maintain such policies and provisions in force.

[48 FR 1960, Jan. 17, 1983. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 29024, 29025, June 7, 1996]

**POLICIES****§ 6.3 Incontestability of United States Government life insurance.**

Discharge or release of an insured from military or naval service for the reason of fraudulent enlistment shall not invalidate United States Government life insurance issued on the basis of such service unless the Secretary determines that the insured was mentally or legally incapable of entering into a contract of enlistment. In such case the United States Government life insurance so issued will be canceled as of the effective date of such insurance.

[13 FR 7091, Nov. 27, 1948, as amended at 17 FR 3162, Apr. 10, 1952; 24 FR 7321, Sept. 11, 1959. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 29024, 29025, June 7, 1996]

**BENEFICIARY OF UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT LIFE INSURANCE****§ 6.4 Proof of age, relationship and marriage.**

Whenever it is necessary for a claimant to prove age, relationship or marriage, the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 103(c) and Part 3 this chapter will be followed.

[26 FR 1856, Mar. 3, 1961. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 29024, 29025, June 7, 1996]

**§ 6.5 Conditional designation of beneficiary.**

If the insured by notice in writing to the Department of Veterans Affairs during his or her lifetime has provided that a designated beneficiary shall be entitled to the proceeds of United States Government life insurance only if such beneficiary shall survive him or her for such period (not more than 30 days), as specified by the insured, no right to the insurance shall vest as to such beneficiary during that period. In the event such beneficiary fails to survive the specified period, payment of the proceeds of United States Government life insurance will be made as if the beneficiary had predeceased the insured.

[14 FR 7175, Nov. 29, 1949, as amended at 46 FR 57043, Nov. 20, 1981. Redesignated at 61 FR 29024, June 7, 1996]

**§ 6.6 Change of beneficiary.**

The insured under United States Government life insurance shall have the right at any time and from time to time and without the consent or knowledge of the beneficiary to change the beneficiary. A change of beneficiary must be made by written notice to the Department of Veterans Affairs over the signature of the insured and shall not be binding on the United States unless received by the Department of Veterans Affairs. A change of beneficiary must be forwarded to the Department of Veterans Affairs by the insured or his or her agent and must contain sufficient information to identify the insured. Whenever practicable, such notices shall be given on forms prescribed by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Upon receipt by the Department of Veterans Affairs, a change of beneficiary shall be deemed effective

## §6.7

as of the date the insured signed the written notice. The United States shall be protected in all payments made to the beneficiary last of record and before receipt of notice of a change of beneficiary, and no payments so made shall be paid again to the changed beneficiary. The insured may exercise any right or privilege given under the provisions of a United States Government life insurance policy without the consent of the beneficiary. An original designation of a beneficiary may be made by the last will and testament, but no change of beneficiary may be made by the last will and testament. The provisions of the "beneficiary" clause in United States Government life insurance policies are hereby amended accordingly.

[17 FR 11071, Dec. 5, 1952, as amended at 46 FR 57043, Nov. 20, 1981. Redesignated at 61 FR 29024, June 7, 1996]

## §6.7 Claims of creditors, taxation.

(a) Effective January 1, 1958, payments of insurance to a beneficiary under a United States Government life insurance policy shall be subject to levy for taxes due the United States by such beneficiary.

(b) The provisions of 38 U.S.C. 5301(b) which entitle the United States to collect by setoff out of benefits payable to any beneficiary under a United States Government life insurance policy do not apply to dividends being held to the credit of the insured for the payment of premiums under the provisions of section 1946 of title 38 U.S.C.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 5301)

[23 FR 681, Feb. 1, 1958, as amended at 24 FR 15, Jan. 1, 1959; 24 FR 582, Jan. 27, 1959; 46 FR 57043, Nov. 20, 1981. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 29024, 29025, June 7, 1996]

## OPTIONAL SETTLEMENT

## §6.8 Selection, revocation and election.

The insured under a United States Government Life Insurance policy may, upon written notice, select an optional settlement. Such optional settlement may be revoked by written notice. If the insured does not select one of the optional settlements, as set out under the provisions of the policy, the insurance shall be payable in 240

## 38 CFR Ch. I (7-1-25 Edition)

monthly installments unless the beneficiary elects in writing a different option.

[61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996]

## §6.9 Election of optional settlement by beneficiary.

If the insured has selected an optional settlement then at the death of the insured the designated beneficiary may elect to receive the proceeds of insurance in installments spread over a greater period of time than that selected by the insured and in accordance with the following provisions.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1952)

(a) If the insured has selected Option 1, the beneficiary may elect to receive payment under Option 2, 3, or 4.

(b) If the insured has selected Option 2 with monthly installments not in excess of 120, the beneficiary may elect to receive payment in a greater number of installments under Option 2, or may elect to receive payment under Option 3 or 4.

(c) If the insured has selected Option 2 with monthly installments in excess of 120, the beneficiary may elect to receive payment in a greater number of installments under Option 2, or may elect to receive payment under Option 3.

(d) If the insured has selected Option 3, and named no contingent beneficiary, the beneficiary may elect to receive payment under Option 4.

(e) If the insured has selected Option 4, the beneficiary may elect to receive payment under Option 3.

If the insured has selected settlement under Option 1, a beneficiary who has elected to receive payment under Option 2, 3, or 4 may elect to receive the commuted value of any remaining unpaid installments certain (240 less the number paid in case of Option 3, or 120 less the number paid in the case of Option 4): *Provided*, That where the commutation is elected under Option 3 or 4 after payment under such option has commenced, and the beneficiary survives the period certain, such beneficiary shall be entitled to the resumption of monthly installments payable for life in accordance with the monthly income option previously selected by

such beneficiary. The entitlement to the resumption of monthly installments will be effective as of the monthly payment date next following the expiration of the period certain. Settlement under any one of the options or payment to the beneficiary of said commuted value under Option 2 or payment of said commuted value under Options 3 and 4 to the beneficiary who does not survive the period certain shall be in full and complete discharge of all liability under the contract. Any other change in the mode of settlement may, within the limitations set forth in paragraphs (a) through (e) of this section, be made by a beneficiary after payment has commenced, provided the change is made within 1 year of the original election and in those instances where Option 3 is changed to Option 1 or 2; or Option 4 is changed to Option 1, 2, or 3, satisfactory proof is submitted to establish that the beneficiary's state of health is the same as it was at time of original election. The effective date of the original election for this purpose will be the date it was delivered to the Department of Veterans Affairs. If such election was forwarded by mail, properly addressed to the Department of Veterans Affairs, the postmark date will be taken as the date of delivery. Such change will be made on the premise that the new election was made initially, and the account will be adjusted accordingly. A condition precedent to any such change will be the repayment of any amount received by the beneficiary in excess of that which would have been due had the new election been made initially.

[32 FR 14274, Oct. 14, 1967, as amended at 48 FR 8069, Feb. 25, 1983. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996]

#### § 6.10 Options.

Insurance will be payable in one sum only when selected by the insured during his or her lifetime or by his or her last will and testament.

[61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996]

#### DIVIDENDS

#### § 6.11 How dividends are paid.

(a) Regular annual dividends becoming payable on or after December 31, 1958, shall be payable on the date pre-

ceding the anniversary of the policy unless the Secretary shall declare them payable on some other date.

(b) If the insured has a National Service Life Insurance policy or policies in force, dividends used to pay premiums in advance will be held to the credit of the insured, unless otherwise directed by the insured.

(c) In the event premiums on more than one policy having the same premium due date are unpaid and the dividend credit of the insured for application to payment of premiums is not sufficient to keep all policies in force, in the absence of instructions to the contrary by the insured, such dividend credit will be applied to pay premiums in such manner as will provide the maximum amount of insurance protection.

(d) Dividend credit of the insured held for payment of premiums as provided in section 1946 of title 38 U.S.C., may not be used to satisfy any indebtedness due the United States without the insured's consent. If the insured requests payment of such dividend credit, or any unused portion thereof, in cash, or requests that such credit be left to accumulate on deposit, then any indebtedness due the United States, such as described in § 6.7 will be recovered therefrom.

(e) Dividend credit of the insured held for payment of premiums or dividends left to accumulate on deposit may be applied to the payment of premiums in advance on any National Service Life Insurance policy upon written request of the insured made before default in payment of premium. Upon maturity of the policy, any unpaid dividend will be paid to the person(s) currently entitled to receive payments under the policy.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1944)

[24 FR 15, Jan. 1, 1959, as amended at 25 FR 7369, Aug. 5, 1960; 28 FR 12544, Nov. 23, 1963; 32 FR 13927, Oct. 6, 1967; 48 FR 1962, Jan. 17, 1983. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996]

#### § 6.12 Special dividends.

Any special U.S. Government Life Insurance dividend that may be declared

## § 6.13

## 38 CFR Ch. I (7-1-25 Edition)

shall be paid in cash. Such special dividends shall not be accepted to accumulate on deposit or as a dividend credit.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1944)

[36 FR 368, Jan. 12, 1971, as amended at 48 FR 1963, Jan. 17, 1983. Redesignated at 61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996]

### LOANS

#### § 6.13 Policy loans.

At any time after the first policy year and upon the execution of a loan agreement satisfactory to the Secretary the United States will lend to the insured on the sole security of his/ her United States Government Life Insurance policy any amount which shall not exceed 94 percent of the cash value, and any indebtedness shall be deducted from the amount advanced on such loan. The loan shall bear interest at a rate not to exceed 5 percent per annum, payable annually, and the loan may be repaid in full or in amounts of \$5 or more. Failure to pay either the amount of the loan or the interest thereon shall not void the policy unless the total indebtedness shall equal or exceed the cash value thereof. When the amount of the indebtedness equals or exceeds the cash value, the policy shall cease and become void.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1944)

[48 FR 1963, Jan. 17, 1983. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996]

### CASH VALUE

#### § 6.14 Cash value; other than special endowment at age 96 plan policy.

Provisions for cash value shall become effective at the completion of the first policy year on any plan of United States Government Life Insurance other than the special endowment at age 96 plan policy; all values, reserves, and net single premiums being based on the American Experience Table of Mortality, with interest at the rate of 3½ percent per annum. The cash value shall be the reserve together with any dividend accumulations. For each month after the first policy year the reserve at the end of the preceding policy year shall be increased by one-twelfth of the increase in reserve for the current policy year. Upon written

request therefor and upon complete surrender of the insurance with all claims thereunder made by the insured the United States will pay to the insured the cash value of the policy less any indebtedness. Unless otherwise requested by the insured, a surrender will be deemed completed as of the end of the month in which the application for cash surrender is delivered to the Department of Veterans Affairs, or as of the date of the check for the cash value, whichever is later. If the application is forwarded by mail, properly addressed, the postmark date will be taken as the date of delivery.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1944)

[48 FR 1963, Jan. 17, 1983. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996]

#### § 6.15 Cash value; special endowment at age 96 plan policy.

Provisions for cash value shall become effective at the completion of the first policy year; all values and net single premiums are as prescribed by the Secretary and published in VA Pamphlet 90-2A. The cash value at the end of the first policy year and at the end of any policy year thereafter shall be the reserve as set forth in the policy together with any dividend accumulations. For each month after the first policy year the reserve at the end of the preceding policy year shall be increased by one-twelfth of the increase in reserve for the current policy year. Upon written request therefor and upon complete surrender of the insurance with all claims thereunder made by the insured, the United States will pay to the insured the cash value of the policy less any indebtedness, provided the policy has been in force for at least 1 year. Unless otherwise requested by the insured, a surrender will be deemed completed as of the end of the month in which the application for cash surrender is delivered to the Department of Veterans Affairs, or as of the date of the check for the cash value, whichever is later. If the application is forwarded by mail, properly addressed, the postmark date will be taken as the date of delivery. If it is forwarded through

**Department of Veterans Affairs****§ 6.20**

military channels, the date the application is placed in military channels will be taken as the date of delivery.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1944)

[48 FR 1963, Jan. 17, 1983. Redesignated at 61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996]

**§ 6.16 Payment of cash value in monthly installments.**

Effective January 1, 1971, in lieu of payment of cash value in one sum, the insured may elect to receive payment in monthly installments under option 2 as set forth in the insurance contract or as a refund life income option. If the insured dies before the agreed number of monthly installments have been paid, the remaining unpaid monthly installments will be payable to the designated beneficiary in one sum, unless the insured or such beneficiary has elected to continue the installments under the option selected by the insured. If no designated beneficiary survives, the present value of any remaining unpaid installments shall be paid to the estate of the insured, provided such payment would not escheat.

[61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996]

**INDEBTEDNESS****§ 6.17 Collection of any indebtedness.**

At the maturity of a United States Government life insurance policy by total permanent disability or death, any indebtedness, unless paid off in cash, shall be liquidated by reducing the amount of each monthly installment in the proportion which the indebtedness bears to the commuted value of monthly installments as may then be payable under the policy, excluding dividend accumulations. If the policy is payable in one sum at death, any indebtedness shall be deducted from the amount payable under the policy.

[13 FR 7096, Nov. 27, 1948. Redesignated at 61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996]

**TOTAL PERMANENT DISABILITY BENEFITS****§ 6.18 Other disabilities deemed to be total and permanent.**

(a) In addition to the conditions specified in 38 U.S.C. 1958, the following

also will be deemed to be total and permanent disabilities: Organic loss of speech; permanently helpless or permanently bedridden.

(b) Organic loss of speech will mean the loss of the ability to express oneself, both by voice and whisper, through the normal organs of speech if such loss is caused by organic changes in such organs. Where such loss exists, the fact that some speech can be produced through the use of an artificial appliance or other organs of the body will be disregarded.

[61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996]

**DEATH BENEFITS****§ 6.19 Evidence to establish death of the insured.**

Whenever a claim is filed on account of the death of a person insured under yearly renewable term insurance or United States Government life insurance, the proof of death shall be established in accordance with the provisions of Part 3 of this chapter.

[26 FR 1856, Mar. 3, 1961. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996]

**DETERMINATION OF LIABILITY UNDER SECTIONS 302 AND 313, WORLD WAR VETERANS' ACT, 1924, SECTIONS 607 AND 602 (V)(2), NATIONAL SERVICE LIFE INSURANCE ACT, 1940, AS AMENDED, AND SECTIONS 1921 AND 1957 OF TITLE 38 UNITED STATES CODE****§ 6.20 Jurisdiction.**

The Insurance Claims Sections are vested with exclusive jurisdiction in determining the liability of the United States and the United States Government Life Insurance Fund for waiver of payment of premiums, payment of total, total permanent disability, and death insurance benefits under United States Government life insurance and to determine the liability of the United States and the National Service Life Insurance Fund for waiver of payment of premiums due to total disability, payment of total disability insurance

## § 6.21

benefits, and death insurance benefits under National Service life insurance.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1944)

[27 FR 9604, Sept. 28, 1962, as amended at 48 FR 1965, Jan. 17, 1983. Redesignated at 61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996]

### APPEALS

#### § 6.21 Guardian: definition and authority.

(a) *Definition.* For the purpose of this section, the term *guardian* includes any fiduciary certified by the appropriate Veterans Service Center Manager under § 13.55 of this title to receive benefits in a fiduciary capacity for an insured or beneficiary.

(b) *Authority.* For the purpose of this part, a guardian of an insured or beneficiary shall have authority to: Apply for conversion of a policy or change of plan; reinstate a policy; withdraw dividends held on deposit or credit; select or change a dividend option; obtain a policy loan; cash surrender a policy; authorize a deduction from benefits or allotment from military retired pay to pay premiums; apply for and receive payment of the proceeds on a matured policy; select or change the premium payment option; apply for waiver of premiums; select or change the settlement option for beneficiaries; assign a beneficiary's interest as provided under section 1953 of title 38 U.S.C.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1944)

[56 FR 9627, Mar. 7, 1991. Redesignated at 61 FR 29025, June 7, 1996, as amended at 71 FR 28586, May 17, 2006]

## PART 7—SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' CIVIL RELIEF

### SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' CIVIL RELIEF ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1942

Sec.

- 7.2 Certification of military service.
- 7.3 The policy.
- 7.4 The premium.
- 7.5 Application.
- 7.6 Benefits.
- 7.7 Maturity.
- 7.8 Beneficiary or assignee.

AUTHORITY: 50 U.S.C. app. 511, 540–547, unless otherwise noted.

SOURCE: 13 FR 7103, Nov. 27, 1948, unless otherwise noted.

## 38 CFR Ch. I (7-1-25 Edition)

### SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' CIVIL RELIEF ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1942

#### § 7.2 Certification of military service.

(a) A statement over the signature of the Commanding Officer or a commissioned officer of equal or higher rank than the insured, on the insured's application, may be accepted as a certification that the insured is a person in the military service.

(b) If the insured is unavailable because of service, the application may be certified by the person who has custody of the insured's service record.

(c) If an application is submitted by a person designated by the insured or by the insured's beneficiary, the Department of Veterans Affairs will obtain from the service department evidence that the insured is a person in the military service.

(Authority 50 U.S.C. app. 547)

[61 FR 29026, June 7, 1996]

#### § 7.3 The policy.

(a) Any provision in a policy that may limit or eliminate a benefit other than the primary death benefit will not, because of such provision, place the policy outside the protection of the Act if it is otherwise eligible for protection.

(b) An annuity contract, if it provides payment of a substantial death benefit in the nature of life insurance, may be included within the provisions of the Act if otherwise eligible. Group insurance will not be included unless an individual and separate contract of insurance is completely released to the insured and thereafter comes within the provisions of the Act as a policy.

(c) The phrase *Face amount of insurance* as used in the regulations in this part will mean the amount of insurance payable as a death benefit; *Provided*, That any indebtedness, or any accruals (such as paid-up additions, dividend accumulations, etc.) that may be added to or taken from the amount payable as the death benefits will not be used in calculating the face amount of a policy.

[13 FR 7103, Nov. 27, 1948, as amended at 21 FR 7297, Sept. 25, 1956. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 29026, June 7, 1996]