

CHANGES IN COMPENSATION AND PENSION EXAMINATION REPORTS

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) directive provides policy for making changes in Compensation and Pension (C&P) Examination Reports.
- 2. SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES:** None.
- 3. RELATED ISSUE:** None.
- 4. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The VHA Office of Health Informatics (10A7) is responsible for the content of this directive. Questions may be referred to VHAHIGHIMVASTaff@va.gov.
- 5. RESCISSIONS:** VHA Directive 2010-024, Changes in Compensation and Pension Examination Reports, dated June 2, 2010, is rescinded.
- 6. RECERTIFICATION:** This VHA directive is scheduled for recertification on or before the last working day of June 2023. This VHA directive will continue to serve as national policy until it is recertified or rescinded.

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CHANGES IN COMPENSATION AND PENSION EXAMINATION REPORTS

1. PURPOSE

This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) directive provides policy for making changes in Compensation and Pension (C&P) Examination Reports. Examination reports are completed by Veterans Health Administration (VHA) examination facilities located in the Compensation and Pension Record Interchange (CAPRI), and Text Integration Utility (TIU). These reports are automatically uploaded into the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS). **AUTHORITY:** Title 38 United States Code (U.S.C.) 5103A.

2. BACKGROUND

a. The Compensation and Pension Record Interchange (CAPRI) package is the official electronic communication mechanism between VHA and the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) for completed VHA C&P Examination Reports. The CAPRI application provides a graphical user interface (GUI). C&P examinations must be documented directly in the CAPRI GUI, or through a Text Integrated Utility (TIU) progress note. **NOTE:** *The official patient record of the C&P Examination Report resides in TIU.*

b. VHA clinical staff communicates examination findings to VBA through CAPRI. Once released by VHA, VBA retains a copy of the examination report and uses that copy to adjudicate Veterans' disability claims. The VBA copy of the examination report is contained in the Veterans claim file.

c. Changes to existing documentation related to the C&P examination must be made in accordance with the Privacy Act and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule; however, a critical communication gap exists because VBA is not electronically alerted to any changes made to C&P examinations in CAPRI after the original version of the completed examination is available in CAPRI. Any changes made to a C&P examination report must be coordinated with the appropriate VA Regional Office for action to ensure VBA is aware of the change, as it could affect the disability rating decision. **NOTE:** *VHA communication with VBA is critical since changes to examination reports may significantly affect the outcome of a disability rating decision.*

3. DEFINITIONS

a. **Compensation and Pension Examination.** Where there is a claim for disability compensation or pension but medical evidence accompanying the claim is not adequate for rating purposes, a Department of Veterans Affairs examination will be authorized. An accurate and fully descriptive medical examination may be required, with emphasis upon the limitation of activity imposed by the disabling condition. See 38 CFR 3.326, 4.1.

b. **Compensation and Pension Record Interchange.** The compensation and pension record interchange (CAPRI) is a joint information technology initiative of the VHA and VBA that improves service to disabled Veterans and Servicemembers by providing online access to medical data – enhancing the timeliness of access to medical results resulting in more efficient and judicious benefits determination.

c. **Graphical User Interface.** The graphical user interface (GUI) is a graphical (rather than purely textual) user interface to a computer.

d. **Text Integration Utility.** The text integration utility (TIU) is a set of software tools to manage clinical documents.

4. POLICY

It is VHA policy that any changes to C&P Examination Reports must be transmitted by VHA to VBA using the official communication mechanism, CAPRI, to ensure VBA is notified of changes in the evidentiary record. ***NOTE: This requirement applies to all C&P examinations whether they reside in TIU and CAPRI. If an examination is modified in TIU, it must also be modified in CAPRI to ensure that the updates are transmitted to VBA.***

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **Under Secretary for Health.** The Under Secretary for Health is responsible for ensuring overall VHA compliance with this directive.

b. **Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management.** The Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management is responsible for:

(1) Communicating the contents of this directive to each of the Veterans Integrated Services Networks (VISNs);

(2) Ensuring that each VISN Director has the sufficient resources to fulfill the terms of this directive in all of the VHA health facilities within that VISN; and

(3) Providing oversight of VISNs to assure compliance with this directive, relevant standards, and applicable regulations.

c. **Veterans Integrated Service Network Director.** Each VISN Director is responsible for ensuring that all VHA facility directors complete the C&P examination requirements set forth under this directive.

d. **VA Medical Facility Director.** The VA medical facility Director is responsible for ensuring the storage of C&P Examination Reports. C&P Examination Reports must be stored within VA's electronic health record. When these reports are stored in TIU, a copy must additionally be placed in CAPRI for transmittal to VBA. If a C&P Examination Report has been released by the VHA facility to VBA through CAPRI, any subsequent

changes made to the report in TIU must be transmitted to VBA and made available in CAPRI.

e. **Chief, Health Information Management and Privacy Officer.**

(1) **Administrative Corrections.** Administrative corrections or updates (e.g., date of birth) made to C&P Examination Reports must be modified and processed by the Chief, Health Information Management, Privacy Officer, or qualified designee. These changes must be minor and not affect the results or findings of the clinical examination. Prior to any administrative correction or update, the Chief, Health Information Management, Privacy Officer, or qualified designee, must ascertain whether this C&P examination report has been disclosed to the patient or other third-party and if notification to these individuals would be required. Any changes made to a C&P Examination Report must be coordinated with VBA and the appropriate VA Regional Office for action to ensure consistency. Whether the report resides only in CAPRI or in TIU, a copy of any changed examination must be sent to all third party (i.e., non-VA) requestors who have previously received the original document prior to its amendment, in accordance with HIPAA and the Privacy Act.

(2) **Amendment Requests.**

(a) A request from a Veteran to amend a C&P Examination Report must be in writing and submitted by the Veteran to the Privacy Officer at the VHA health care facility that performed the examination. Upon receipt, the VHA Privacy Officer, or designee, notifies the VBA Privacy Officer that an amendment request has been received. Amendment requests are processed by VHA for all C&P examinations in accordance with VHA Directive 1605.01, Privacy and Release of Information, dated August 31, 2016, or subsequent policy. VHA uses standard letter templates for the Privacy Officer, or designee, notify the Veteran whether the request for amendment has been granted or denied. The VHA Privacy Officer, or designee, forwards a completed amendment packet to the VBA Privacy Officer, or designee. VHA and VBA are both responsible for providing all parties to whom they have previously released the C&P Examination Report a corrected version of the report.

(b) If a request from a Veteran to amend a C&P Examination Report is received by the Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office (VARO), the request must be forwarded immediately to the attention of the Privacy Officer at the VHA health care facility that performed the examination. The corresponding Privacy Officer can be located through:

<https://vaww.vets.vaco.portal.va.gov/sites/privacy/vhapo/Pages/default.aspx>. **NOTE:** *This is an internal VA Web site that is not available to the public.*

(3) **Addenda Completed.** On occasion, the original author, or other clinicians, must addend a completed C&P examination record in TIU that has been released to VBA through CAPRI (e.g., a laboratory value may return late or a mistake may be detected in the original report). The addendum must be processed according to local guidance, signed, and reported to the Chief, Health Information Management, Privacy

Officer, or qualified designee, through a locally-established process. The Chief, Health Information Management, Privacy Officer, or qualified designee, ensures CAPRI is updated with the addendum and VBA is provided with a corrected copy of the report, which includes the new information.

(4) **Reissue Changed Examination.** Whether the report resides only in CAPRI or in TIU, a copy of any changed examination must be sent to all third party (non-VA) requestors who have previously received the original document prior to its amendment.

f. **VHA Health Care Provider.** A VHA health care provider correcting a C&P Examination is responsible for notifying the Chief, Health Information Management or designee to make the needed modification.

6. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

a. Recommended training includes Practice Brief 2, Requests for Amendments under the Privacy Law, available at:

https://vaww.vha.vaco.portal.va.gov/sites/HDI/HIM/vaco_HIM/subsite5/subsite3/Practice%20Briefs/Forms/AllItems.aspx?InitialTabId=Ribbon%2ERead&VisibilityContext=WSSTabPersistence. **NOTE:** This is an internal VA Web site that is not available to the public.

b. Recommended training includes Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS) Corrections, available at:

https://vaww.vha.vaco.portal.va.gov/sites/HDI/HIM/vaco_HIM/subsite5/subsite3/Health%20Record%20Resources/CPRS/file_560e9b960df3f_20150925_Final%20Lync%20Meeting%20CPRS%20Corrections.pptx. **NOTE:** This is an internal VA Web site that is not available to the public.

7. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

All records regardless of format (paper, electronic, electronic systems) created by this directive shall be managed per the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) approved records schedules found in VA Records Control Schedule 10-1. If you have any questions regarding any aspect of records management you should contact your facility Records Manager or your Records Liaison.

8. REFERENCES

- a. HIPAA (Public Law 104-191), implemented by 45 CFR Parts 160 and 164.
- b. The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552, implemented by VA at 38 CFR 1.550-1.562.
- c. The Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a, implemented by VA at 38 CFR 1.575-1.582.

d. VHA Directive 1605.01, Privacy and Release of Information, dated August 31, 2016, or subsequent policy.

e. VHA Handbook 1907.01, Health Information Management and Health Records, dated March 19, 2015, or subsequent policy.