

Department of Veterans Affairs

§ 3.2600

nearest whole dollar amount. The resulting average actual cost is published at the end of each fiscal year in the "Notices" section of the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 2306(d))

(4) The following applies to joint or multiple headstones or markers:

(i) When a joint or multiple non-Government headstone or marker is purchased subsequent to the veteran's death, the amount set forth in paragraph (e)(2)(ii) of this section shall be available as reimbursement for the cost of the veteran's portion of the joint or multiple headstone or marker.

(ii) When a joint or multiple non-Government headstone or marker is existent at the time of the veteran's death, the allowance payable as reimbursement under paragraph (e)(2) of this section shall be determined based on the cost of the services for adding the veteran's identifying information.

(f) *Payment of allowance prohibited.* This monetary allowance shall not be paid when a Government headstone or marker has been requested or issued under the provisions of § 1.631 (a)(2) and (b) of this chapter.

(g) *Claims.* There is no time limit for filing claims for monetary allowance in lieu of a Government-furnished headstone or marker.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 2306(d))

(h) The monetary allowance in lieu of a Government-furnished headstone or marker is not payable if death occurred on or after November 1, 1990.

(Authority: Pub. L. 101-508)

[44 FR 58711, Oct. 11, 1979, as amended at 47 FR 19131, May 4, 1982; 49 FR 19653, May 9, 1984; 51 FR 17629, May 14, 1986; 52 FR 34910, Sept. 16, 1987; 55 FR 50323, Dec. 6, 1990; 56 FR 25045, June 3, 1991; 56 FR 65851, Dec. 19, 1991; 61 FR 20727, May 8, 1996]

Subpart C [Reserved]

Subpart D—Universal Adjudication Rules That Apply to Benefit Claims Governed by Part 3 of This Title

AUTHORITY: 38 U.S.C. 501(a), unless otherwise noted.

SOURCE: 66 FR 18195, Apr. 6, 2001, unless otherwise noted.

GENERAL

§ 3.2100 Scope of Applicability.

Unless otherwise specified, the provisions of this subpart apply only to claims governed by part 3 of this title.

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

§ 3.2130 Will VA accept a signature by mark or thumbprint?

VA will accept signatures by mark or thumbprint if:

(a) They are witnessed by two people who sign their names and give their addresses, or

(b) They are witnessed by an accredited agent, attorney, or service organization representative, or

(c) They are certified by a notary public or any other person having the authority to administer oaths for general purposes, or

(d) They are certified by a VA employee who has been delegated authority by the Secretary under 38 CFR 2.3.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 5101)

REVISIONS

§ 3.2600 Review of benefit claims decisions.

(a) A claimant who has filed a timely Notice of Disagreement with a decision of an agency of original jurisdiction on a benefit claim has a right to a review of that decision under this section. The review will be conducted by a Veterans Service Center Manager or Decision Review Officer, at VA's discretion. An individual who did not participate in the decision being reviewed will conduct this review. Only a decision that has not yet become final (by appellate decision or failure to timely appeal) may be reviewed. Review under this section will encompass only decisions with which the claimant has expressed

disagreement in the Notice of Disagreement. The reviewer will consider all evidence of record and applicable law, and will give no deference to the decision being reviewed.

(b) Unless the claimant has requested review under this section with his or her Notice of Disagreement, VA will, upon receipt of the Notice of Disagreement, notify the claimant in writing of his or her right to a review under this section. To obtain such a review, the claimant must request it not later than 60 days after the date VA mails the notice. This 60-day time limit may not be extended. If the claimant fails to request review under this section not later than 60 days after the date VA mails the notice, VA will proceed with the traditional appellate process by issuing a Statement of the Case. A claimant may not have more than one review under this section of the same decision.

(c) The reviewer may conduct whatever development he or she considers necessary to resolve any disagreements in the Notice of Disagreement, consistent with applicable law. This may include an attempt to obtain additional evidence or the holding of an informal conference with the claimant. Upon the request of the claimant, the reviewer will conduct a hearing under §3.103(c).

(d) The reviewer may grant a benefit sought in the claim notwithstanding §3.105(b), but, except as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, may not revise the decision in a manner that is less advantageous to the claimant than the decision under review. A review decision made under this section will include a summary of the evidence, a citation to pertinent laws, a discussion of how those laws affect the decision, and a summary of the reasons for the decision.

(e) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section, the reviewer may reverse or revise (even if disadvantageous to the claimant) prior decisions of an agency of original jurisdiction (including the decision being reviewed or any prior decision that has become final due to failure to timely appeal) on the grounds of clear and unmistakable error (see §3.105(a)).

(f) Review under this section does not limit the appeal rights of a claimant. Unless a claimant withdraws his or her Notice of Disagreement as a result of this review process, VA will proceed with the traditional appellate process by issuing a Statement of the Case.

(g) This section applies to all claims in which a Notice of Disagreement is filed on or after June 1, 2001.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 5109A and 7105(d))

[66 FR 21874, May 2, 2001, as amended at 67 FR 46868, July 17, 2002]

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THE MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM

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