

§§ 20.505–20.599 [Reserved]

**Subpart G—Representation**

CROSS-REFERENCE: In cases involving access to medical records relating to drug abuse, alcoholism, alcohol abuse, sickle cell anemia, or infection with the human immunodeficiency virus, also see 38 U.S.C. 7332.

**§ 20.600 Rule 600. Right to representation.**

An appellant will be accorded full right to representation in all stages of an appeal by a recognized organization, attorney, agent, or other authorized person.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 5901–5905, 7105(a))

**§ 20.601 Rule 601. Only one representative recognized.**

A specific claim may be prosecuted at any one time by only one recognized organization, attorney, agent or other person properly designated to represent the appellant.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7105(b)(2))

**§ 20.602 Rule 602. Representation by recognized organizations.**

In order to designate a recognized organization as his or her representative, an appellant must execute a VA Form 21–22, “Appointment of Veterans Service Organization as Claimant’s Representative.” This form gives the organization power of attorney to represent the appellant. The designation will be effective when it is received by the agency of original jurisdiction or, if the appellate record has been certified to the Board for review, by the Board of Veterans’ Appeals. A properly filed designation made prior to appeal will continue to be honored, unless it has been revoked by the appellant or unless the representative has properly withdrawn.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7105(b)(2))

**§ 20.603 Rule 603. Representation by attorneys-at-law.**

(a) *Designation.* An attorney-at-law may be designated as an appellant’s representative through a properly executed VA Form 22a, “Appointment of Attorney or Agent as Claimant’s Representative.” This form gives the at-

torney power of attorney to represent the appellant. In lieu thereof, an attorney may state in writing on his or her letterhead that he or she is authorized to represent the appellant in order to have access to information in the appellant’s file pertinent to the particular claim presented. For an attorney to have complete access to all information in an individual’s records, the attorney must provide a signed consent from the appellant or the appellant’s guardian. Such consent shall be equivalent to an executed power of attorney. The designation must be of an individual attorney, rather than a firm or partnership. An appellant may limit an attorney’s right to act as his or her representative in an appeal to representation with respect to a specific claim for one or more specific benefits by noting the restriction in the written designation. Unless specifically noted to the contrary, however, designations of an attorney as a representative will extend to all matters with respect to claims for benefits under laws administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Designations are effective when they are received by the agency of original jurisdiction or, if the appellate record has been certified to the Board for review, by the Board of Veterans’ Appeals. A properly filed designation made prior to appeal will continue to be honored, unless it has been revoked or unless the representative has properly withdrawn. Legal interns, law students, and paralegals may not be independently accredited to represent appellants under this Rule.

(b) *Attorneys employed by recognized organization.* A recognized organization may employ an attorney-at-law to represent an appellant. If the attorney so employed is not an accredited representative of the recognized organization, the signed consent of the appellant for the substitution of representatives must be obtained and submitted to the agency of original jurisdiction or, if the appellate record has been certified to the Board for review, to the Board of Veterans’ Appeals. When the signed consent is received by the agency of original jurisdiction or the Board, as applicable, the attorney will be recognized as the appellant’s representative in lieu of the organization.