

**CIVILIAN HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS (CHAMPVA)**

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE.** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook updates Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) information regarding medical care for survivors and dependents of certain Veterans under the CHAMPVA program.
- 2. SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES.** VHA Manuals, M-1, "Operations," Part I, "Medical Administration Activities," Chapter 29, "Civilian Health and Medical Program" has been revised to conform with current procedures.
- 3. RELATED ISSUES.** VHA Directive 1601 (to be published).
- 4. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE.** The Chief Business Office (16) is responsible for the contents of this VHA Handbook. Questions may be addressed to telephone number (303) 331-7500.
- 5. RESCISSION.** VHA Manual M-1, Part 1, Chapter 29 is rescinded.
- 6. RECERTIFICATION:** This VHA Handbook is scheduled for recertification on or before the last working day of September, 2014.

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CIVILIAN HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (CHAMPVA)

1. PURPOSE

This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook provides informational procedures regarding health care benefits for survivors and dependents of certain Veterans under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA).

2. AUTHORITY

Title 38 United States Code (U.S.C.) Section 1781 requires VHA to provide medical care for survivors and dependents of certain Veterans in the same or similar manner and subject to the same or similar limitations as medical care that is furnished under 10 U.S.C. Chapter 55, TRICARE . Further information related to the CHAMPVA program can also be found within Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Sections 17.270 to 17.278.

3. BACKGROUND

a. CHAMPVA is a health benefits program in which the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) shares costs of covered medical care for survivors and dependents of certain Veterans in the same or similar manner and subject to the same or similar limitations as medical care that is furnished under TRICARE. For purposes of this program, VA interprets the terms “same or similar” broadly because the original CHAMPUS program was replaced by the TRICARE program, which differs significantly from its predecessor. TRICARE’s current benefit structure offers varying degrees of medical benefits under multiple plan options. As a result of these differences, CHAMPVA has coverage variations from TRICARE.

b. The program is administered by the Director, Health Administration Center (HAC), Denver, CO 80246, who is under the administrative and programmatic direction of the Chief Business Office (CBO) (16), VHA, Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington, DC 20420.

4. SCOPE

a. CHAMPVA is authorized to provide medical benefits for the spouses, surviving spouse, and children of certain Veterans in the same or similar manner and subject to the same or similar limitations as medical care that is furnished under 10 U.S.C. Chapter 55, TRICARE. HAC is responsible for all aspects of administering the program.

b. CHAMPVA covers most medical services and supplies required to meet the health care needs of eligible beneficiaries. There are some limitations to those benefits, which include, but are not limited to, services that are not medically necessary, or those that are cosmetic in nature, investigational or experimental. **NOTE:** *A more specific list of exclusions can be located at 38 CFR 17.272.* In addition to excluding certain medical services and supplies, there are also limitations on the claim filing deadline.

(1) Claims for medical services must be filed with the HAC no later than 1 year after the date of service (see 38 CFR 17.275).

(2) An appeal or reconsideration on a denied benefit must be submitted to HAC within 1 year from the date of the initial determination (see 38 CFR 17.276).

5. ELIGIBILITY

a. To be eligible for CHAMPVA benefits, the individual must be the spouse, surviving spouse, or child of a Veteran who:

(1) Is permanently and totally (P&T) disabled because of an adjudicated service-connected disability or;

(2) Died because of an adjudicated service-connected disability or;

(3) At the time of death had been rated P&T disabled because of an adjudicated service-connected disability; or

(4) Died on active military service in the line of duty.

b. In addition, such spouse, surviving spouse, or child must not otherwise be eligible for TRICARE.

c. When determining eligibility for the CHAMPVA program the HAC utilizes several databases for verification of a Veteran sponsor status, such as:

(1) Veterans Information Solution (VIS);

(2) Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Corporate database; and

(3) Defense Enrollment and Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS).

6. APPLICATION FOR BENEFITS

To apply for medical benefits under the CHAMPVA program beneficiaries must submit a completed application for benefits which include the following documents:

a. VA Form 10-10d, Application for CHAMPVA Benefits;

b. VA Form 10-7959c, CHAMPVA Other Health Insurance (OHI) Certification; and

c. A copy of the applicant's Medicare Card, when applicable.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF VHA CHIEF BUSINESS OFFICER (16)

The Chief Business Officer is responsible for:

- a. Oversight of CHAMPVA program management;
- b. Establishing centralized reporting requirements as needed; and
- c. Evaluating CHAMPVA recommendations for significant proposed policy initiatives that would add benefits or services.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEALTH ADMINISTRATION CENTER (HAC) DIRECTOR

a. The HAC Director is responsible for:

(1) The daily management of all CHAMPVA activities, including planning, organizing, budgeting, directing, coordinating, evaluating, and improving administrative operations;

(2) Representing VA as the CHAMPVA program official and exercising a controlling influence in all matters of executive level involvement in CHAMPVA program matters;

(3) Providing liaison support to the Deputy Chief Business Officer for Purchased Care (DCBO), CBO, VA Central Office staff, and other Federal agencies;

(4) Establishing and maintaining CHAMPVA policy consistent with applicable public laws, regulations, and established program requirements;

(5) Developing and application of a comprehensive Quality Assurance Program;

(6) Developing and implementing of internal controls to ensure beneficiary eligibility, authorization of benefits, and payment of claims;

(7) Providing customer service using a designated call center;

(8) Processing applications;

(9) Determining eligibility;

(10) Authorizing benefits and services;

(11) Processing claims;

(12) Processing appeals and reconsiderations; and

(13) Managing an active Fraud Waste and Abuse Program.