

Pittsburgh Regional Office

Post-Determination Actions for Foreign Claims



Purpose

This Tip Sheet provides guidance on the authorization of foreign claims.



Audience

Post-determination Veterans Service Representatives (VSR).



References

- 38 C.F.R. § 3.108, *State Department as agent of Department of Veterans Affairs*
- M21-1, II.ii.3.1.b, *Jurisdiction of Claims Involving a Special Mission or Circumstance*
- M21-1, VII.i.3.B.1.a, *Determining Whether Additional Evidence/ Information Is Necessary*
- M21-1, VII.ii.1.A.1.d, *Verifying Accreditation of Educational Institutions*
- M21-1, X.i.3.A.2.a, *Jurisdiction Over Claims Involving Foreign Residence*

Tips

Click on a link to navigate to the desired topic:

- [Documents Needed to Add Dependents for Foreign Veterans](#)
- [Auto-Text for Notification Letters](#)
- [Foreign Direct Deposit](#)
- [Foreign Address More Than Five Lines](#)
- [Adding School Children in a Foreign School](#)

Documents Needed to Add Dependents for Foreign Veterans

1. Marriage Certificates
2. Divorce Decrees/ Death Certificates
3. Birth Certificates
4. Adoption Decrees



Auto-Text for Notification Letters

1. VA must include the following Foreign Medical Program (FMP) language in every notification letter where VA is granting service-connection for a condition at 0% disabling or greater:

“The Foreign Medical Program (FMP) is a VA health benefits program designed for United States veterans with service-connected conditions who are residing or traveling outside the United States. (Canada and the Philippines are excluded.) VA will assume payment responsibility for certain necessary medical services associated with the treatment of service-connected disabilities and related conditions.”

Pittsburgh Regional Office

Post-Determination Actions for Foreign Claims

You can also contact the Foreign Medical Program at (303) 331-7590 or write: VA Health Administration Center, FMP Office, PO Box 469061, Denver, CO 80246-9061. Information is also available via the VA's Foreign Medical Program website at:

<http://www.va.gov/purchasedcare/programs/veterans/fmp/>. Contact Information: Call or visit the nearest American Embassy or Consulate for assistance. Call us at 412-395-6272.”

2. If granted a combined evaluation of 30% disabling or more and VA does not have dependency information:

“Please note Dependency events (births, marriages, divorces, etc.) affecting benefits of claimants who live outside the United States, or its territories, require documentation.”

Foreign Direct Deposit

Some Veterans residing overseas will have a United States bank account. If the Veteran has an international bank account, the Muskogee Regional Office (RO) is the only office that can update and input this information. Request the Veteran complete VA Form 24-0296A, *International Direct Deposit*, to enroll in direct deposit and send the completed form to the Muskogee RO. Alternatively, VA can email it internally to Muskogee at VAVBAMUS/RO/SSD/DIRECTD.

The authorizer can release payment to the address of record if the Veteran does not have direct deposit established/provided. Do not hold up the claim to input direct deposit unless the retroactive payment is of a large amount, and you are advised to wait.

Foreign Address More Than Five Lines

To manually create a foreign address cover letter and associate it with the correspondence package, follow these steps. This process is a way to allow a lengthy address to be readable in the envelope window.

1. Using the Letter Creator tool, generate a letter to the Veteran/beneficiary using *any* template.
2. Delete all content from the letter except for the mailing information.
3. Ensure the current and complete foreign address shown in the permanent, Veteran-level note is displayed. If necessary, manually edit the address.
4. Manually change the font size of the mailing address to size 10, or in cases with extremely long address lines, size 9.
5. Save the PDF file and upload to the eFolder with the following properties:
 - a. Subject: *FOREIGN ADDRESS COVER LETTER*
 - b. Category – Type: *Correspondence: Correspondence*
 - c. Content Source: *VBMS*
 - d. Date of Receipt: (date the correspondence is being generated)
6. Upload the cover letter to the Veteran's eFolder in VBMS Core.
7. Add the document to the correspondence package in the Package Manager.



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U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Pittsburgh Regional Office

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Adding School Children in a Foreign School

A foreign school is accredited for VA purposes if the school is recognized as standard and accredited for the student's specific course of instruction by the authority established within the country for determining educational standards.

If unable to determine if a school is accredited, additional development to the Veteran may be required. Per M21-1, VII.ii.1.A.1.d, determine accreditation status via the in-country Minister of Education, Minister of Cultural Affairs or by reviewing 38 U.S.C. Chapter 30, 31, 33 and 35 to determine entitlement.

Important Reminders



- VA can use evidence within the last eight years to add dependents.
- Ensure to add the *Foreign Corporate* flash
- Diplomatic and consular officers of the Department of State (State Department) are authorized to act as agents of the Department of Veterans Affairs and therefore a complete claim as set forth in [§ 3.160\(a\)](#) or an intent to file a claim as set forth in [§ 3.155\(b\)](#) or evidence submitted in support of a claim filed in a foreign country will be considered as filed in the Department of Veterans Affairs as of the date of receipt by the State Department representative.

Other Resources



- [Calendar Service Calendar - August 2021](#)
 - Thursday 19th: In certain circumstances, correspondence letters sent to Veterans and beneficiaries with foreign addresses will have the complete address truncated to fit the address window on envelopes. (Steps outlined for Letter Creator)
- [VA Form 21-686c, Application Request to Add and/or Remove Dependents](#)