

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Job Title: Claims Representative Claims Service Office

Classification: Administrative/Professional

Immediate Supervisor: Claims Office Supervisor

A. Purpose:

The main function of this position is to be an advocate for veterans and their families. The Veterans Claims Representative is tasked with providing expert level guidance and assistance to beneficiaries in obtaining the benefits that they may be entitled to. Furthermore, the Veterans Claims Representative is responsible for traveling to, and maintaining the training and knowledge of our network of National Representatives, county and tribal veterans service officers. The Veterans Claims Representative is frequently called upon as the subject matter expert regarding the Federal Veterans Affairs Rating Veterans Service Representatives and Veterans Service Center Manager.

The Claims Representatives within the VFW maintain individual caseloads of up to 10,000 clients per individual. Each client is an individual who ranges in personality, problem and diagnosis (often mental health). They must be a counselor who can be understanding, empathetic, fluid, flexible and able to react quickly and appropriately when assisting his/her potentially volatile clients. They must be aware of the individual's needs and overall condition and be able to guide the individual through the process that often involves state and federal officials including law judges.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

The Veterans' Services Claims Examiner examines and assists filling out the proper paperwork for veterans' benefits claims for accuracy and completeness, reviews disability rating decisions, examines award letters, represents beneficiaries during hearings, and compiles statistical information. The Veterans' Benefits Representative provides counseling and research assistance, explains available veterans' benefits and programs, prepares and/or explains how to prepare claims, and reviews determinations made by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

C. Functions:

(These are examples only; the position may not include all of the listed examples nor do only the listed examples included/excluded by all functions which may be found in this position.)

1. Reviews veterans' benefits claims prior to submission to ensure information is authentic, complete, and accurate.
 - a. Determines if proper and correct documents are attached.
 - b. Ensures that attached narratives are clear and informative.
 - c. Ensures the claims are submitted to the proper section in the VA.
2. Reviews and completes requests for burial benefits, home loans, service record requests, service medical records requests and VA healthcare enrollment.
3. Requests additional information from claimants or individual(s) originating the claim to complete claims before presentation to the VA.
4. Reviews and provides signatures signing off on rating decisions to ensure the initial claim is completed accurately and completely.
5. Reviews claims after adjudication by the VA rating board to confirm the accuracy of monetary or non-monetary awards.
 - a. Reviews award letters for accuracy and ensures that the VA has complied with all laws, regulations, and policies.
 - b. Notifies the VA of errors or exceptions.
6. Drafts correspondence to veterans, their dependents, Veterans' Benefits Representatives, or County and Tribal Veteran Service Officers to request additional information and to provide information on claims.
7. Updates and distributes manuals and copies of office policies and procedures to ensure all have complete and accurate information to use in accepting and processing veterans' claims.
8. Provides instruction to State Service Officers and County and Tribal Service Officers (C/TVSOs) in a formal classroom setting.
 - a. Prepares and presents formal instruction on VA rules and regulations, forms completion, VA computer programs, and administrative requirements.
 - b. Provides frequent instruction on proper claims preparation for County Veteran Service Officers and claimants.

9. Creates and maintains a database of client information, claims, and benefits to ensure all claims are tracked and processed.
 - a. Compiles data and composes monthly statistical reports.
 - b. Maintains the VIMS database to ensure all essential data regarding changes in awards, grants, and denials for claims is kept up to date.

10. Prepares briefs for representation of veterans' appeals and assists them in their testimony to Decision Review Officers and Board of Veterans Appeals Law Judges.

11. Assists in preparation of and maintaining reports for contacts, monetary awards, outreach and work load.

D. Reporting Relationships:

Reports to a Claims Office Supervisor. May provide work direction as it relates to claims processing to office staff and County Veteran Service Officers.

E. Challenges and Problems:

Challenged to handle the increased volume and complexity of claims and to verify the calculation of monetary awards. This is difficult because of the time, accuracy, and knowledge that is required in the submission of VA claims. Other typical problems include ensuring consistency with awards, having complete and accurate information, having knowledge of the various veterans benefit programs, various time limits associated with claims, knowing who or where to go for information, being knowledgeable of various disability rates and how to calculate awards, and ensuring timelines are adhered to in filing claims.

At times the Veterans Claims Representative must deal with challenging clientele, legal authorities, family members, federal and state representatives and numerous other interested parties.

The Veterans Claims Representative must also maintain a level of knowledge in an ever changing federal system. Every client and case are different. The Veterans Claims Representative must be able to identify case specifics and work within federally established parameters while helping individuals who all work and react differently.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions made include necessary changes in the format or wording of narratives, who to contact for more information, if awards are correct and why, and preparation changes to claims. Decisions referred include whether awards need to be referred to the VA for correction and requesting re-considerations, privacy or confidentiality conflicts, final approval of claims to be submitted for adjudication, and approval of changes in reporting procedures.

G. Contact with Others:

Daily contact with veterans and/or their dependents, Minnesota County Veterans Service Officers, and personnel from the VA to give and receive information.

H. Working Conditions:

Typical office environment.

I. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- regulations that govern the award of veterans' benefits;
- military and medical documents;
- proper office practices;
- Department of Veterans' Affairs rules, policies, and procedures.

Ability to:

- deal tactfully with others;
- establish rapport with claimants;
- interpret military and medical documents and statements;
- align information in a logical sequence;
- use a computer;
- meet deadlines;
- make decisions;
- work independently;
- prioritize multiple tasks, projects, and assignments;
- communicate information clearly and concisely.

J. Training

Continuous training and development within the respective position also includes having an intimate knowledge of and staying current with state and federal laws, Dept. of Veterans Affairs mandates/fast letters, training letters and Office of General Council Opinions/Guidance. Typically, because of the difficult nature of this position, individuals are not fully trained and able to work unassisted for two years or more. Veterans Claims Representatives must stay current with all entities and their regulatory requirements.

GENERAL SCHEDULE - RATES OF PAY

Veterans Service Representative

GRADE (Years 1-5)	Annual Rates for Merit (1.5% yearly increase Steps 1-10)									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	48,000	48,720	49,450	50,192	50,945	51,709	52,485	53,272	54,071	54,882
2	50,945	51,709	52,485	53,272	54,071	54,882	55,705	56,540	57,388	58,248
3	54,071	54,882	55,705	56,540	57,388	58,248	59,121	60,007	60,907	61,820
4	57,388	58,248	59,121	60,007	60,907	61,820	62,747	63,688	64,643	65,612
5	60,907	61,820	62,747	63,688	64,643	65,612	66,596	67,594	68,608	69,637

Grades are determined by years of service. An employee will start in grade 1 at the step consummate with experience. The employee will advance to grade 2 after 5 years of service; grade 3 after 10 years of service; grade 4 after 15 years of service and grade 5 after 20 years of service. An employee need not start at step 1 of a grade; the initial step of a grade should be assessed based on the previous rate of pay and the performance of the employee. Generally, an employee that starts at step 1 of a grade will advance to step 2 following his/her probationary period if satisfactorily completed. Another step advance may be awarded after a year has expired if the employee has demonstrated meritorious service.

Step advancements will be determined by a combination of time in grade and merit. The office supervisors will complete a performance evaluation of their respective employees annually and report the results to the Finance and Internal Affairs committee. The Finance and Internal Affairs committee will conduct the performance evaluation of each office supervisor. If an employee exhibits an excellent or satisfactory performance evaluation a step increase should be awarded. If an employee demonstrates a less than satisfactory performance evaluation no step increase should be awarded. Additional or more than one step advance may be awarded based on exceptional merit as the employee advances in years of service.

The Council of Administration at its' annual Budget meeting will adjust the General Schedule - Rates of Pay on July 1st of each year correspondingly with the cost of living adjustment (COLA) established by the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners. This information is obtained at the CPI website (<http://stats.bls.gov/cpihome.htm>). The newly computed salary figures will be rounded to the nearest hundred increment.

In the event the Department of Minnesota, VFW determines it is unable to meet the scheduled salary increase shown in this General Schedule due to fiscal duress, alternative covenants may be made by the Council and the employee.



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Claims Service Office
BHW Federal Building, Room G900
St. Paul, MN 55111-4028
(612)970-5669
FAX: (612)970-5405 E-Mail: VFW.VBASPL@VA.GOV

Application for Employment

APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME: _____ DATE: _____
(Last) (First) (MI)

ADDRESS: _____
(Apartment/Unit #)
(City) (State) (Zip) PHONE NO: _____

SOCIAL SECURITY No: _____ DESIRED SALARY: _____

POSITION APPLIED FOR: _____

ARE YOU A U.S. CITIZEN: _____ IF NO, ARE YOU AUTHORIZED TO WORK IN THE U.S.: _____

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A FELONY: _____ IF YES EXPLAIN: _____

DO YOU HAVE VETERANS PREFERENCE: _____ ARE YOU A VFW MEMBER: _____

EDUCATION

HIGH SCHOOL: _____ ADDRESS: _____

FROM: _____ TO: _____ DID YOU GRADUATE: _____ DEGREE: _____

COLLEGE: _____ ADDRESS: _____

FROM: _____ TO: _____ DID YOU GRADUATE: _____ DEGREE: _____

OTHER: _____ ADDRESS: _____

FROM: _____ TO: _____ DID YOU GRADUATE: _____ DEGREE: _____

OTHER CERTIFICATES: _____

EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYER: _____

DATES EMPLOYED: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ (City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip)

PHONE NO: _____

POSITION HELD: _____

DUTIES PERFORMED: _____

SUPERVISORS NAME AND TITLE: _____

REASON FOR LEAVING: _____

MAY WE CONTACT THEM? _____

EMPLOYER: _____

DATES EMPLOYED: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ (City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip)

PHONE NO: _____

POSITION HELD: _____

DUTIES PERFORMED: _____

SUPERVISORS NAME AND TITLE: _____

REASON FOR LEAVING: _____

MAY WE CONTACT THEM? _____

REFERENCES

NAME: _____ TITLE: _____ COMPANY: _____ PHONE: _____

NAME: _____ TITLE: _____ COMPANY: _____ PHONE: _____

NAME: _____ TITLE: _____ COMPANY: _____ PHONE: _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AUTHORIZATION

I CERTIFY THAT ALL ANSWERS GIVEN HERIN ARE TRUE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE: _____
IN THE EVENT OF EMPLOYMENT, I UNDERSTAND THAT FALSE OR MISLEADING INFORMATION GIVEN MAY RESULT IN DISCHARGE: _____

Signature of Applicant

Date

PLEASE ATTACH RESUME IF APPLICABLE

In the policy of this office, the Veterans of Foreign Wars does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, national origin, handicap, age or sex. This policy applies not only to employment, but to upgrading, transfer, recruitment and recruitment advertising, lay-off, demotion, termination and other matters pertaining to personal relationships.

I do hereby request, and authorize this company, any person or persons, each former employer, or any firm or corporation referred to in this application, to give any information or answer all questions asked concerning my ability, work or moral character in connection with this application.

If employed by you in any position, I fully understand and agree that upon payment of such wages or salary as my have been earned, you may terminate my employment without assuming further liability.

I understand that misrepresentation or omission of facts called for is cause for dismissal.

DATE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____