



PRESS RELEASE

Vietnam Veterans of America

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VVA Calls on President to Reverse the VA's Removal of the "48-Hour Review Policy"

(Washington, D.C.)--On April 7, the Department of Veterans Affairs informed Veterans Service Organizations of an April 1 policy change ending the "48-hour review policy." The discontinued 48-hour review policy allowed for a window of two days for the veteran service officers to review the veteran's disability claim for accuracy prior to sending it to the veteran.

"While every other governmental body in the nation is working hard to ensure that Americans are spared undue hardship during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Veterans Affairs is doing just the opposite, making this damaging policy decision amid the chaos of the pandemic" said John Rowan, Vietnam Veterans of America National President.

"That's why we're asking for President Trump's immediate intervention to reverse this recent VA decision that could severely impact the mental health and financial security of disabled veterans while they're being asked to stay home."

"Our Veteran Service Officers routinely find errors during this 48-hour window, which allows them to work with the VA to make corrections so that the veterans do not receive improper claims decisions," noted Rowan. "Errors range from the VA's failure to acknowledge documented combat experience to its failure to recognize the veteran experiences suicidal thoughts."

Correcting an improper negative decision before it is received by the veteran protects the veteran from having to file an appeal--which results in an extended delay in receiving benefits and adds to the backlog of claims—as well as saving the veteran from the the emotional distress of feeling like their service and sacrifice are not recognized and valued by the country they served.

"The President said last week at his daily COVID-19 Taskforce press conference 'We're making every effort to provide relief to our great veterans,' but since then, the VA has told veterans that it's doing just the opposite," continued Rowan. "Please, President Trump, step in now and direct the VA to preserve the 48-hour review policy."