

TDVS Benefits Bulletin
23-7

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This month's bulletin is 984 words and will take just under 4 minutes of your time.

1 big thing: TDVS Town Hall in Harriman, TN



The American Legion Post #53
624 Morgan Avenue, NE, Harriman, TN 37748

TDVS Updates

VetraSpec Working Group Updates

TDVS has established a VetraSpec Work Group to assess and recommend improvements to VetraSpec and its utilization to support consistent operations.

It includes representation from a broad variety of VetraSpec users –

- TDVS Leadership;
- TDVS Employees;
- County Service Officer Representatives from Each Region; and
- Representatives from TN County Veterans Service Officer Association.

It's been hard at work on issues like –

- VetraSpec Improvements – provided VetraSpec with recommendations for system improvements.
- Consistent Usage – collecting and disseminating best practices to enhance service to Veterans and improve efficiency.
- Imagining the Future – articulating what the perfect claims management system might look like and participating in system demonstrations.

Dig deeper: The Work Group along with your feedback are contributing to even more improvements.

- Imagining the Future – the Work Group helped produce a [Request for Information](#) – released July 5th – that will help us learn even more about how a claims management system of the future might support your advocacy.
- Fixes to VA Forms
 - 21-534EZ (Section IX, 9I-L (2) INCOME TYPE/SOURCE did not have a free text block to enter the “other” type of income; and
 - 21-2680 (Claimant DOB Did Not Populate in Printable VetraSpec Form)
- Adding Additional Forms to Support Survivors
 - SF1174 & DD2656-7

What's new: VetraSpec announced it will soon deploy a new release. TDVS is reviewing the release notes and how it might impact users.

More information to follow soon. At a minimum, once notified of successful deployment of the release, **all users must clear their cache after the deployment is complete, prior to logging in the following morning.**

Contact your [Regional Director](#) to learn more about your Region's representatives and how you can engage and offer feedback to ensure the claims management system meets your needs.

[TN Veterans Need Your Help](#)

TDVS is seeking information on VA's re-adjudication of claims for reimbursement of certain non-VA emergency medical expenses. If you have a client that may be impacted, please provide their VetraSpec ID [here](#).

What's this about: VA was ordered to readjudicate claims for reimbursement of medical expenses because of a class action filed in 2018 but has never completed them. Recent court action is seeking to compel VA to do so, and we want to ensure impacted Tennessee Veterans' claims are properly decided.

I need more:

- [History, Background and Recent Release](#) from the National Veterans Legal Services Program
- [Reimbursement of Emergency Medical Expenses Training](#) from TDVS Fall Training Conference 2020

Training Updates

What's next: Here's the training schedule for the remainder of the calendar year.

- August Lunch and Learn, August 9th, 11:30 to 12:30 p.m. CST
 - A Year in Review: PACT Act Implementation and VA Regional Office Progress
- September Lunch and Learn, September 13th, 11:30 to 12:30 p.m. CST
- Annual Conference, October 2nd – 4th, Knoxville, TN
- November Lunch and Learn, November 8th, 11:30 to 12:30 p.m. CST
- Annual Examination, November 17th **or** November 20th
- December Lunch and Learn, December 13th, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. CST
- [2023 Training Schedule](#)

PACT Act Toolbox – Updates

TDVS has created a [PACT Act Toolbox](#) to help you serve Tennessee Veterans and their families. It's an advocate's one-stop shop for all things PACT Act –

- VA Fact Sheets
- VA Web Resources
- TDVS Fact Sheet
- TDVS FAQs
- Bill Text, Summaries, and More
- Training Resources

What's new: Encourage eligible Veterans and survivors to apply for PACT Act benefits or do an intent to file by August 9, 2023. In many cases, if the claim is granted the Veteran or survivor will be eligible for retroactive benefits to August of 2022 – when the PACT Act became law.

Here's a [PACT VetFest Toolkit](#) that can help you educate Veterans and survivors in your communities.

VA and Veteran Benefit Updates

VBMS Update: eFolder Modernization & Smart Search

On June 25, 2023, **VA released eFolder Modernization and Smart Search functionality.** It is 2 parts –

- **Smart Search** which is an enhanced VBMS functionality that allows users the ability to search Veterans eFolders, without having to open them individually,
- **eFolder Modernization**, also known as the Claims Evidence user Interface, which is a modernized and updated version of the current VBMS eFolder – this presents no lost functionalities for end users.

Dig deeper: Here are several resources including a video to help you with the new look and feel.

- VA Quick Reference Guide, Fact Sheet and FAQ can be found [Here](#) > Job Aids > eFolder Modernization and Smart Search Functionality Deployment
- VA Video (8 min 26 sec) - you must log into the VA Desktop (PIV Card needed) and copy and paste to your favorite browser  [eFolder Modernization Claims Evidence UI and Smart Search Training.mp4](#) (right click over the link “copy hyperlink” > right click over browser address window in VA desktop browser “paste” and “enter”).

Practice Like a Pro

Self Service Fact Sheets

- More Self-Service Fact Sheets Coming Soon – Health Care, VA Debt, Complex Claims

Advocate Spotlight

Please join us in welcoming Tennessee's newest accredited representatives:

Keenan Carroll, Nashville Field Office
Tina Close, Benton
Deanna Day, TDVS
James Dozier, Murfreesboro Field Office
Ross Eggebeen, Davidson County
Daniel Franken, Shelby
Jonathan Garza, Cheatham
Brandon Gore, Murfreesboro Field Office
Ingrid Majid, Fort Campbell Field Office
Everett McKeown, Davidson County
Roxanne Sidwell, Overton
Colette Tozer, Cheatham
Brooke Wood, Hardin

Congratulations on your recent completion of TDVS's Accreditation Course and TDVS accreditation!

Do you have an advocacy success story or something you'd like to see included in an upcoming bulletin? If so, [share](#) for a future bulletin.

TDVS Benefits Bulletins Can Be Found on the [VSO Tools](#) Portion of TDVS's Website

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