

**Vet Center Services: Readjustment Counseling
RIN 2900-AN92**

OMB FORM 2900-XXXX

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection of information.

Proposed § 17.2000(b) contains a collection of information that would allow a veteran to submit a copy of a DD-214 or other appropriate documentation as evidence that the veteran received a medal that would serve as the basis for establishing his or her eligibility to receive readjustment counseling. Receipt of one of the listed medals will be accepted as evidence to establish eligibility for readjustment counseling. The provisions of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 makes certain that current members of the Armed Forces who served on active duty in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom are eligible for the readjustment counseling that VA currently provides to Veterans and members of their immediate families. In addition, regulation will authorize Vet Centers to provide referral and advice to individuals who are not otherwise eligible for such counseling, and served in a theater of combat operations or in an area during a period of hostilities in that area, in accordance with the 2010 Act.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purposes the information is to be used; indicate actual use the agency has made of the information received from current collection.

The proposed rule at § 17.2000(b) would allow a veteran to submit a copy of a DD-214 or other appropriate documentation as evidence that the veteran received a medal that would serve as the basis for establishing his or her eligibility to receive readjustment counseling.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

Improved information technology will not decrease the burden on the public.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

VA does not have a similar collection of information because regulations that govern Vet Center services are created by the proposed rulemaking.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

The collection of information does not impact small businesses or other small entities.

6. Describe the consequences to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

VA would not be able to provide readjustment counseling to servicemembers, veterans, or members of the immediate family of the servicemembers or the veteran.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted more often than quarterly or require respondents to prepare written responses to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it; submit more than an original and two copies of any document; retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years; in connection with a statistical survey that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study and require the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB.

There are no such special circumstances.

8. a. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the sponsor's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the sponsor in responses to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

The notice of Proposed Information Collection Activity was published in the Federal Register on March 13, 2012 (Volume 77, Number 49, Pages 14707-14712). We received no comments in response to this notice.

b. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure or reporting format, and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed or reported. Explain any circumstances which preclude consultation every three years with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained.

Outside consultation is conducted with the public through the 60- and 30-day Federal Register notices.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payment or gift is provided to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of privacy, to the extent permitted by law, provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

This information will not include Protected Health Information (PHI) or Individually Identifiable Health Information (IIHI).

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature (Information that, with a reasonable degree of medical certainty, is likely to have a serious adverse effect on an individual's mental or physical health if revealed to him or her), such as

sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private; include specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimate of the hour burden of the collection of information:

a. The number of respondents, frequency of responses, annual hour burden, and explanation for each form is reported as follows:

| No. of respondents | x No. of responses | Number of Hours |
|---|---------------------------|--|
| 57,000 veterans or active duty service members | 1 time per year | No more than 1 hour to locate and scan the appropriate documentation into the veteran's record. |

b. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB 83-I.

This request covers only one information collection.

c. Provide estimates of annual cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included in Item 14.

VA does not require any additional recordkeeping. There is no cost to the respondents for completing the information collection.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).

There is no anticipated recordkeeping burden.

14. Provide estimates of annual cost to the Federal Government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operation expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies also may aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.

There is no anticipated recordkeeping burden.

15. Explain the reason for any burden hour changes or adjustments reported in items 13 or 14 of the OMB form 83-1.

This is a new collection and all burden hours are considered a program increase.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

VA does not intend to publish this data.

17. If seeking approval to omit the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

VA is not seeking approval to omit the expiration.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions," of OMB 83-I.

There are no exceptions.

B. Employing Statistical Methods

The data collection does not employ statistical methods.