

Public Law 117–303
117th Congress

An Act

To improve coordination between the Veterans Health Administration and the Veterans Benefits Administration with respect to claims for compensation arising from military sexual trauma, and for other purposes.

Dec. 27, 2022
[H.R. 7335]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “MST Claims Coordination Act”.

SEC. 2. VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION AND VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION COORDINATION FOR CERTAIN CLAIMS ARISING FROM MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.

(a) COORDINATED PROVISION OF MATERIALS.—

(1) REQUIRED MATERIALS.—During or immediately after each covered event, and together with each covered document, in a claim for compensation arising from military sexual trauma experienced by a covered individual, the Under Secretary for Benefits of the Veterans Benefits Administration, in coordination with the Under Secretary for Health of the Veterans Health Administration, shall provide, to the covered individual—

- (A) outreach letters;
- (B) information on the Veterans Crisis Line;
- (C) information on how to make an appointment with a mental health provider; and
- (D) other information on available resources relating to military sexual trauma (including information on military sexual trauma coordinators of the Veterans Health Administration, mental health providers trained in military sexual trauma issues, and peer support specialists).

(2) FORMAT OF MATERIALS.—Materials described in paragraph (1) may be provided electronically.

(b) AUTOMATIC NOTIFICATION SYSTEM.—In a claim for compensation arising from military sexual trauma experienced by a veteran, if the veteran is enrolled in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, and consents to the notification system under this subsection, the Under Secretary for Benefits shall automatically notify the Under Secretary for Health shortly before the veteran—

- (1) participates in any covered event; or
- (2) receives any covered document.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall implement this Act not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

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38 USC 1166
note.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “compensation” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) The term “covered document” means a determination (including a rating determination) that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs provides to the claimant in connection with a claim for compensation.

(3) The term “covered event” includes, with respect to a claim for compensation—

(A) a medical examination under section 5103A of title 38, United States Code;

(B) a hearing before the Board of Veterans’ Appeals under section 7107 of such title; and

(C) any other event determined relevant by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(4) The term “covered individual” means a former member of the Armed Forces (as that term is defined in section 1720D of title 38, United States Code) who elects to receive materials under subsection (a).

(5) The term “military sexual trauma” has the meaning given that term in section 1166 of title 38, United States Code.

(6) The term “Veterans Crisis Line” means the toll-free hotline for veterans established under section 1720F(h) of title 38, United States Code.

Approved December 27, 2022.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 7335:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 168 (2022):

May 18, considered and passed House.

Dec. 19, considered and passed Senate.

