

TDVS Benefits Bulletin
24-11

[TDVS Updates](#)

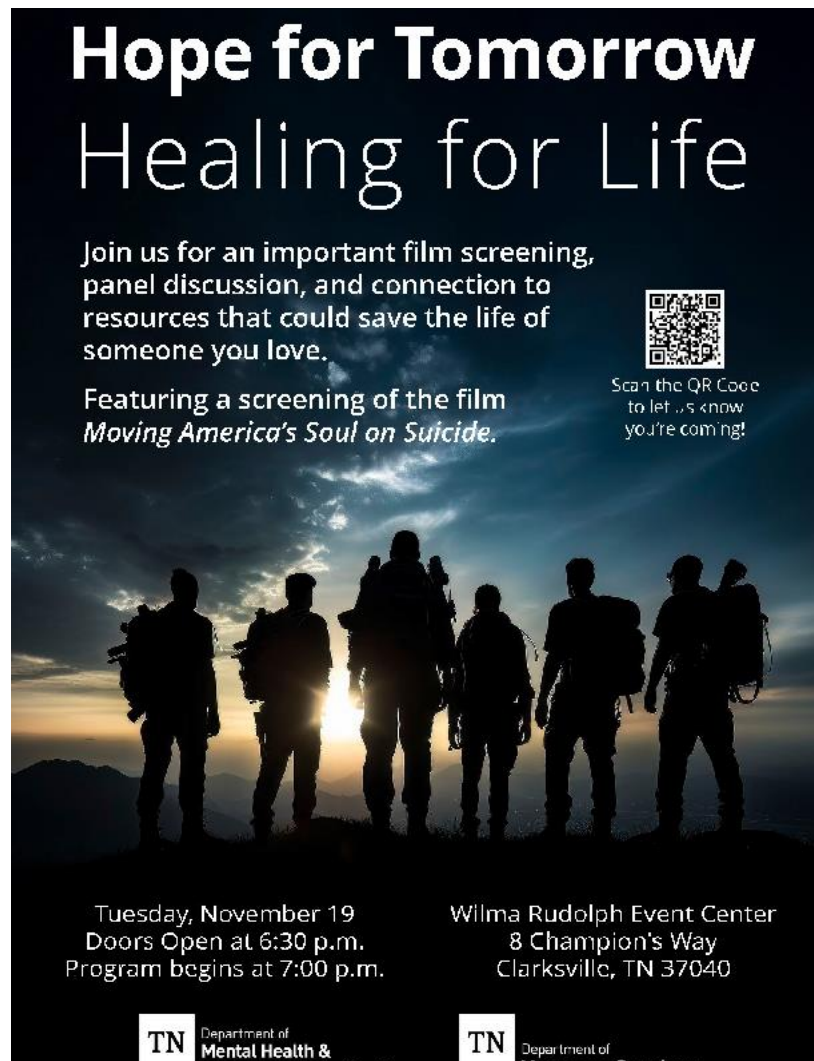
[VA and Veteran Benefit Updates](#)

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This month's bulletin is 1,337 words and will take just 5 ½ minutes of your time.

1 big thing: Moving America's Soul on Suicide



Hope for Tomorrow
Healing for Life

Join us for an important film screening, panel discussion, and connection to resources that could save the life of someone you love.

Featuring a screening of the film
Moving America's Soul on Suicide.

Scan the QR Code to let us know you're coming!


Tuesday, November 19
Doors Open at 6:30 p.m.
Program begins at 7:00 p.m.

Wilma Rudolph Event Center
8 Champion's Way
Clarksville, TN 37040

TN Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services




TN Department of Veterans Services

Join the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services for an important event around veteran suicide prevention.

The  November 19th event at the Wilma Rudolph Event Center in Clarksville will feature a film screening, panel discussion, and connection to resources that can save lives and strengthen our community. Let them us know you're coming: <https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/clarksville>.

TDVS Updates

TDVS' Knowledge Library

-  Added [10.15.2024 Tennessee CSO Contact Roster](#) – VSO Tools – Organizations
-  Added [Benefits Bulletin 24-10](#) – VSO Tools – TDVS Benefits Bulletin
-  Added [Prohibition of Accessing Personal Veteran Benefits Record](#) – VSO Tools – Job Aid

Training Updates

What's next: Here's the training schedule for the next several months:

- Annual Examination – Friday, November 15th **OR** Monday, November 18th – Virtual
- December Lunch & Learn – Wednesday, December 11, 2024 – Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Centerstone - Clarksville
- [2024 Training Schedule](#)
- January Mandatory Quarterly Accreditation Training
- February Lunch & Learn – Wednesday, February 12, 2025 – Complex Claim Assistance – Discharge Upgrades – Lessons Learned
- [2025 Training Schedule](#)

VA and Veteran Benefit Updates

Final Rule – Fee Reasonableness Reviews: Effect of Loss of Accreditation on Direct Payment

VA published a [final rule](#) in the Federal Register to address its process for reviewing, determining, and allocating reasonable fees for claim representation, and to address the effect on direct payment of the termination of a claims agent's or attorney's VA accreditation.

Why it matters: Over the past decade, there has been a steady increase in requests for fee reasonableness review, as well as claimants being represented by multiple agents or attorneys over the course of a case. The Office of General Counsel (OGC) has limited

resources to issue determinations on reasonable fees in all those cases. This has led to a backlog for all fee matters, which has delayed attorneys, agents, and claimants from promptly receiving their earned fees or benefits. To best ensure timely resolution of fee matters for all parties, it is appropriate to establish reasonable default allocation rules for fee matters.

Here's more:

- [Final Rule](#)
- [Federal Register](#)
- [Plain Language Summary Document](#)

👉 **Don't forget:** TDVS' [Accreditation Procedures](#) provide guidance, including counseling on fee agreements, for establishing Power of Attorney when a Veteran was previously represented by an attorney.

Notice – VA Reviewing Possible Link Between Kidney Cancer and PFAS

VA published a [notice of public comment and listening session](#) in the Federal Register announcing they will conduct a review to determine if kidney cancer should be considered a presumptive service-connected condition due to exposure to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

I need more:

- [Notice](#)
- [Federal Register](#)
- [VA Press Release](#)

VA Expands Tele-emergency Care

VA [announced](#) that tele-emergency care (tele-EC) is now available nationwide for veterans enrolled in VA health care.

Why it matters: This expansion of care — piloted in recent months — has already shown promise for Veterans, helping more than 61,182 callers with a 59.4% case resolution rate (meaning Veterans' needs were resolved without having to travel from their homes to urgent care or an emergency department).

Dig deeper: Tele-emergency care is a part of [VA Health Connect](#), a phone service that Veterans can call nationwide. Veterans who contact VA Health Connect will speak to a clinical triage nurse, who will connect them to tele-emergency care when clinically appropriate.

I need more:

- [VA Press Release](#)
- [VA Health Connect](#)

VA Grant Program – Legal Services to Veterans Seeking Discharge Upgrades

VA [proposed a new grant program](#) to organization providing legal services to Veterans for assistance in upgrading their military discharge status and characterization of discharge determinations.

👉 **Don't forget:** TDVS' has a partnership with NVLSP's Discharge Upgrade Assistance Program – Lawyers Serving Warriors® (LSW) Program – to support former service members seeking discharge upgrades. TDVS has seen a growing number of referrals since this partnership's roll out at April's Regional Trainings.

Dig deeper: TDVS has a liaison in place to support CSOs and VSOs who are assisting former service members with the Discharge Upgrade process – Lloyd Sharp. TDVS is not acting in place of the CSO or VSO but rather serves in a supporting role. As the liaison, Lloyd gives guidance regarding the LSW process and communicates with the LSW director when needed. The former service member remains the client of the CSO or VSO should the former service member need help gathering documents or other information requested for the LSW process.

Check out the updated fact sheet below for additional tips on how you can ensure your clients get the benefit of LSW screening.

I need more:

- [TDVS Fact Sheet V2 – Discharge Upgrades – November 2024](#)
- 📅 Save the Date - February Lunch & Learn – Wednesday, February 12, 2025 – Complex Claim Assistance – Discharge Upgrades -Lessons Learned

Practice Like a Pro

Claims Accuracy Request (CAR)

The Claim Accuracy Request (CAR) allows representatives opportunities to quickly identify significantly flawed decisions, and for VBA to expeditiously review and redetermine them.

[TDVS Benefits Bulletin 21-5](#) highlighted this program's expansion to State and County Service Officers. VA just launched Phase VI of the pilot and produced an [updated Job Aid for Representatives](#). Check out the fact sheet and job aid to learn how you can use this pilot program to practice like a pro.

I need more:

- [TDVS Fact Sheet V2 – Claim Accuracy Request \(CAR\) Pilot – November 2024](#)
- [Claim Accuracy Request \(CAR\) Job Aid for Representatives 10.01.2024 v.2](#)


Digits to Digits (D2D) Sunset

D2D has been sunset and is no longer a filing tool in VetraSpec. This SOP should provide everything you need to get started - [Benefits Claims – How to Use 08.10.2024](#) filing POA and ITF with Benefits Claims.

D2D is no longer available; use Benefits Claims

I need more: Here's your [one-stop shop](#) for all things VetraSpec Release 24-1. Check out --

- Release Notes Detailing Changes and New Features
- VA's Official communication Regarding the Move from D2D to Benefits Claims
- User Guide for Benefits Claims - Available to Users Who Currently Have D2D Access
- Instructions for Clearing Browser Cache

 Contact your Regional Director or the Appeals & Accreditation Division [Training Team](#) for Small Group Training.

Benefits Intake Delays

TDVS continues to engage VBA and solicit updates on benefits intake delays. Many of you have noticed and reported that VA is taking longer than normal to process forms and claims, which means you can't see these forms in VBMS.

For the past several months, the VA has been experiencing longer than normal processing times for claims. Claims may remain in "Success" status for several weeks. [Click here for more information.](#)

Why it matters: Although a successful filing message preserves an effective date, until a form or document is in VBMS a Veteran can't get accurate information from VA.gov or VA call centers regarding the status of a claim or appeal.

Tips and Tricks:

- A filing with the status of "Success" was successfully submitted to the VA and is going through the VA workflow.
- TDVS continues to adhere to the "Golden 24" – filing forms and documents you package within 24 hours.
 - BUT these forms and documents aren't appearing in VBMS for two weeks or longer.
- TDVS ensures VetraSpec's Direct Submit screen includes a [successful filing message](#) and preserves the earliest possible effective date.

Direct Submit Responses and Error Codes	
The GUID you see in the Status column is used by VA to track the submission internally. If you need to call VA about forms or documents sent using Direct Submit, you will need to give them this number.	
Status	Meaning
SENDING	VetraSpec has begun the transfer.
PENDING	VA has accepted the connection and the package is being transferred electronically.
UPLOADED	The package has been uploaded, but NOT yet processed or propagated to Centralized Mail.
RECEIVED	Indicates package has been successfully propagated to Centralized Mail.
PROCESSED	At this point the veteran's effective date of claim is protected. i.e. This is your datestamp.
SUCCESS	The package is being processed by VA systems.
VBMS	The package has been received, processed and is being moved where it needs to go within VA, but may not be in VBMS yet.
EXPIRED	The VA may keep claims in this status for up to two weeks. This may be the final status for some claims which the VA does not process in VBMS.
ERROR	The claim is in VBMS.
	There was a lag on the VA system and the submission was not accepted. You must resubmit the claim.
	DOC101 System error - email FD-VetraSpecSupport@fiterftech.com.
	DOC102 Bad vet data. Make sure the vet's name, VA claim number (if applicable), SSN and zip code are in the database. Make sure there are no letters in the VA claim number.
	DOC103 Detail: Invalid veteran name. eg empty invalid characters or too long Names must match the regular expression azaZ150. Solution: make sure there are no empty spaces at the beginning or end of the vet's first, middle or last name. Fix it on the Edit Vet screen and resubmit.
	DOC104 Invalid PDF content part. You tried to send something that was not a PDF. Only PDFs can be sent over Direct Submit.
	DOC105 Rejected by a VA system. The error detail will tell you which one.
	DOC106 Unknown sender. This can be an issue with VA systems. Wait a little while and resubmit. This can also happen if you didn't pick any forms or documents to send.
	DOC108 - Maximum page size exceeded. Limit is 21x21 in. Re-scan the PDF into smaller dimensions and resubmit.
	DOC201 Internal VA server error. Try again later.
	DOC202 Error in a VA system. The error detail will provide more information.

If you receive other error messages, feel free to email FD-VetraSpecSupport@fiterftech.com for an explanation.

- Do not repackage or refile forms or documents if there is a valid success message.
- Please wait at least 14 – 21 days to engage TDVS to check the status of a filing that has not appeared in VBMS.

I need more:

- Correspondence from VetraSpec – [Benefits Intake Delays](#) – Includes Tips to Avoid Delays

Advocate Spotlight

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

Melody Bierwirth, Tipton
Kristy Brogan, TDVS

Ryan Bumpers, Montgomery
William "Travis" Frost, McMinn
Carlos Gonzalez, Madison
Jackie Greenwood, Lincoln
Santana Jenkins, Sevier
Roberto Lasalle, Dickson
Daniel Moore, TDVS



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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