

Standard Operating Procedures For Processing Retired Pay Cases Before Retired Pay Starts

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1. Purpose

This document establishes standard operating procedures (SOP) for cases in which a Veteran is eligible for retired pay the day after separation, but the monthly retired pay amount has yet to be determined. The goal is to establish correctly paid compensation and retired pay accounts in the least number of actions.

2. DFAS RCPS Data Requirements

- a. Data from the DFAS Retired and Casualty Pay Subsystem (RCPS) must be used to determine the amount of compensation to withhold based on retired pay for retirees of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.

The remaining uniformed services (Coast Guard, Public Health Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) have the same input and withholding requirements as shown in these procedures; retired pay information for these uniformed services may be obtained by calling the Coast Guard Retiree and Annuitant Service Branch (CG) at 1-800-772-8724 or 1-785-339-3415.

- b. Use of the [Shell/No Record Procedure](#) requires verification of the “shell” or “no record” in RCPS on the same date as the date of authorization/concurrence.
- c. See the following references for information regarding access and use of RCPS:
 - Contact your station’s Trusted Agent for information regarding access to RCPS; access is assumed in these procedures,
 - [Hunt User’s Guide](#) for information regarding use of RCPS, as found under the [Special Military Retirement Benefits](#) section of the [Compensation Service Intranet Home Page](#) under Procedures (212), and
 - the remainder of these standard operating procedures.
- d. RCPS data may also be acquired by contacting DFAS at 1-800-321-1080, 1-888-332-7411, or 216-522-5955.

3. RCPS Use and Data Information

- a. RCPS usage notes:

- Use the Pause/Break key to reset RCPS if/when necessary.
 - RCPS (Mech Model 2) may require periodic reentry from the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) Multi-Host Internet Access Portal (MIAP) if access is maintained throughout the day. Do not log out of the DISA MIAP in order to maintain access from this point.
- b. To determine if a retired pay account has been established in RCPS, a review of the RCPS entitlement screen (ENTIT) is required. A review of the member entitlement (MBRENT), VA Waiver (VA) and other screens in RCPS may also be necessary.
 - c. When the RCPS logon is completed, the cursor should be in the upper left hand corner. Commands are typed here.
 - d. In RCPS, the HUNT command is used, along with the Veteran's social security number (SSN) and the screen name. In order to determine current monthly retired pay information, the ENTIT screen is used. To access the ENTIT screen, type the following:

HUNT(comma or space), Veteran's nine digit SSN(comma)ENTIT

Example: HUNT 999SSN999,ENTIT (then press the enter key)
 - e. To access the MBRENT screen, change ENTIT to MBRENT. The first page on all available screens in RCPS is shown by changing the screen name (ENTIT, MBRENT, VA, etc.) in the HUNT command.

4. Establishing the "Retired Pay Case" Indicator

- a. A proper "Retired Pay Case" indicator must be established prior to authorization; see M21-1 III.v.5.B.1 for additional information.
- b. The indicator may be established in either VBMS-A or VETSNET Awards, though establishment is preferred using VETSNET Awards, as VBMS-A may not allow a "blank" retired pay amount.

A "blank" amount is used to set the indicator when the monthly retired pay amount has yet to be determined.

Caution must be used in VETSNET Awards, as the program will input a false \$0.00 amount if an edit is not made correctly. A \$0.00 amount terminates the indicator.

- c. To establish the "Retired Pay Case" indicator:

1. On the Record Decisions screen, enter the Military Payment Information screen.
2. On the Military Payment Information screen add the following information:
 - **Retired Pay Type:** Five options exist, all of which establish the “Retired Pay Case” indicator:
 1. Disability Retired Payment
 2. Regular Retired Payment
 3. Retired Payment – Reserves
 4. Temporary Disability Retired Payment
 5. Survivor’s Benefits Plan

More exact retired pay type information is located in the FAN CD field on the ENTIT and MBRENT screens in RCPS. FAN CD is the abbreviation for the Functional Account Number or FAN Code.

See the [Hunt User’s Guide](#) for a complete list of the FAN Codes.

- **Effective Date:** Enter the date of entitlement to compensation (not the payment date).

Note 1: Do not delete historical information that is true on this screen.

Note 2: A date on or before the date the award was generated must be used in all Effective Date fields. Do not use a future date any Effective Date field. A future date will create the “Retired Pay Case” indicator but will not pass the necessary compensation information to the retired pay centers (DFAS, etc.). “Future date” is defined as any date after the date the award was generated.

- **Gross Amount:** In [Shell/No Record Procedure](#) cases, the gross amount must be “blank.” A \$0.00 amount terminates the indicator and is not used.

5. Shell/No Record Procedure

- a. In “Shell” cases, the ENTIT screen returns a record that states “THE REQUESTED DATA FIELDS ARE BLANK FOR THIS SSN” as shown below in [Figure 1](#), and the MBRENT screen returns data, as shown below in [Figure 2](#).

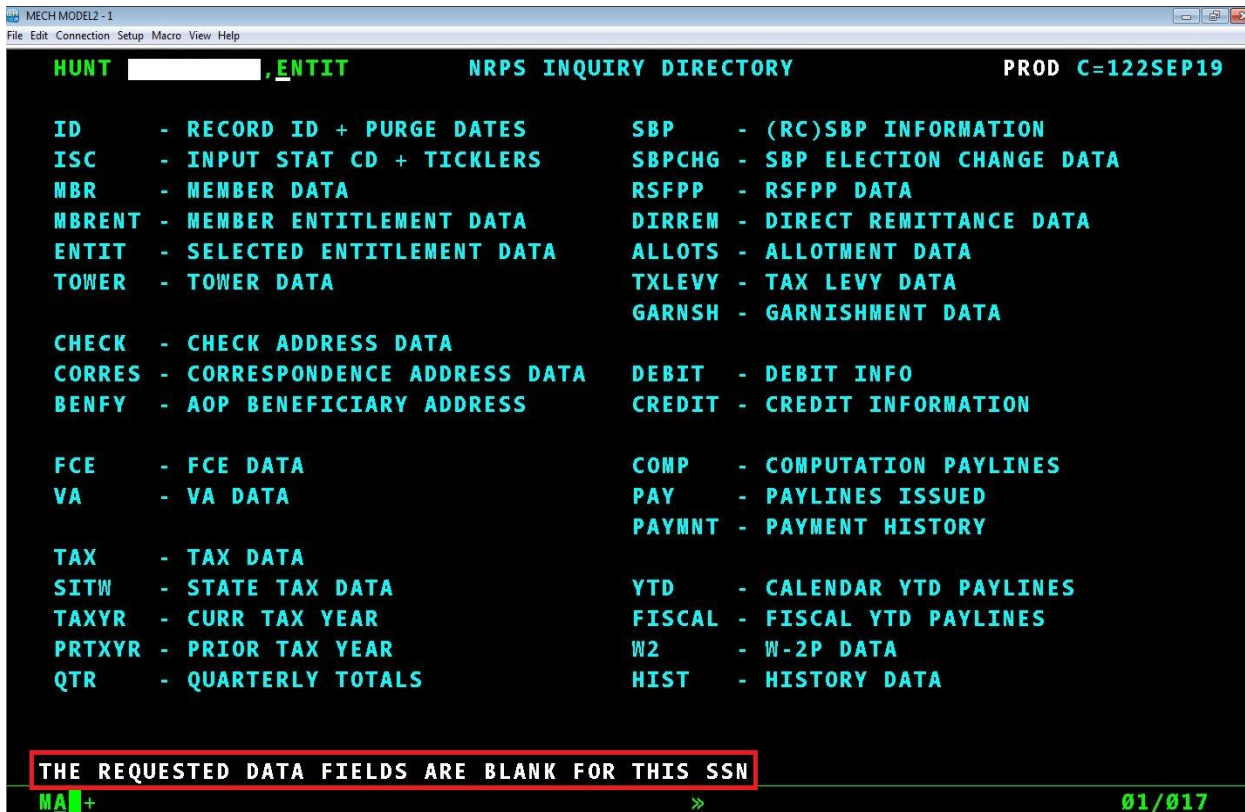


Figure 1 – HUNT, ENTIT screen showing “THE REQUESTED DATA FIELDS ARE BLANK FOR THIS SSN”

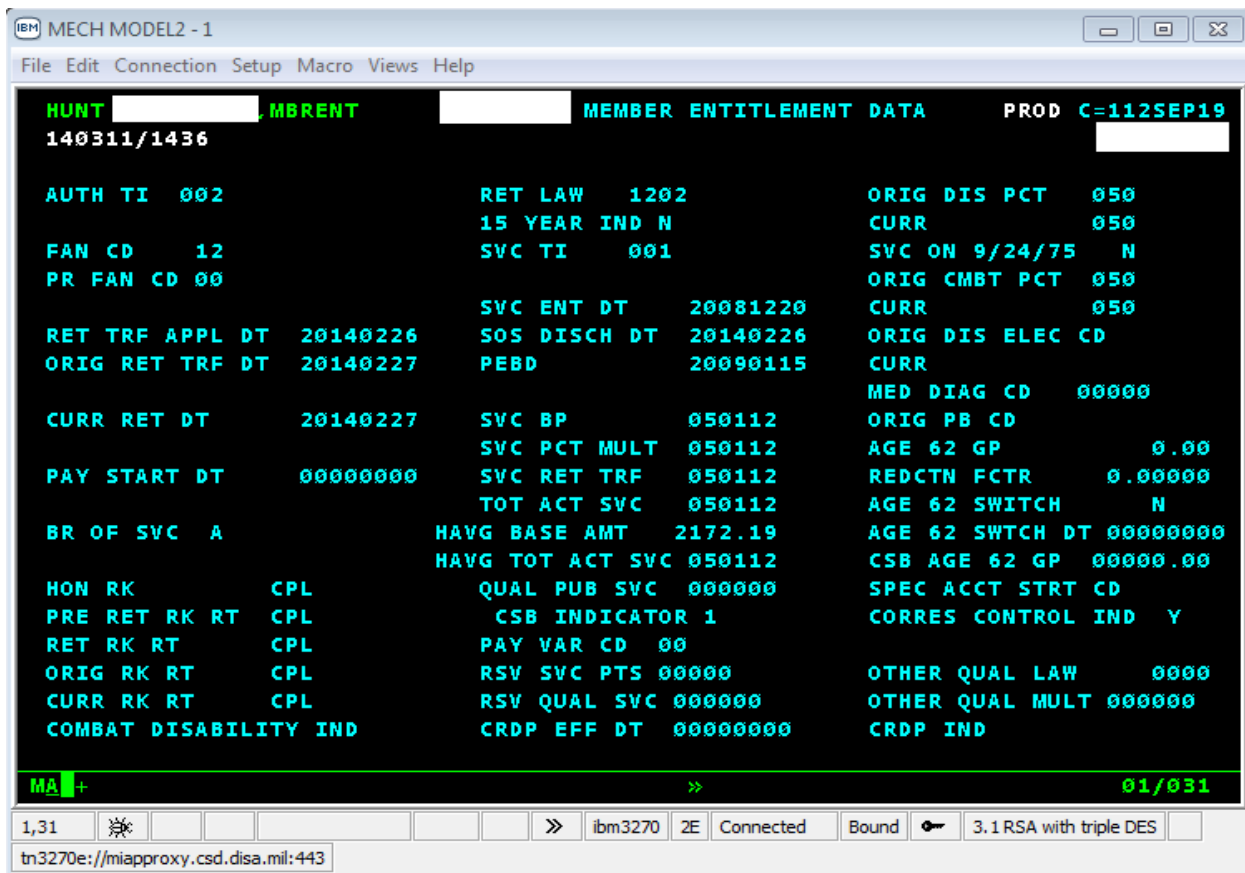


Figure 2 – HUNT, MBRENT screen showing data on SSN

- b. In “no record” cases, the ENTIT screen returns a record that states “THE REQUESTED INFORMATION DOES NOT EXIST FOR THIS SSN” as shown below in [Figure 3](#). The MBRENT screen will also return a record that states “THE REQUESTED INFORMATION DOES NOT EXIST FOR THIS SSN” as shown below in [Figure 4](#).

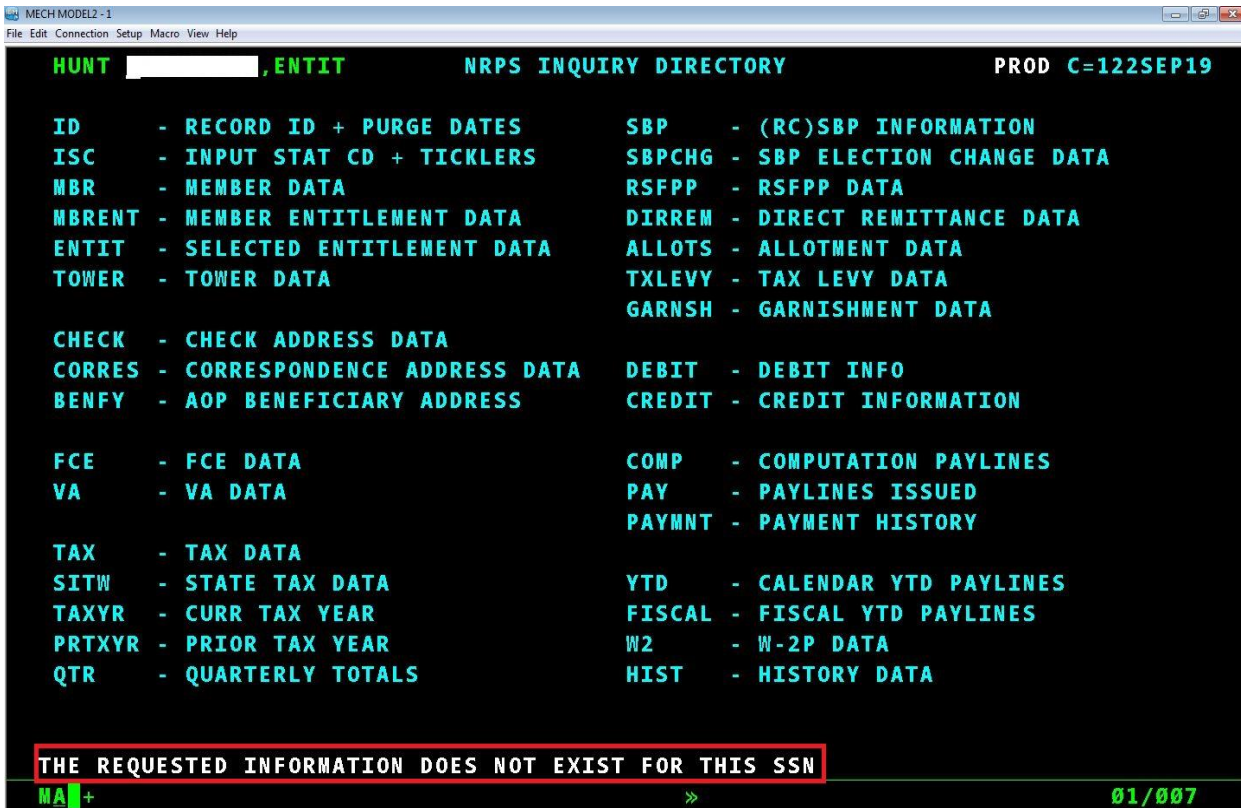


Figure 3 – HUNT, ENTIT screen showing “THE REQUESTED INFORMATION DOES NOT EXIST FOR THIS SSN”

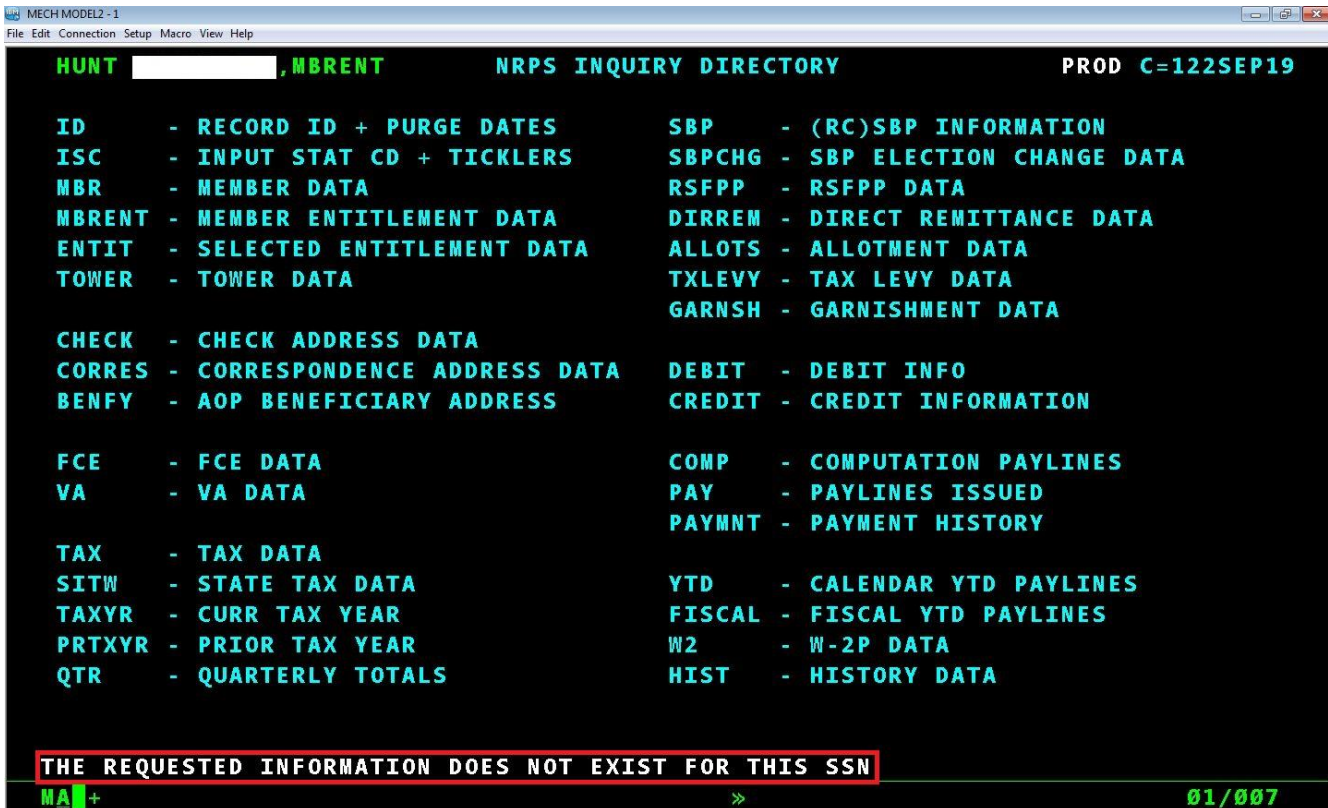


Figure 4 – HUNT, MBRENT screen showing “THE REQUESTED INFORMATION DOES NOT EXIST FOR THIS SSN”

- c. Prior to processing a “shell” or “no record” case, review SSN and RCPS inputs for accuracy.
- d. When processing a “shell” or “no record” case:
 - 1) Set the “Retired Pay Case” indicator. See the paragraph above entitled [Establishing the “Retired Pay Case” Indicator](#) for additional information.
 - 2) The existence of a “shell” or “no record” case must be verified in RCPS on the same date as the date of authorization/concurrence.
 - 3) Report the claim number to milpay.vbaco@va.gov after authorization/concurrence of a “shell” or “no record” case.
- e. When processing a “no record” case, request the retirement orders using DPRIS, upload the orders to VBMS, and send an e-mail to milpay.vbaco@va.gov regarding the issue.
- f. The best dates to process a “shell” or “no record” case in which an EP 290 is needed run from after the retired pay cutoff date/time to a few days prior to the end of that calendar month. See the table below for information on when an EP 290 needs to be established.

Processing a “shell” or “no record” case in which an EP 290 is needed during this period increases the likelihood that a VA Waiver will post in RCPS with an effective date and amount equal to the effective date and amount in which compensation starts regardless of any withholdings, which allows for [EP 290 processing](#) without the actual retired pay amount.

Note: If retired pay has not been figured within 6 months of the date of separation, withholding for retired pay is not necessary, but the “[Retired Pay Case](#)” indicator must still be established as noted above. For retirees of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, RCPS must be reviewed on the date of authorization/concurrence to ensure that the retired pay amount still remains unknown. For the retirees of the Coast Guard, Public Health Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a phone call must be made to Coast Guard Retiree and Annuitant. Report the claim number to milpay.vbaco@va.gov after authorization of the case.

- g. The table below contains further instructions for processing “shell” or “no record” cases. See the [Compensation Service Intranet Calendar](#) to determine the current retired pay cutoff date.

If ...	Then...
the initial effective date of payment is the same as the current retired pay cutoff date	<p>the claim may be processed with no withholding.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Vet retires on 2/27/14, compensation is payable from 3/1/14, and the current retired pay cutoff date is 3/1/14. No withholding for retired pay is necessary.</p>
the initial effective date of payment is later than the current retired pay cutoff date	<p>the claim may be processed with no withholding.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Vet retires on 3/1/14, compensation is payable from 4/1/14, and the current retired pay cutoff date is 3/1/14. No withholding for retired pay is necessary.</p>
the initial effective date of payment is earlier than the current retired pay cutoff date	<p>1) The entire amount of compensation must be withheld from the initial effective date of payment to the current retired pay cutoff date.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> For cases in which compensation is already being paid on the retirement date, continue the compensation amount and withhold any increases until the current retired pay cutoff date.</p> <p>2) Upon authorization/concurrence, establish an EP 290 with a claim label of “DRAS Retired Pay Waiver/Election” for IDES cases, or an EP 290 with a claim label of “BDD Retired Pay Waiver/Election” in all other cases, and a date of claim equal to the date the controlling EP (010, 110, 020) was closed. See EP 290 Processing Instructions below.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Vet retires on 1/21/14, compensation is payable from 2/1/14, and the current retired pay cutoff date is 3/1/14. Compensation is withheld for retired pay from 2/1/14 to 3/1/14.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> Adjudication jurisdiction of further award adjustments based on the use of this procedure will remain with the</p>

If ...	Then...
	station where the EP 290 was established until initial payment accounting has been resolved.
the initial effective date of payment is based on a catastrophic disability or a reopened claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if the initial effective date of payment is within the retired pay cutoff date for the first of the current month on the date of authorization/concurrence, the claim may be processed with no withholding. • if the initial effective date of payment is not within the retired pay cutoff date for the first of the current month on the date of authorization/concurrence, compensation must be withheld until the current retired pay cutoff date. In these cases, upon authorization/concurrence, establish an EP 290 with a claim label of “DRAS Retired Pay Waiver/Election” for IDES cases, or an EP 290 with a claim label of “BDD Retired Pay Waiver/Election” in all other cases, and a date of claim equal to the date the controlling EP (010, 110, 020) was closed. See EP 290 Processing Instructions below. Adjudication jurisdiction of further award adjustments based on the use of this procedure will remain with the station where the EP 290 was established until initial payment accounting has been resolved. <p><i>Example:</i> Vet retires on 3/6/16, compensation is payable from 3/6/16, and the current retired pay cutoff date is 3/1/16 (current date/time is from 3/6/16 to 6:00 p.m. (CDT) on 3/16/16). As such, no withholding for retired pay is necessary. However, if the claim is processed after the 3/1/16 retired pay cutoff date/time of 6:00 p.m. (CDT) on 3/16/16, then compensation must be withheld until the current retired pay cutoff date.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> See the section on Cases with running compensation awards for cases of this type.</p>

6. EP 290 Processing Instructions

- a. Review all EP 290 - DRAS Retired Pay Waiver/Election and/or EP 290 – BDD Retired Pay Waiver/Election cases established by your station on a weekly basis.
 1. Review ENTIT screen.

- i. If the ENTIT screen returns a record that states “THE REQUESTED INFORMATION DOES NOT EXIST FOR THIS SSN” as shown above in [Figure 3](#), no further review is needed.
- ii. If the ENTIT screen returns a record that states “THE REQUESTED DATA FIELDS ARE BLANK FOR THIS SSN” as shown below in [Figure 1](#), proceed to step [6.a.2](#) below.
- iii. If the ENTIT screen returns payment information:
 - Update the retired pay gross amount(s) and date(s) on the Retired Pay tab of the Military Payment Information screen in VBMS-A with the amount(s) and date(s) shown on the ENTIT screen in RCPS.

The gross amount of retired pay is shown in the CURR GP field on the ENTIT screen. The HUNT, ENTIT screen shown below in Figure 5 shows a current gross retired pay amount of \$1,530.00 beginning on January 23, 2013 (CURR GP EFF DT 20130123).

HUNT [REDACTED], ENTIT [REDACTED]		SELECTED ENTITLEMENT DATA		PROD C=122NOV30
GP COMP CD	H	SVC BP	070000	PB CD 58
FAN CD	12	SVC PCT MULT	070000	OVRD CD
RET LAW	01202	RES SVC PTS	00000	PR GP EFF DT 000000
PAY RK RT	SGT	DIS PCT	060	PR CRDP SVC GP 0.00
PAY GRD CD	55	DIS ELEC CD	A	PR GP 0.00
COLA:PCT		PAY VAR CD	00	CURR GP EFF DT 20130123
19891201- 00.0				CRDP SVC GP 489.00
19901201- 00.0	19971201- 00.0	20071201- 00.0		CURR GP 1530.00
19911201- 00.0	19981201- 00.0	20081201- 00.0		EQUIV YRS SVC PCT 07.67
19921201- 00.0	19991201- 00.0	20091201- 00.0		HI-3 BASE AMT 2551.52
19931201- 00.0	20001201- 00.0	20101201- 00.0		15YR REDCTN FCTR 0.00000
19940301- 00.0	20011201- 00.0	20111201- 00.0		AGE62 METH C GP 0.00
19941201- 00.0	20021201- 00.0	20121201- 00.0		GP FOR SBP 1530.00
19950301- 00.0	20031201- 00.0	20131201- 00.0		
19951201- 00.0	20041201- 00.0	20141201- 00.0		
19960301- 00.0	20051201- 00.0	20151201- 00.0		
19961201- 00.0	20061201- 00.0	20161201- 00.0		

Figure 5 – HUNT, ENTIT showing payment information

If gross retired pay has increased based on a COLA or other adjustment, the date and amount shown in the prior fields will be entered first. The “PR” or prior fields show the effective date and amount of retired pay prior to a COLA or other adjustment. The HUNT, ENTIT screen shown above in Figure 5 shows no prior effective date (PR GP EFF DT 000000), and no prior gross retired pay amount (PR GP 0.00).

Note 1: If the CURR GP EFF DT and the PR GP EFF DT fields show the same date with different amounts in the CURR GP field and the PR GP field, DFAS has changed the gross retired pay amount from the amount shown in the PR GP field to the amount shown in the CURR GP field. In these cases, use the amount shown in the CURR GP field as the gross retired pay amount.

Note 2: The CRDP SCV GP and PR CRDP SVC GP fields represent gross retired pay based on years of service, and are used in CRSC/CRDP calculations to prevent the duplication of disability benefits paid to a Veteran. These fields are not used by VA.

- Proceed to step [6.a.2](#) below.

2. Review VA screen to determine the VA Waiver date and amount.

The VA screen shows the VA Waiver. The VA Waiver is:

- the amount of retired pay withheld based on receipt of compensation
- the variable that must be established in order for DFAS to adjust and pay retired pay and CRSC/CRDP as eligible

Within 10 working days of the date of the initial award, the VA screen should show an actual deduction date (ACTUAL DED DT) that is the same as or earlier than the date compensation benefits were no longer withheld based on receipt of retired pay on the initial award, and an actual amount (ACTUAL AMT) shown directly underneath, which should be equal to the gross amount of compensation on the ACTUAL DED DT. This is the VA Waiver.

If the VA screen does not show the VA Waiver as described above within 10 working days of the date the initial award was authorized/concurred, report case to milpay.vbaco@va.gov and wait for further instructions.

The HUNT, VA screen shown below in Figure 6 shows a waiver of retired pay in the amount of \$1,525.55 (ACTUAL AMT) from March 1, 2014 (ACTUAL DED DT).

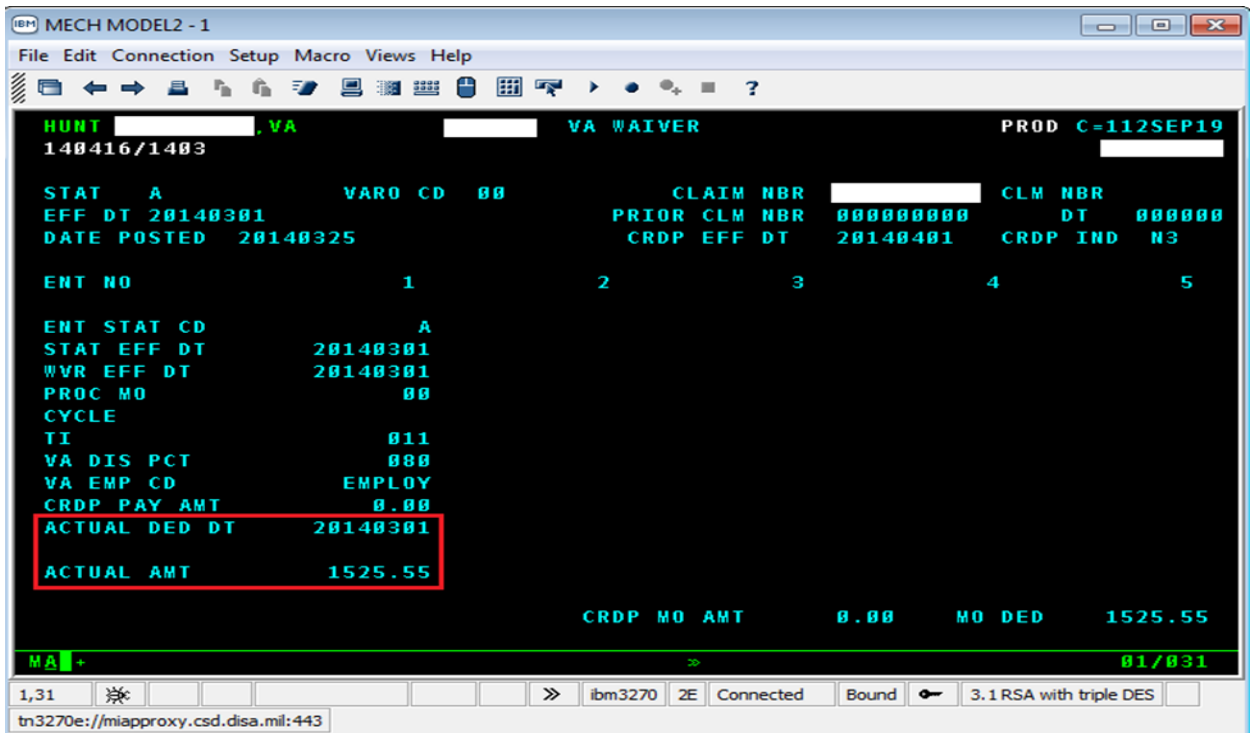


Figure 6 – HUNT, VA showing VA Waiver information

Note1: If the ACTUAL AMT shows an amount of 0.00, then the VA Waiver was \$0.00 on the ACTUAL DED DT.

Note 2: If the VA Waiver posts more than once with the same ACTUAL DED DT, the ACTUAL AMT on the data to the left reflects the VA Waiver used by DFAS.

Note 3: If more two or more VA Waivers post with different ACTUAL DED DTs, all of that data was used by DFAS as the VA Waiver.

3. With the [VA Waiver](#), as determined above, use the table below to complete the EP 290.

If...	And...	Then...
the VA Waiver posts with the same ACTUAL DED DT and in the same ACTUAL AMT from the date compensation was no longer withheld based on the retired pay cutoff date used on the initial award	the retired pay amount(s) equal or exceed the gross compensation amount(s)	PCLR the EP 290. Compensation has been properly withheld for retired pay.
the VA Waiver posts with the same	the retired pay amount(s) is less	reduce the amount(s) withheld for retired pay to the actual retired pay amount(s) on the Award Adjustment

If...	And...	Then...
ACTUAL DED DT and in the same ACTUAL AMT from the date compensation was no longer withheld based on the retired pay cutoff date used on the initial award	than the gross compensation amount(s)	<p>screen/Retired Pay tab.</p> <p>This action releases all compensation in excess of retired pay that was previously withheld.</p> <p>Send the Veteran a decision notification letter regarding this action.</p>
the VA Waiver posts with an ACTUAL DED DT and ACTUAL AMT with the same date and amount in which compensation started but was initially withheld based on the retired pay cutoff date used on the initial award		<p>remove withholding for retired pay from the ACTUAL DED DT in the ACTUAL AMT. Do not remove any dates and adjustment amount(s) that are earlier than the ACTUAL DED DT.</p> <p>This action releases all compensation withheld from the date the VA Waiver began.</p> <p>Send the Veteran a decision notification letter regarding this action.</p> <p>Place a screenshot of the VA screen in VBMS. Use Category – Type of “Retired Pay Screen” with subject “VA Waiver.”</p>
the VA Waiver posts with an ACTUAL DED DT and ACTUAL AMT that is later than the date compensation was paid in full based on the retired pay cutoff date used on the initial award		<p>an overpayment has occurred in the monthly amount of the lesser of retired pay or compensation from the retired pay cutoff date used on the initial award to the ACTUAL DED DT. For further instructions, report the claim number and issue to milpay.vbaco@va.gov.</p>

b. If the EP 290 is unable to be processed after 6 months of the date of separation:

- Remove the withholding for retired pay that was the basis for the EP 290 using the pending EP 290 (leave the retired pay amount “blank” on the Retired Pay tab of the Military Payment Information screen),
- Send the Veteran a decision notification letter regarding this decision, and
- Report the claim number to milpay.vbaco@va.gov after authorization of the case.

Note: For retirees of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, RCPS must be reviewed on the date of authorization/concurrence to ensure that the retired pay amount still remains unknown. For the retirees of the Coast Guard, Public Health Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a phone call must be made to Coast Guard Retiree and Annuitant

Service Branch at 1-800-772-8724 or 1-785-339-3415 on the date of authorization/concurrence to ensure that the retired pay amount still remains unknown.

7. Retirement Date on the 31st of the Month

For cases in which the retirement date, the date following the separation date (a.k.a. RAD date), falls on the 31st of a month, retired pay will start on the 1st of the following month, as the 31st is not a pay date for retired pay purposes. Therefore, when entering the effective date of retired pay on the Retired Pay tab of the Military Payment Information screen, use the first of the following month in these cases.

In the unlikely event that a compensation award is authorized/concurred on the 31st of the month and is the same date as the separation date, the 31st of the month must be used as the effective date of retired pay on the Retired Pay tab of the Military Payment Information screen, as a the 1st of the following month will be a future date. A future date will create the “Retired Pay Case” indicator but will not pass the necessary compensation information to DFAS. “Future date” is defined as any date not current or earlier than the actual date of entry; a date in the future starting with tomorrow.

8. Cases with Running Compensation Awards

In cases in which compensation is running, a review of the VA Waiver (VA) screen in RCPS is necessary. The VA Waiver screen shows the amount of retired pay withheld/to be withheld based on receipt of compensation.

The actual deduction date (ACTUAL DED DT) field on the VA Waiver screen and the corresponding actual amount (ACTUAL AMT) shown directly underneath represent the date and amount in which retired pay was/will be reduced based on receipt of compensation.

Use the table below to determine the amount of compensation to withhold/pay from the payment date of compensation based on the VA Waiver.

If...	And...	Then...
no VA Waiver is shown	the retired pay amount is known	withhold compensation up to the amount of retired pay until the current retired pay cutoff date.
no VA Waiver is shown	the retired pay amount is not known	1) The entire amount of compensation must be withheld from the initial effective date of payment to the current retired pay cutoff date. 2) Upon authorization/concurrence, establish an EP 290 with a claim label of “ DRAS Retired Pay Waiver/Election” for IDES cases, or an EP 290 with a claim label of “BDD Retired Pay Waiver/Election” in all other cases, and a date of claim equal to the date the controlling EP (020) was closed.

If...	And...	Then...
		<p>3) Follow the EP 290 Processing Instructions above thereafter.</p> <p>Adjudication jurisdiction of further award adjustments based on the use of this procedure will remain with the station where the EP 290 was established until initial payment accounting has been resolved.</p>
a VA Waiver is shown	the retired pay amount is known	pay compensation in the amount of the VA Waiver (plus any cents on the dollar the VA Waiver may not include) and withhold the remainder up to the amount of retired pay until the current retired pay cutoff date.
a VA Waiver is shown	the retired pay amount is not known	<p>1) Pay compensation in the amount of the VA Waiver (plus any cents on the dollar the VA Waiver may not include) and withhold the remainder until the current retired pay cutoff date.</p> <p>2) If compensation is withheld, upon authorization/concurrence, establish an EP 290 with a claim label of “ DRAS Retired Pay Waiver/Election” for IDES cases, or an EP 290 with a claim label of “BDD Retired Pay Waiver/Election” in all other cases, and a date of claim equal to the date the controlling EP (020) was closed.</p> <p>3) Follow the EP 290 Processing Instructions above thereafter.</p> <p>Adjudication jurisdiction of further award adjustments based on the use of this procedure will remain with the station where the EP 290 was established until initial payment accounting has been resolved.</p>

9. Notification Letter

- a. Follow the notification letter requirements in M21-MR III.v.2.B.
- b. Include the following paragraph in all cases in which compensation is withheld based on receipt of retired pay:

Concurrent Receipt of VA Compensation and Military Retired Pay

You may be eligible for full or partial concurrent receipt of VA compensation and military retired pay under the Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) and/or Concurrent Retired and

Disability Pay (CRDP) programs. Your retired pay center (RPC) has been notified of this award of VA compensation. If your RPC determines the withholdings from your VA compensation should be retroactively adjusted due to CRSC/CRDP eligibility; VA will be notified and will adjust your VA compensation accordingly. More information on CRSC and CRDP can be found at the following web site: <http://www.dfas.mil/dfas/retiredmilitary/disability/payment.html>, or by calling your RPC as shown below:

- Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS): 1-800-321-1080
- United States Coast Guard: 1-800-772-8724
- Public Health Service: 1-800-638-8744

10. Questions

Questions regarding these procedures should be submitted to Thomas.Kenville@va.gov .