

to defray the expenses of care and VA may exempt the Veteran from the requirement to pay copayments for hospital or outpatient care. In addition, section 103 of Public Law 117-168, titled the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022, amended title 38 U.S.C. 1710(e)(3) by expanding the health care eligibility benefit for Veterans who participated in a toxic exposure risk activity (TERA) while serving on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training.

This collection of information is required to properly administer health benefits to eligible Veterans.

a. VA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Health Benefits, is used to collect Veteran information during the initial application process for VA medical care, nursing home, domiciliary, dental benefits, etc. Updates were made to this form pursuant to section 103 of the PACT Act to collect additional information in the Military Service section for the expanded TERA health care eligibility benefit. Corresponding changes were made to the Instructions and Definitions sections.

b. VA Form 10-10EZR, Health Benefits Update Form, is used to update a Veteran's personal information, such as marital status, address, health insurance and financial information, for renewal of health benefits. Updates were made to this form pursuant to section 103 of the PACT Act to collect additional information in the Military Service section for the expanded TERA health care eligibility benefit. Corresponding changes were made to the Instructions and Definitions sections.

c. VA Form 10-10HS, Request for Hardship Determination, is used to collect information from Veterans who are in a copay required status for hospital care and medical services, but due to a loss of income project their income for the current year will be substantially below the VA means test limits. No updates were made to this form.

These forms collect information to enroll a Veteran for health benefits, establish basic eligibility, determine TERA benefit eligibility, identify 3rd party health insurance coverage, identify prescription copayment, provide for income verification, and serve as a mechanism to make changes upon admission for benefits or yearly financial updates.

Total Annual Burden: 703,300 hours.

Total Annual Responses: 1,406,000.

VA Form 10-10EZ

Affected Public: Individuals and households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 315,000 hours.

Estimated Average Burden per Respondent: 35 minutes.

Frequency of Response: Annually.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 540,000.

VA Form 10-10EZR

Affected Public: Individuals and households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 386,550 hours.

Estimated Average Burden per Respondent: 27 minutes.

Frequency of Response: Annually.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 859,000.

VA Form 10-10HS

Affected Public: Individuals and households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 1,750 hours.

Estimated Average Burden per Respondent: 15 minutes.

Frequency of Response: Annually.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 7,000.

By direction of the Secretary.

Maribel Aponte,

VA PRA Clearance Officer, Office of Enterprise and Integration/Data Governance Analytics, Department of Veterans Affairs.

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Revised VA Tribal Consultation Policy and Directive 8603

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs (OPIA), Office of Tribal Government Relations (OTGR), has updated their policy and directive on VA Tribal Consultation, in accordance with Executive Order 13175 and Presidential Memorandum January 2021. We request that tribal leaders or their designees review the final directive/policy and provide any additional feedback.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before April 22, 2024.

ADDRESSES: Comments must be submitted through www.regulations.gov. Except as provided below, comments received before the close of the comment period will be available at www.regulations.gov for public viewing, inspection, or copying, including any personally identifiable or confidential business information that is included in a comment. We post the comments received before the close of the comment period on www.regulations.gov as soon as possible after they have been received. VA will not post on Regulations.gov public comments that make threats to individuals or institutions or suggest that the commenter will take actions to harm the individual. VA encourages individuals not to submit duplicative comments; however, we will post comments from multiple unique commenters even if the content is identical or nearly identical to other comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Veronica Duncan, Tribal Relations Specialist, 202-461-7431, 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20420. (This is not a toll-free number.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: VA has gathered tribal input on the policy through a March 2021 Dear Tribal Leader Letter requesting written comments, a series of six tribal consultation meetings held in April 2021, and a review of the policy by VA's Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs. VA has reviewed all input received through this engagement and proposes several edits to the Tribal Consultation Policy in response to the tribal recommendations deemed feasible to implement. VA Directive 8603 on Consultation and Communication with Federally Recognized Indian Tribes can be found at: www.va.gov/vapubs/search_action.cfm?dType=1.

Signing Authority

Denis McDonough, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, approved and signed this document on March 18, 2024, 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.

Jeffrey M. Martin,

Assistant Director, Office of Regulation Policy & Management, Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs.

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