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38 CFR Ch. I (7-1-08 Edition)

§ 1.578 [Reserved]

§ 1.579 Amendment of records.

(a) Any individual may request amendment of any Department of Veterans Affairs record pertaining to him or her. Not later than 10 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) after the date or receipt of such request, the Department of Veterans Affairs will acknowledge in writing such receipt. The Department of Veterans Affairs will complete the review to amend or correct a record as soon as reasonably possible, normally within 30 days from the receipt of the request (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) unless unusual circumstances preclude completing action within that time. The Department of Veterans Affairs will promptly either:

(1) Correct any part thereof which the individual believes is not accurate, relevant, timely or complete; or

(2) Inform the individual of the Department of Veterans Affairs refusal to amend the record in accordance with his or her request, the reason for the refusal, the procedures by which the individual may request a review of that refusal by the Secretary or designee, and the name and address of such official.

(Authority: 5 U.S.C. 552a(d)(2))

(b) The administration or staff office having jurisdiction over the records involved will establish procedures for reviewing a request from an individual concerning the amendment of any record or information pertaining to the individual, for making a determination on the request, for an appeal within the Department of Veterans Affairs of an initial adverse Department of Veterans Affairs determination, and for whatever additional means may be necessary for each individual to be able to exercise fully, his or her right under 5 U.S.C. 552a.

(1) Headquarters officials designated as responsible for the amendment of records or information located in Central Office and under their jurisdiction include, but are not limited to: Secretary; Deputy Secretary, as well as other appropriate individuals responsible for the conduct of business within

the various Department of Veterans Affairs administrations and staff offices. These officials will determine and advise the requester of the identifying information required to relate the request to the appropriate record, evaluate and grant or deny requests to amend, review initial adverse determinations upon request, and assist requesters desiring to amend or appeal initial adverse determinations or learn further of the provisions for judicial review.

(2) The following field officials are designated as responsible for the amendment of records or information located in facilities under their jurisdiction, as appropriate: The Director of each Center, Domiciliary, Medical Center, Outpatient Clinic, Regional Office, Supply Depot, and Regional Counsels. These officials will function in the same manner at field facilities as that specified in the preceding subparagraph for headquarters officials in Central Office.

(Authority: 5 U.S.C. 552a(f)(4))

(c) Any individual who disagrees with the Department of Veterans Affairs refusal to amend his or her record may request a review of such refusal. The Department of Veterans Affairs will complete such review not later than 30 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) from the date on which the individual request such review and make a final determination unless, for good cause shown, the Secretary extends such 30-day period. If, after review, the Secretary or designee also refuses to amend the record in accordance with the request the individual will be advised of the right to file with the Department of Veterans Affairs a concise statement setting forth the reasons for his or her disagreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs refusal and also advise of the provisions for judicial review of the reviewing official's determination. (5 U.S.C. 552a(g)(1)(A))

(d) In any disclosure, containing information about which the individual has filed a statement of disagreement, occurring after the filing of the statement under paragraph (c) of this section, the Department of Veterans Affairs will clearly note any part of the

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record which is disputed and provide copies of the statement (and, if the Department of Veterans Affairs deems it appropriate, copies of a concise statement of the Department of Veterans Affairs reasons for not making the amendments requested) to persons or other agencies to whom the disputed record has been disclosed. (5 U.S.C. 552a(d)(4)) (38 U.S.C. 501)

[47 FR 16324, Apr. 16, 1982]

§ 1.580 Administrative review.

(a) Upon denial or a request under 38 CFR 1.577 or 1.579, the responsible Department of Veterans Affairs official or designated employee will inform the requester in writing of the denial, cite the reason or reasons and the Department of Veterans Affairs regulations upon which the denial is based, and advise that the denial may be appealed to the General Counsel.

(b) The final agency decision in such appeals will be made by the General Counsel or the Deputy General Counsel.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501)

[40 FR 33944, Aug. 12, 1975, as amended at 47 FR 16324, Apr. 16, 1982; 55 FR 21546, May 25, 1990]

§ 1.581 [Reserved]

§ 1.582 Exemptions.

(a) Certain systems of records maintained by the Department of Veterans Affairs are exempted from provisions of the Privacy Act in accordance with exemptions (j) and (k) of 5 U.S.C. 552a.

(b) *Exemption of Inspector General Systems of Records.* The Department of Veterans Affairs provides limited access to Inspector General Systems of Records as indicated.

(1) The following systems of records are exempted pursuant to the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552a(j)(2) from subsections (c)(3) and (4), (d), (e)(1), (2) and (3), (e)(4) (G), (H) and (I), (e)(5) and (8), (f) and (g) of 5 U.S.C. 552a; in addition, the following systems of records are exempted pursuant to the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(2) from subsections (c)(3), (d), (e)(1), (e)(4) (G), (H), and (I), and (f) of 5 U.S.C. 552a:

(i) Investigation Reports of Persons Allegedly Involved in Irregularities Concerning VA and Federal Laws, Reg-

ulations, Programs, etc.—VA (11 VA51); and

(ii) Inspector General Complaint Center Records—VA (66VA53).

(2) These exemptions apply to the extent that information in those systems is subject to exemptions pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a (j)(2) and (k)(2).

(3) For the reasons set forth, the systems of records listed under paragraph (b)(1) of this section are exempted under sections 552a (j)(2) and (k)(2) from the following provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552a:

(i) 5 U.S.C. 552a(c)(3) requires that upon request, an agency must give an individual named in a record an accounting which reflects the disclosure of the record to other persons or agencies. This accounting must state the date, nature and purpose of each disclosure of the record and the name and address of the recipient. The application of this provision would alert subjects to the existence of the investigation and identify that such persons are subject of that investigation. Since release of such information to subjects would provide them with significant information concerning the nature of the investigation, it could result in the altering or destruction of derivative evidence which is obtained from third parties, improper influencing of witnesses, and other activities that could impede or compromise the investigation.

(ii) 5 U.S.C. 552a(c)(4), (d), (e)(4) (G) and (H), (f) and (g) relate to an individual's right to be notified of the existence of records pertaining to such individual; requirements for identifying an individual who requests access to records; the agency procedures relating to access to records and the amendment of information contained in such records; and the civil remedies available to the individual in the event of adverse determinations by an agency concerning access to or amendment of information contained in record systems. This system is exempt from the foregoing provisions for the following reasons: To notify an individual at the individual's request of the existence of records in an investigative file pertaining to such individual or to grant access to an investigative file could interfere with investigative and enforcement proceedings, threaten the