Automobile and Adaptive Equipment Allowance

Trainee Handout

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Objectives

After completing this training, the Veteran Service Representative (VSR), should be able to:

* Relate what the benefits are
* List the eligibility criteria for automobile and/or adaptive equipment allowances
* Identify the proper claim forms and controlling End Product (EP)
* Determine what actions to take based on submission of a claim for automobile and/or adaptive equipment
* Describe award notification requirements

References

All M21-1 references are found in the [Compensation and Pension Knowledge Management (CPKM) Portal](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034).

* [M21-1 Part IX, Subpart i, 2](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014997/M21-1,%20Part%20IX,%20Subpart%20i,%20Chapter%202%20-%20Automobile%20and%20Adaptive%20Equipment%20Allowance%20Under%2038%20U.S.C.%20Chapter%2039), Automobile and Adaptive Equipment Allowance Under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 39
* [M21-1 Part III, Subpart ii, 2.B](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014119/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-ii-Chapter-2-Section-B-Claims-for-Disability-Compensation-and-or-Pension-and-Claims-for-Survivors-Benefits).1.b, Requirements for a Complete Claim Received on or After March 24, 2015
* [38 CFR §3.808](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=ad275643432556b9dda942343fb89296&mc=true&node=pt38.1.3&rgn=div58#se38.1.3_1808)  Automobiles or other conveyances and adaptive equipment; certification.

Topic 1: Automobile and Adaptive Equipment Allowance

**What is an Automobile Allowance?**

Service members and Veterans may be eligible for a one-time payment of not more than $21,488.29 (FY 2020) toward the purchase of an automobile or other conveyance if they have certain service-connected disabilities. The grant is paid directly to the seller of the automobile and the service member or Veteran only receives the automobile grant once in their lifetime (generally).

***Note:*** Although this is generally a one-time benefit, PL 112-154 authorizes VA to provide or assist in providing eligible Veterans with a second automobile or other conveyance when

* + the first vehicle purchased with VA financial assistance is destroyed as a result of natural or other disaster
  + the destruction was not the Veteran’s fault, and
  + the Veteran does not receive compensation for the loss from a property insurer.

**Eligibility for Automobile Allowance**

To be eligible for financial assistance in purchasing a new or used automobile (or other conveyance), a Veteran or service member must have acquired one of the following disabilities as a result of injury or disease incurred or aggravated during active military service, or as a result of medical treatment or examination, vocational rehabilitation, or compensated work therapy provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) (38 U.S.C. 1151):

* loss, or permanent loss of use (LOU), of one or both feet
* loss, or permanent LOU, of one or both hands,
* permanent impairment of vision in both eyes with a
* central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with corrective glasses, or
* central visual acuity of more than 20/200 if there is a field defect in which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of visual field has an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees in the better eye, or
* a severe burn injury defined as disability caused by deep partial thickness or full thickness burns resulting in scar formation that causes contractures and limits motion of one or more extremities or the trunk and precludes effective operation of an automobile, or
* amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)

Final determination of eligibility is made by the rating activity and can be inferred without a claim.

**What is an Adaptive Equipment Allowance?**

Adaptive equipment includes, but is not limited to, power steering, power brakes, power windows, power seats, and special equipment necessary to assist the eligible person into and out of the vehicle. VA may provide financial assistance in purchasing adaptive equipment more than once. This benefit is payable to either the seller or the Veteran or service member.

**Eligibility for Adaptive Equipment Allowance**

A Veteran or service member who qualifies for the automobile allowance also qualifies for adaptive equipment allowance. To be eligible to receive only anadaptive equipment allowance the Veteran or service member must be entitled to disability compensation for ankylosis of one or both knees or hips based on:

* the establishment of service connection (SC), or
* entitlement under [38 U.S.C. 1151](http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode38/usc_sec_38_00001151----000-.html) as the result of
  + VA treatment or examination
  + compensated work therapy, or
  + vocational training under [38 U.S.C. Chapter 31](https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/part-III/chapter-31).

Final determination of eligibility is made by the rating activity and can be inferred without a claim.

**Vocational Readiness and Employment (Chapter 31)**

Adaptive equipment may also be furnished to a beneficiary utilizing vocational training under [38 U.S.C. Chapter 31](https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/part-III/chapter-31), if Vocational Readiness and Employment (VR&E) determines equipment is necessary to overcome an employment handicap to which a service connected disability materially contributes, and achieve the goals of the program of rehabilitation.

**Disqualifying Eye Condition**

Even though compensation for disability of paired service-connected (SC) and non-service-connected (NSC) organs is payable under 38 CFR 3.383, Veterans do not qualify for the automobile and/or adaptive equipment allowance based on bilateral visual impairment if the impairment of vision in one eye is due to an NSC disease or injury.

Note: Entitlement to the automobile and adaptive equipment allowance may be based on disability of paired *extremities* under [38 CFR 3.383](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=82912c3dd4647a0d7606973ad474aaa9&node=se38.1.3_1383&rgn=div8) because eligibility under [38 U.S.C. Chapter 39](https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/part-III/chapter-39) requires the SC loss, or LOU, of only one hand or one foot.

**Claim for Automobile Allowance**

Claim may be received on VA Form 526EZ, but [*VA Form 21-4502, Application for Automobile or Other Conveyance and Adaptive Equipment*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-4502-ARE.pdf), is required for the award of benefits.

The application for an automobile or other conveyance is considered an application for the adaptive equipment specified for the claimant’s disability by directive of the Chief Medical Director.  The instructions on the [*VA Form 21-4502*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-4502-ARE.pdf)contain a list of adaptive equipment that has been preapproved for particular disabilities.

***Notes***:

* There is no time limit for filing a claim.
* Upon receipt of the application, before referring the claim to the rating activity
  + establish an end product (EP) as directed in [M21-4, Appendix B](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000011474/Appendix-B.-End-Product-(EP)-Codes)
  + select an appropriate claim label for initial claims, and
  + send the claimant the notice required under [38 U.S.C. 5103](https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/5103), when needed.
* A spouse-payee may file an application for an automobile on behalf of an incompetent Veteran, in accordance with [VAOPGCPREC 36-1991](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000056521/VAOPGCPREC-36-91,-Mar-11,-1991,-Application-for-Automobile).
* There are several claim labels that can be appropriate in initial claims for an automobile or other conveyance and adaptive equipment.  In most cases involving SC compensation use *Automobile Allowance*.  However, the *DRAS Automobile Allowance* or *PMC – Automobile Allowance* labels may be necessary in some cases.
* Where one of the auto-related claim labels is applicable, it is important that it is properly applied to ensure appropriate prioritization through the National Work Queue (NWQ).  NWQ prioritizes the distribution of initial auto and adaptive equipment claims utilizing the claim label.
* If basic eligibility to the automobile allowance and/or adaptive equipment has been previously denied by rating decision, [*VA Form 21-4502*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-4502-ARE.pdf) must be accompanied by a qualifying request for decision review under [38 CFR 3.2500](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=379880548722e2465c3f7eb1045012cb&mc=true&r=SECTION&n=se38.1.3_12500).  Otherwise, treat the submission as a request for application in accordance with procedures found in [M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii, 2.C.6](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014115/M21-1,-Part-III,-Subpart-ii,-Chapter-2,-Section-C---Informal-Claims-Received-Prior-to-March-24,-2015,-Communication-of-an-Intent-to-File-(ITF),-and-Requests-for-Application).

***References***:  For more information on

* EPs, see [M21-4, Appendix B](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000011474/Appendix-B.-End-Product-(EP)-Codes)
* claim attributes, see [M21-4, Appendix C](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000036570/Appendix-C.-Index-of-Claim-Attributes)
* notification requirements for a complete application, see [M21-1, Part I, 1.B.1.d](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014065/M21-1,-Part-I,-Chapter-1,-Section-B---Duty-to-Notify-Under-38-U.S.C.-5102-and-5103)
* exceptions to the requirement for sending notification under [38 U.S.C. 5103](https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/5103), see [M21-1, Part I, 1.B.1.l](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014065/M21-1,-Part-I,-Chapter-1,-Section-B---Duty-to-Notify-Under-38-U.S.C.-5102-and-5103), and
* handling supplemental claims, see [M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii, 2.D](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014116/M21-1,-Part-III,-Subpart-ii,-Chapter-2,-Section-D---Supplemental-Claims).

**Claim for Adaptive Equipment Allowance Only**

Claim may be received on VA Form 526EZ, but [*VA Form 10-1394, Application for Adaptive Equipment – Motor Vehicle*](https://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/10-1394-fill.pdf), is required for the award of benefits. Typically, this form is provided by the outpatient clinic to the Veteran for forwarding to the finance activity, or submitted by the prosthetics department on his/her behalf to the local finance activity.

A [*VA Form 10-1394*](https://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/10-1394-fill.pdf)is also required for approval of equipment not specified on the [*VA Form 21-4502*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-4502-ARE.pdf) for the Veteran’s particular disability.

***Notes***:

* There is no time limit for filing a claim for adaptive equipment based on ankylosis.
* Upon receipt of the application, before referring the claim to the rating activity
  + establish an EP as directed in [M21-4, Appendix B](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000011474/Appendix-B.-End-Product-(EP)-Codes)
  + for initial claims, select the claim label *Vehicular Adaptive Equipment*, and
  + send the claimant the notice required under [38 U.S.C. 5103](https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/5103), when needed.
* There are several claim labels that can be appropriate in initial claims for adaptive equipment only.  In most cases involving SC compensation use *Vehicular Adaptive Equipment* as provided above.  However, the *DRAS Vehicular Adaptive Equipment* or *PMC-Vehicular Adaptive Equipment* may be needed in some cases.
* Where one of the adaptive-equipment-only claim labels is applicable, it is important to ensure it is properly applied to ensure appropriate prioritization through NWQ.  NWQ prioritizes the distribution of initial adaptive equipment claims using the claim label.

***References***:  For more information on

* EPs, see [M21-4, Appendix B](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000011474/Appendix-B.-End-Product-(EP)-Codes)
* claim attributes, see [M21-4, Appendix C](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000036570/Appendix-C.-Index-of-Claim-Attributes)
* notification requirements for a complete application, see [M21-1, Part I, 1.B.1.d](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014065/M21-1,-Part-I,-Chapter-1,-Section-B---Duty-to-Notify-Under-38-U.S.C.-5102-and-5103)
* exceptions to the requirement for sending notification under [38 U.S.C. 5103](https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/5103), see [M21-1, Part I, 1.B.1.l](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014065/M21-1,-Part-I,-Chapter-1,-Section-B---Duty-to-Notify-Under-38-U.S.C.-5102-and-5103), and
* handling supplemental claims, see [M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii, 2.D](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014116/M21-1,-Part-III,-Subpart-ii,-Chapter-2,-Section-D---Supplemental-Claims).

**Finance Responsible for all Eligible and Complete Adaptive Equipment Claims**

After 5103 notice period has expired, refer all substantially complete claims for adaptive equipment to the finance activity. It will determine if the adaptive equipment is preapproved for reimbursement based upon the effective date of entitlement, the Veteran’s SC disability, or if it is specifically authorized by the local VA outpatient clinic.  If it is not, then the finance activity will forward the claim to the outpatient clinic serving the applicant's residence.  The designee of the Chief Medical Director will consider the claim.  The prosthetic department will signify its approval by completing [*VA Form 10-1394*](https://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/10-1394-fill.pdf).  This form is then returned to finance for payment.

These claims may be independent of any initial application for an automobile, and may involve repair, replacement, or reinstallation of adaptive equipment.

**Handling Incomplete Applications**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | If an application from a person on active duty is incomplete in any essential part or the medical evidence or service status is insufficiently documented   * return the application to the VA prosthetics department, if it is responsible for the deficiency; otherwise * advise the service member of the deficiency, and * ask him/her to obtain the necessary evidence. |

**If Eligibility Has Not Been Determined**

If prior rating decisions do ***not*** establish the existence of a qualifying SC disability, refer the claim to the rating activity following completion of any necessary development. Rating decisions finding eligibility to adaptive equipment ***only*** will be clear that it does ***not*** include the automobile allowance.

**Reviewing VA Form 21-4502 and Determining Prior Payment Status**

M21-1 Part IX, Subpart i, 2.5.a:

Follow the steps in the table below to determine whether prior payment has been made following receipt and review of [*VA Form 21-4502*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-4502-ARE.pdf), with claimant-completed entries in Sections

* I, *Veteran/Servicemember Identification Information*, and
* II, *Application Information*.

| **Step** | **Action** |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | Does the claims folder contain a copy of a prior [*VA Form 21-4502*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-4502-ARE.pdf) annotated by the finance activity indicating prior payment of the automobile allowance?   * If *yes*, go to Step 8. * If *no*, go to the next step.   ***Important***:  Historically, when a [*VA Form 21-4502*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-4502-ARE.pdf) was processed, the form was filed in the left flap of a paper claims folder.  However, it is important to review the entire paper claims folder or electronic claims folder (eFolder) to identify a prior payment. |
| 2 | Has the *Automobile Allowance Paid* corporate flash been appended to the claimant’s corporate record?   * If *yes*, go to Step 8. * If *no*, go to the next step. |
| 3 | Does the Share M15 screen (or the equivalent in the Veterans Service Network) display   * a *Y* in the Auto Allowance Paid field, or * the terminal digit of the year in which the last payment was made in the Auto Adaptive Equipment field?      * If *yes*, go to Step 8. * If *no*, go to the next step. |
| 4 | Did a prior rating decision establish entitlement to the automobile or adaptive equipment allowance?   * If *yes*, go to Step 6. * If *no*,   + send a [Section 5103](https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/5103) notice to the claimant   + refer the claim to the rating activity for consideration after the duty-to-notify/assist response period has expired, and   + go to the next step. |
| 5 | Did the rating activity establish entitlement to either the automobile or adaptive equipment allowance?   * If *yes*, go to Step 9. * If *no*,   + disallow the claim, and   + notify the claimant accordingly. |
| 6 | Does *either* of the following situations apply?   * The claimant was rated with the qualifying disability more than five years prior to receipt of [*VA Form 21-4502*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-4502-ARE.pdf)*.* * There is indication that adaptive equipment payments have been made.      * If *yes*,   + refer the claim to the finance activity to review for prior payment, and   + after the finance activity completes the review and returns the claim to authorization, go to the next step. * If *no*, go to Step 9. |
| 7 | Does the finance activity’s review show that a prior payment for an automobile or conveyance was made?   * If *yes*, go to the next step. * If *no*, go to Step 9. |
| 8 | Follow the instructions in the table below.     | **If the claim is for …** | **Then …** | | --- | --- | | an automobile or conveyance, and the Veteran is contending entitlement to a second allowance due to the catastrophic circumstances discussed in [M21-1, Part IX, Subpart i, 2.1.b](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014997/M21-1,%20Part%20IX,%20Subpart%20i,%20Chapter%202%20-%20Automobile%20and%20Adaptive%20Equipment%20Allowance%20Under%2038%20U.S.C.%20Chapter%2039#1b) | process the claim in accordance with [M21-1, Part IX, Subpart i, 2.5.b](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014997/M21-1,%20Part%20IX,%20Subpart%20i,%20Chapter%202%20-%20Automobile%20and%20Adaptive%20Equipment%20Allowance%20Under%2038%20U.S.C.%20Chapter%2039#5b). | | an automobile or conveyance and the Veteran   * is ***not*** contending entitlement to a second allowance due to the catastrophic circumstances discussed in [M21-1, Part IX, Subpart i, 2.1.b](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014997/M21-1,%20Part%20IX,%20Subpart%20i,%20Chapter%202%20-%20Automobile%20and%20Adaptive%20Equipment%20Allowance%20Under%2038%20U.S.C.%20Chapter%2039#1b), or * previously received a second allowance | * disallow the claim, and * inform the claimant accordingly. | | adaptive equipment | * prior payment does *not* necessarily disqualify the application, and * go to the next step. | |
| 9 | Complete [*VA Form 21-4502*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-4502-ARE.pdf), Section III, *Certificate of Eligibility,* by entering all the qualifying disabilities. |
| 10 | Have [*VA Form 21-4502*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-4502-ARE.pdf) signed (in wet or digital/electronic format) by the Veterans Service Center Manager (VSCM) or by a designee no lower than coach.  ***Reference***:  For more information on signatures, see [M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii, 1.C.2](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014112/M21-1,-Part-III,-Subpart-ii,-Chapter-1,-Section-C---Initial-Screening-Policies). |
| 11 | * Release the original [*VA Form 21-4502*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-4502-ARE.pdf) to the applicant and send him/her a notification letter, unless referral to an outpatient clinic is required, and * clear the pending EP.   ***Reference***:  For more information on the requirement of referring claims to an outpatient clinic, see [M21-1, Part IX, Subpart i, 2.6.f](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014997/M21-1,%20Part%20IX,%20Subpart%20i,%20Chapter%202%20-%20Automobile%20and%20Adaptive%20Equipment%20Allowance%20Under%2038%20U.S.C.%20Chapter%2039#6f). |
| 12 | Place a copy of the [*VA Form 21-4502*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-4502-ARE.pdf) in the claims folder. |

**Post Rating Notification – lacking prescribed form**

Use the table below to inform the claimant of potential eligibility after receiving the rating decision.

| **If the Veteran or service member is eligible for …** | **Then …** |
| --- | --- |
| the automobile allowance | * furnish [*VA Form 21-4502*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-4502-ARE.pdf), if one is not of record, and * instruct the claimant to complete and return the form. |
| adaptive equipment only | * furnish [*VA Form 10-1394*](https://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/10-1394-fill.pdf) and * instruct the claimant to   + complete all items in Section I, except Items 5 and 6   + specify the disability upon which the claim is based in Item 7E, and   + return the completed form to the nearest VA medical facility. |

The redesigned automated decision letter (RADL) created in VBMS-A will add lines for the auto allowance or adaptive equipment grant, but the VSR should double-check the letter to ensure the language informing the Veteran of eligibility is clear, and that the appropriate attachments are included.

Attachment 1: Sample of Rating Code Sheet

| **ACTIVE DUTY** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **EOD** | **RAD** | **BRANCH** | **CHARACTER OF DISCHARGE** |
| 01/05/1952 | 12/30/1975 | Army | Honorable |

| **LEGACY CODES** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ADD’L SVC**  **CODE** | **COMBAT**  **CODE** | **SPECIAL PROV CDE** | **FUTURE EXAM**  **DATE** |
|  | 1 |  | None |

**JURISDICTION:** Original Claim 11/22/2008

**ASSOCIATED CLAIM(s):** 110; Original Claim; 11/22/08

**SUBJECT TO COMPENSATION (1. SC)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 5110 | Loss of use of both feet [Medical/Veteran Evidence]  Service Connected, Vietnam Era, Incurred  100% from 12/31/2007 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 7101 | Hypertension [Medical/Veteran Evidence]  Service Connected, Vietnam Era, Incurred  0% from 12/31/2007 |

Use to complete blocks 14 c, d of Section III of VA Form 21-4502

***COMBINED EVALUATION FOR COMPENSATION***:

100% from 12/31/2007

***SPECIAL MONTHLY COMPENSATION*** ***:***

L-1 Entitled to special monthly compensation under 38 U.S.C. 1114, subsection (L) and

38 CFR 3.350(b) (1) on account of loss of use of the feet from 12/31/2007.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **EFFECTIVE DATE** | **BASIC** | **HOSPITAL** | **LOSS OF USE** | **ANAT. LOSS** | **OTHER LOSS** |
| 12/31/2007 | 03 | 03 | 24 | 00 | 0 |

**NOT SERVICE CONNECTED/NOT SUBJECT TO COMPENSATION (8.NSC Vietnam Era)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 5237 | BACK INJURY  Not Service Connected, Not Incurred/Caused by Service |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 6100 | HEARING LOSS  Not Service Connected, Not Incurred/Caused by Service |

Rating grant for Auto/Adaptive Equipment

Entitled to Automobile and Adaptive Equipment

Entitled to Specially Adapted Housing

Basic Eligibility under 38 USC CH 35 from 12/31/07

Practical Exercise

Instructions: With the below scenarios, write a brief description of the action you would take to process the claim. If you need more space, use a separate piece of paper or write on the back of the exercise.

The purpose of this exercise is to determine your understanding of your responsibilities when you receive a claim for automobile and/or adaptive equipment allowance at any stage.

1. Upon initial review of the VBMS eFolder, you find a completed VA Form 10-1394 and a completed VA Form 21-4138. On the 4138 is the following statement,

“I have lost the use of my lower legs and need financial help to add special equipment to my car. I proudly served my country during Vietnam. I received treatment and rehabilitation at the VAMC for my service connected knees. Please help.”

After reviewing the rest of the file, you confirm the Veteran is service connected for a bilateral knee condition and there is no rating for automobile and adaptive equipment eligibility.

What is the next action you should take?

1. Upon initial review of the VBMS eFolder, you find a completed VA Form 21-4138 and a completed VA Form 21-4502. On the 4138 is the following statement,

“I am slowly losing my sight. I am currently taking the bus to my doctor appointments. While talking with my service rep, she informed me VA could help me buy a vehicle, but I would have to complete an application to claim auto allowance. I would like to buy a car so I won’t have to depend on the bus and so my wife can take me to all my appointments. My vision is due to an explosion while serving in Iraq. I have completed the proper form with the assistance of my wife. Please help.”

After your review of the VBMS eFolder, you discover the Veteran is 70% service connected for his vision, and there is a rating establishing entitlement to automobile and adaptive equipment allowance. You have received the file back from the Finance Dept, confirming no prior payments.

What is the next action you should take?

1. Upon review of the VBMS eFolder, you find a completed VA Form 21-4138 and a completed VA Form 21-4502. On the 4138 is the following statement,

“I am applying for automobile allowance. Because of my diabetes, my right leg had to be amputated just below the knee. I am including a completed application for automobile allowance. Please help.”

The Veteran does not have any service-connected conditions.

We sent a 5103 notice and there has been no reply after 30 days.

What is the next action you should take?

1. Upon review of the VBMS eFolder, you find a contract from the local Chevrolet truck dealer quoting the price for special equipment, along with a completed VA Form 21-4502 and a completed VA Form 21-4138. On the 4138 is the following statement,

“I am service connected for loss of use of both feet and I need a special lever in my car for applying the parking brake. Please help.”

You confirm the Veteran is service connected for her feet and entitled to automobile and adaptive equipment allowance benefits. Further review of the corporate record indicates prior payments for adaptive equipment.

What is the next action you should take?