



Marine Corps League

15 Mar 24

From: Tom Mueller, Cpl Richard Scott Haymes, Detachment #1393
To: National Executive Director/COO//MCL
National Judge Advocate//MCL

Subj: Proposed National Administrative Procedures (NAP) Amendment

In accordance with the NAP, Chapter TEN, Section 10020, the following is submitted for consideration by the body assembled at the 2024 National Convention.

IRT: NAP Sections 3055, 3060, 3065, 3095, and 10035.

CURRENT:

Section 3055. National Director of Veterans Service

- E. Oversee all Veterans' Administration activities of the MCL.
- I. Participate in National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO) conference and one (1) class to network and keep current on Veterans Affairs (VA) activities.

Section 3060. National Accredited Veterans Service Officer (VSO) (Not a National Position.)

- A. As a National Accredited VSO, you must have the sponsorship of a State or County Veterans Affairs (VA) to gain access to the VA intranet to process claims. You will be responsible to process claims within the MCL that are forwarded or presented to you by a Detachment/Department Service Officer in your area. You will be expected to complete all paperwork and follow up with the veteran at all stages of the process. You will provide quarterly reports of cases you are working on. To qualify as a National Accredited VSO, you must:
 - 1. Seek the approval of your department commandant.
 - 2. Provide in writing a letter from your commandant recommending you for the position of National Veterans Service Officer.
 - 3. Must be regular member of the MCL.
 - 4. Complete VSO training and provide resume of prior experience.
 - 5. Complete VA Application for Accreditation as Service Organization Representative (VA Form 21).

6. Secure an office at the VA to meet with Veterans, provide hours and contact information.
7. Send all the above to the National Director of Veterans Service (MCL National Office).
8. Complete “TRIP” training; Training, Responsibility, Involvement and Preparation of Claims.
9. Pass a background check by Office of Personnel Management (OPM).
10. To maintain your accreditation, provide a quarterly report of contact with veterans and their progress to the department and MCL National.
11. If any grants or monies are received, an annual audit/financial review must be performed, and copies given to MCL department and MCL National Office.
12. Complete continuing education training every three (3) years and send copies along with a new Form 21 to National Director of Veterans Services (MCL National Office)
13. Be prepared to assist National Office in continuing education classes for the detachment/department.
14. Will always follow the rules and requirements prescribed by National MCL.

Section 3065. Detachment/Department Service Officer (DSO) (Not a National Position)

A. As a DSO, you have immediate access to a group of qualified veterans who may all rate some type of VA Benefits. That group is your detachment; all are honorably discharged (or general under honorable conditions) Marines, Navy FMF Corpsman, or Navy FMF Chaplains who deserve to have all their benefits explained to them. To assist your detachment members, you need to become a detachment or a department service officer. Listed below is a brief description of the necessary steps and description of a DSO;

1. Seek the approval of your detachment/department commandant.
2. Provide in writing a letter from your commandant recommending you for the position of DSO.
3. Be a regular member of detachment/department.
4. Take a Veteran Service Officer’s training.
5. Complete VA Application for Accreditation as Service Organization Representative (VA Form 21).

6. Connect with a County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) or State Veterans Service Officer (SVSO) who holds a cross-accreditation with the Marine Corps League to process your veterans' paperwork.
7. If your local county or state office does not have a VSO who is cross accredited, have them complete a VA Form 21 and provide certification of their training and letter from their supervisor to and the MCL National Director of Veterans Service for "cross-accreditation" processing.
8. If you are in an area with a MCL National accredited VSO, i.e., Michigan or Ohio, you will pass paperwork to an MCL Nationally accredited VSO for processing.
9. Ensure you are on the mailing list for county and state veterans job fairs; veterans outreach programs and workshops as well as education and job opportunities for veterans.
10. Create a library of pertinent VA forms and then begin to schedule meetings with each of your detachment members to determine their individual needs.
11. Ensure that your detachment/department commandants are aware of your need to maintain a concurrent training program and to establish a budget allowing you to complete required continuing education every three years.
12. Must always follow the rules and requirements prescribed by the MCL.
13. Please direct any questions to National Director of Veterans Services at MCL National Office.

Section 3095. National Veterans Affairs Volunteer Service (VAVS) Representative

- A. Maintain contact with the Department of Veterans Affairs VAVS staff for the purpose of keeping abreast of the changes in policies and procedures pertaining to the VAVS program.
- E. Receive and compile comprehensive VAVS program activity reports from the various participating departments and detachments and provide copies to the National BOT and Department of Veterans Affairs.
- G. Attend annual VAVS meetings conducted by the Department of Veterans Affairs for the representatives and deputies of participating organizations within the approved budget.

Section 10035. Blanket Bond

- K. National Director of Veterans' Service

PROPOSED:

Section 3055. National Director of Veterans Service

- E. Oversee all U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) activities of the MCL.
- I. Participate in National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO) conference and one (1) class to network and keep current on VA activities.

Section 3060. National Accredited Veteran Service Officer (VSO) (Not a National Position.) AS a National Accredited VSO, you must have the approval of the VA to gain access to the VA intranet to process claims that are forwarded or presented to you by a Detachment/Department Service Officer. You will be expected to complete all paperwork and follow up with the veteran at all stages of the process and provide quarterly reports of cases you are processing. To serve as a National Accredited VSO, you must:

- A. Provide a letter from your department commandant to the National Director of Veterans Service recommending you for the position of National VSO.
- B. Be a regular member in good standing of the MCL.
- C. Complete VSO training and provide resume of prior experience.
- D. Complete VA Form 21, *Application for Accreditation as Service Organization Representative*.
- E. Secure a VA Regional office or consolidated work site to meet with claimants, provide hours and contact information.
- F. Send all the above to the National Director of Veterans Service (MCL National Office).
- G. Complete Training, Responsibility, Involvement and Preparation of Claims (TRIP) training and provide the certificate of completion to the National Director of Veterans Service.
- H. Pass a background check by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.
- I. Provide quarterly reports of contact with veterans and their progress to the department and National Director of Veterans Service to maintain your accreditation.
- J. Perform an annual audit/financial review when any grants or monies are received and provide copies of the audit/review to the department and National Director of Veterans Service.
- K. Complete all assigned continuing education training every three (3) years and send copies along with a new VA Form 21 to the National Director of Veterans Service.

L. Assist the National Director of Veterans Service in continuing education classes for the detachment/department.

M. Follow the policies and procedures prescribed by the VA and the MCL.

Section 3065. Detachment/Department Service Officer (DSO) (Not a National Position.) As a DSO, you have immediate access to a group of qualified veterans who may rate VA benefits. That group is your detachment: all are honorably discharged (or general under honorable conditions) Marines, Navy FMF Corpsman, or Navy FMF Chaplains who deserve to have their benefits explained to them. The DSO is important to the success of the MCL Veterans Service Program, but your role is limited. To serve as a DSO, you must:

A. Provide a letter from your detachment/department commandant to the National Director of Veterans Service recommending you for the position of DSO.

B. Be a member in good standing of a detachment/department.

C. Have a fundamental understanding of both Federal and state benefits for veterans, dependents, and survivors, and the VA claims process.

D. Connect with a MCL, county, or state VSO who holds an accreditation or cross-accreditation with the MCL to process your veterans' paperwork.

E. Ensure you are on the mailing list for county and state veterans job fairs, veterans outreach programs and workshops, as well as education and job opportunities for veterans.

F. Create a library of pertinent VA forms and meet regularly with your detachment members to determine their individual needs.

G. Ensure that your detachment/department commandants are aware of your need to maintain a training program and establish a budget that will allow you to complete continuing education to maintain currency in veterans' benefits.

H. Follow the policies and procedures prescribed by the VA and the MCL.

I. Direct VA benefits questions to a MCL National VSO or the National Director of Veterans Service.

Section 3095. National Veterans Affairs Volunteer Service (VAVS) Representative

A. Maintain contact with the VA VAVS staff for the purpose of keeping abreast of the changes in policies and procedures pertaining to the VAVS program.

E. Receive and compile comprehensive VAVS program activity reports from the various participating departments and detachments and provide copies to the National BOT and VA.

G. Attend annual VAVS meetings conducted by the VA for the representatives and deputies of participating organizations within the approved budget.

Section 10035. Blanket Bond

K. National Director of Veterans Service

JUSTIFICATION:

Proposed section 3055 et. seq. - The official name of the agency is “U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs” and its abbreviation is “VA”. (Source: <https://www.usa.gov/agencies/u-s-department-of-veterans-affairs>). The Government Printing Office (GPO) Style Manual provides that [a]bbreviations ... should be followed in the text by the spelled-out forms in parentheses the first time they occur” and “spaces are omitted after initials used as shortened names of governmental agencies” (pages 221-222). The proposed changes herein use the official title for the Department of Veterans Affairs, and consistent use of the abbreviation “VA” thereafter.

Proposed sections 3060 and 3065 - As a best practice, when there is a section A, there must be a section B; when there is a subsection 1, there must be a subsection 2, etc. Since the two sections did not have a subsection B, the proposed change reformats sections 3060 and 3065 to align with this practice, which also agrees with other sections in the NAP, e.g., sections 3045, 3050, 3055.

Proposed section 3060 - Removes the requirement to obtain VA “sponsorship” and replaces it with the intent: obtaining access to the VA intranet to process claims. This proposed change also simplifies the text of section 3060 for ease of reading.

Proposed sections 3060 and 3065 - Remove the explicit requirement to seek the approval of a commandant to become a VSO or DSO since approval is inherent when a letter recommends the member for the position of a National VSO or DSO, proposed sections 3060A and 3065A, respectively.

Proposed section 3060B - Corrects the syntax, i.e., removes the double “must”, and adds the requirement for the member to be in good standing.

Proposed section 3060E - Eliminates the requirement to secure an office at VA; however, the VSO must still secure a space that safeguards a veteran’s personal and private information.

Proposed section 3060G - Consistent with the GPO Style Manual, the abbreviation “TRIP” follows the text the first time it appears and clarifies that the TRIP certificate of completion is sent to the National Director of Veterans Service.

Proposed section 3060H - Consistent with proposed section 3055, adds “U.S.” before Office of Personnel Management and removes “(OPM)” because it is not used elsewhere in the NAP.

Proposed section 3060J – Replaces the passive voice in current section 3060A.11 with active voice.

Proposed section 3060K - Replaces “Form 21” in current section 3060A.12 with “VA Form 21” and clarifies that the form is sent to the National Director of Veterans Service.

Proposed sections 3060M and 3065H - Clarify that the VSO must comply with VA and MCL policy and procedures.

Proposed section 3065B - In contrast with proposed section 3060B, which specifies a VSO must be a *regular* member (emphasis added), proposed section 3065B includes DSO eligibility to associate members of a detachment/department.

Proposed section 3065 - Removes the requirement for a DSO to take VSO training, complete VA Form 21, and provide VA Form 21 to a county or state VSO to apply for MCL cross accreditation. A DSO is a support role internal to the MCL and cannot represent claimants before the VA, and therefore are an unnecessary requirement. Although the proposed section removes the requirement for a DSO to take VSO training, the proposed section specifies a DSO must possess a fundamental knowledge of veterans’ benefits, which can be obtained through VSO training or other means.

Proposed section 3065I - Limits the scope of questions from “any” to “VA benefits” and includes the MCL VSO within the DSO’s chain of command.

Proposed section 3095 - Makes consistent use of the abbreviation “VA”.

Proposed section 10035 - Removes the apostrophe (’) on the word, “veterans”.

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas G. Mueller

Thomas G. Mueller
Member

Copy to:
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