



Privacy Impact Assessment for the VA IT System called:

# Managed Services - Veterans Evaluation Services (VES) Assessing

Veterans Benefit Administration (VBA)

Medical Disability Examination Office (MDEO)

System ID# 195

Date PIA submitted for review:

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System Contacts:

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## Abstract

*The abstract provides the simplest explanation for “what does the system do for VA?”.*

The Managed Services - Veterans Evaluation Services (VES) Assessing system is designed to process compensation and pension (C&P) cases for the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). The VES system is in-house developed system that provides scheduling and tracking of medical disability exam requests. The system’s goal is to secure, track, and then submit the completed Disability Benefits Questionnaire (DBQ) results back to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) when the case is completed. VES Services performs medical exams of veterans who are in the process of applying for veteran benefits.

By providing a centralized data collection system, the VES system enables the VA to efficiently and effectively collect, manage and access Veteran medical disability exam data and supporting documentation. The secure transmission of Veteran data, including Personally Identifiable Information (PII), outside the VA system to medical provider contractor and back to VA is a major component of the VES system.

The data transmissions are one-way to the Veterans Benefit Management System (VBMS) at the Philadelphia Information Technology Center (ITC). The VES Office Management System (OMS), located in Houston, TX, uses secure file transfers via the Internet using Attachmate’s Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) 140-02 compliant Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) software.

## Overview

*The overview is the most important section of the Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA). A thorough and clear overview gives the reader the appropriate context to understand the responses in the PIA. The overview should contain the following elements:*

### *1 General Description*

- A. What is the business purpose of the program, IT system, or technology and how it relates to the program office and agency mission?*

VES processes exam requests from the VA VBMS systems via DAS and manages the delivery of medical disability results to the VA for the determination of benefits for Veterans. This web application provides a secure portal for operations staff to schedule and review the quality of medical exam results, allows providers to perform and record the results of exams they perform for Veterans, and allows Veterans to track their appointments. The VES system supports coordination of Contract Exam Management requests and the transmission of Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQ) results back to the VA.

- B. Who is the owner or has control of the IT system or project? If the system has an eMASS entry, ensure this information matches with the eMASS entry.*

Managed Services - Veterans Evaluation Services (VES) Assessing  
2. Information Collection and Sharing

- C. *Indicate the expected number of individuals whose information is stored in the system and include a brief description of the typical client or affected individual?*

Veterans Evaluation Services (VES) Assessing system is an application used by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to support the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Compensation and Pension Service (C&P) in providing evaluations and processing examinations in all US states and territories for the Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN). VES Services performs medical exams of veterans who are in the process of applying for veteran benefits. The data transmissions are two-way via DAS to and from VES.

This system has been identified as a system containing partial Social Security Numbers (SSNs) and is being marked appropriately in order to allow the VA to report appropriately and move forward in meeting requirements of the Fraud Prevention Act of 2017 and the Consolidate Appropriations Act of 2018. SSNs are sent as part of the Compensation and Pension (C+P) forms by the VA and included in medical records for the Veteran. Truncated (last 4x digits) of SSNs are used to identify Veterans and validate their identity within the VES system. The expected number of individuals whose information is stored in the system is approximately 3.5 million.

Check if Applicable	Demographic of individuals
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Veterans or Dependents
<input type="checkbox"/>	VA Employees
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clinical Trainees
<input type="checkbox"/>	VA Contractors
<input type="checkbox"/>	Members of the Public/Individuals
<input type="checkbox"/>	Volunteers

- D. *What is a general description of the information in the IT system and the purpose for collecting this information?*

The VES system contains personally identifiable information (PII) of Veterans, including names, dates of birth, contact information, as well as provider information, such as names, National Provider Identifiers (NPIs), and contact details. The purpose of collecting this information is to facilitate the processing of exam requests from the VA's Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) and to

manage the delivery of medical disability exam results to the VA, ultimately supporting the determination of benefits for Veterans.

*E. What information sharing is conducted by the IT system? A general description of the modules and components, where relevant, and their functions.*

The VES system shares information with the VA's Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) to facilitate the processing of Veteran claims and examination requests. The system consists of the following modules/components and their functions:

- Exam Request Module: Receives exam requests from VBMS via DAS.
- Exam Management Module: Manages the scheduling and delivery of medical disability exams.
- Results Management Module: Collects and stores medical disability exam results from providers.
- Results Transmission Module: Transmits exam results back to VBMS for benefits determination.

The system shares Veteran PII and provider information with these modules to support the claims process, ensuring seamless communication between the VA and VES.

*F. Are the modules/subsystems only applicable if information is shared?*

No, the modules are used for VES system in support of the Medical Disability Examinations Office (MDEO) for Veterans claims processing by the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)

*G. Is the system operated in more than one site to include primary and secondary site, and if so, a description of how use of the system and PII is maintained consistently in all sites and if the same controls are used across sites?*

This is an on- premises solution with approved connection to GovCloud components for the telephonic support the patient providers and all PII is in a closed system.

### *3. Legal Authority and System of Record Notices (SORN)*

*H. What is the citation of the legal authority?*

VES is operating under the following examples of legal authority:

- Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA)
- VA Directive 6500, VA Cybersecurity Program, and Handbook 6500, Risk Management Framework for VA Information Systems VA information Security Program
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Security Rule, 45 C.F.R. Part 160

- 38 United States Code (U.S.C.) §§ 5721-5728, Veteran's Benefits, Information Security
- Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-130, Appendix III, Security of Federal Automated Information Systems
- 18 U.S.C. 641 Criminal Code: Public Money, Property or Records
- 18 U.S.C. 1905 Criminal Code: Disclosure of Confidential Information

*I. What is the SORN?*

*VA Compensation, Pension, Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Records – VA” 58VA21/22/28 (November 8, 2021). This SORN can be found online at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-11-08/pdf/2021-24372.pdf>*

*J. If the system is in the process of being modified and a SORN exists, will the SORN require amendment or revision and approval.*

No modification and the SORN covers cloud usage and storage

**4. System Changes**

*K. Will the business processes change due to the information collection and sharing?*

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No

*L. Will the technology changes impact information collection and sharing?*

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No

## **Section 1. Characterization of the Information**

The following questions are intended to define the scope of the information requested and collected as well as the reasons for its collection as part of the program, IT system, or technology being developed.

### **1.1 Information collected, used, disseminated, created, or maintained in the system.**

*Identify and list all Sensitive Personal Information (SPI) that is collected and stored in the system, including Individually Identifiable Information (III), Individually Identifiable Health Information (IIHI), Protected Health Information (PHI), and Privacy- Protected Information. For additional information on these information types and definitions, please see VA Directives and Handbooks in the 6500 series (<https://vaww.va.gov/vapubs/>). If the system creates information (for example, a score, analysis, or report), list the information the system is responsible for creating.*

*If a requesting system receives information from another system, such as a response to a background check, describe what information is returned to the requesting system.  
This question is related to privacy control AP-1, Authority to Collect, and AP-2, Purpose Specification.*

*The information selected below must match the information provided in question 2.1 as well as the data elements columns in 4.1 and 5.1. It must also match the information provided in question 3.4 of the PTA.*

Please check any information listed below that your system collects, uses, disseminates, creates, or maintains. If additional SPI is collected, used, disseminated, created, or maintained, please list those in the text box below:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Name  | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Information                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Number (ICN)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Full</b> Social Security Number   | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Insurance Beneficiary Numbers     | <input type="checkbox"/> Military History/Service Connection                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Partial</b> Social Security Number  | <input type="checkbox"/> Account Numbers                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Next of Kin   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Date of Birth   | <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate/License Numbers <sup>1</sup> | <input type="checkbox"/> Date of Death   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother's Maiden Name   | <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle License Plate Number             | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Email Address                                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal Mailing Address  | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet Protocol (IP) Address Numbers   | <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Data Interchange Personal Identifier (EDIPI) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal Phone Number(s)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Medications                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Data Elements (List Below)             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Fax Number  | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Records                          |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal Email Address  | <input type="checkbox"/> Race/Ethnicity                           |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Contact Information (Name, Phone Number, etc. of a Different Individual) | <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Identification Number                |  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Record Number                    |  |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex                           |  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Control                       |  |

Other PII/PHI data elements: Diagnostic test result, file number, Completed Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQ) form

## 1.2 List the sources of the information in the system

*These questions are related to privacy controls DI-1, Data Quality, and IP-1, Consent.*

*1.2a List the individual, entity, or entities providing the specific information identified above. For example, is the information collected directly from the individual as part of an application for a benefit, or is it collected from other sources such as commercial data aggregators?*

To receive Compensation and Pension (C&P) claims from the VA, to process the claim using VA Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQ) using a network of appropriate providers, and to return the results to the VA. These data transfers are done through encrypted communications channel using Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) and/or Secure Socket Layer (SSL) communications. Any outsider seeing this communication would not be able to interpret anything meaningful as the data is scrambled/encrypted to

<sup>1</sup> \*Specify type of Certificate or License Number (e.g., Occupational, Education, Medical)

an outsider. FIPS 140-2 AES 256 is applied to all data sets. The information processed by the system is from individuals (veterans)

*1.2b Describe why information from sources other than the individual is required? For example, if a program's system is using data from a commercial aggregator of information or data taken from public Web sites, state the fact that this is where the information is coming from and then in question indicate why the system is using this source of data.*

None

*1.2c Does the system create information (for example, a score, analysis, or report), list the system as a source of information?*

No

### **1.3 Methods of information collection**

*These questions are related to privacy controls DI-1, Data Quality, and IP-1, Consent.*

*1.3a This question is directed at the means of collection from the sources listed in question 1.2. Information may be collected directly from an individual, received via electronic transmission from another system, or created by the system itself. Specifically, is information collected through technologies or other technologies used in the storage or transmission of information in identifiable form?*

The initial information, veteran contact information and medical history, is directly downloaded out of VBMS by our downloading team. Once the case is accepted and built within OMS, exams are scheduled accordingly. Data entry is performed by the provider for their Disability Benefit Questionnaires (DBQs) for that specific veteran on the VES portal. While a veteran may see multiple providers for multiple conditions, only the specified DBQs assigned to that veteran are visible to the provider. The provider fills out the DBQ on the OMS portal, SSL secured in transit, and the data is stored on encrypted volumes for data at rest.

*1.3b If the information is collected on a form and is subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act, what is the form's OMB control number and the agency form number?*

The VES OMS system stores the data initially supplied by the VA via a download from VBMS exclusively. This data includes the immediate claim as well as medical history associated with the veteran. All data is used expressly to build a case for the veteran and establish all potential conditions that the veteran suffers from. The veteran speaks to a case builder within VES through Q+A regarding all potential conditions so this data is voluntarily supplied by the veteran. Only DBQ data results are stored from a provider's exam and Q+A with the veteran. All data that VES uses ultimately goes into building a complete set of exams for the veteran.

Minor amounts of metadata are maintained for reporting, security, or operational needs. Data such as IP addresses and time spent per DBQ are examples of the metadata

maintained. This data is solely and exclusively used within VES and without a 3rd party to improve the provider coverage, improve timeliness, clarify common DBQ questions, address billing accuracy, or improve the security of the OMS system.

#### **1.4 Information checks for accuracy, and how often will it be checked.**

*These questions are related to privacy controls DI-1, Data Quality, and DI-2, Data Integrity and Integrity Board.*

*1.4a Discuss whether and how often information stored in the system is checked for accuracy. Is information in the system checked against any other source of information (within or outside your organization) before the information is used to make decisions about an individual? For example, is there a computer matching agreement in place with another government agency? For systems that receive data from internal data sources or VA IT systems, describe the system checks to ensure that data corruption has not occurred during transmission.*

Accuracy is established throughout the process of case handling. The case builder verifies the initial PII with the veteran on the phone once the veteran's identity is established. The data available to the provider is reviewed as part of the DBQ process during completion of the DBQ. The provider renders professional opinion or judgement through the DBQ completion process.

Finally, after a DBQ is completed, the VES QA team reviews every DBQ. The DBQ is audited for completion of all necessary information. Secondly, the providers completed DBQ response is audited to find any potentially conflicting conditions for further clarification by the QA team. Once the provider has addressed all issues to the satisfaction of the QA team then the completed case is submitted to the VA.

*1.4b Does the system check for accuracy by accessing a commercial aggregator of information, describe this process and the levels of accuracy required by the contract?*

No

#### **1.5 Identify the specific legal authorities, arrangements, and agreements that defined the collection of information.**

*List the full legal authority for operating the system, specifically the authority to collect the information listed in question 1.1. Provide the authorities in a manner understandable to any potential reader, i.e., do not simply provide a legal citation; use statute names or regulations in addition to citations. Legal authorities include Federal laws, regulations, statutes, and Executive Orders. This question is related to privacy control AP-1, Authority to Collect*

VES is operating under the following examples of legal authority:

- 58VA21/22/28 - Compensation, Pension, Education and Vocation Rehabilitations and Employment Records – VA
- Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA)



- VA Directive 6500, VA Cybersecurity Program, and Handbook 6500, Risk Management Framework for VA Information Systems VA information Security Program
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Security Rule, 45 C.F.R. Part 160
- 38 United States Code (U.S.C.) §§ 5721-5728, Veteran's Benefits, Information Security
- Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-130, Appendix III, Security of Federal Automated Information Systems
- 18 U.S.C. 641 Criminal Code: Public Money, Property or Records
- 18 U.S.C. 1905 Criminal Code: Disclosure of Confidential Information

### **1.6 PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Characterization of the information**

*Consider the specific data elements collected and discuss the potential privacy risks and what steps, if any are currently being taken to mitigate those identified risks.*

*Consider the following Fair Information Practice Principles (FIPPs) when assessing the risk to individual privacy:*

*Principle of Purpose Specification: The collection ties with the purpose of the underlying mission of the organization and its enabling authority.*

*Principle of Minimization: The information is directly relevant and necessary to accomplish the specific purposes of the program.*

*Principle of Individual Participation: The program, to the extent possible and practical, collects information directly from the individual.*

*Principle of Data Quality and Integrity: VA policies and procedures must ensure that personally identifiable information is accurate, complete, and current.  
This is related to privacy control AR-1, Governance and Privacy Program, and AR-2, Privacy Impact and Risk Assessment.*

Follow the format below when entering your risk assessment:

**Privacy Risk:** Medium-An example being an insider threat to PII data.

A privacy risk is the unauthorized access or disclosure of sensitive information. This could lead to identity theft, fraud or other forms of privacy violation, causing harm to individuals whose information is compromised.

**Mitigation:** Mitigation is complete and extensive through the following principles and solutions:

Principle of Purpose Specification: Under contractual and regulatory oversight the VA has provided the data necessary to perform the MDE process. The purpose of the data collection

directly leads to billable MDEs and the completion of DBQs to establish veteran benefits. Internally the SSN is masked for employees so that this is not a risk.

Principle of Minimization: All case contact information and medical history are necessary for the case completion. Contact information is necessary to establish identity and complete exams. Medical history is necessary for the provider to establish any prior vs. service-created conditions. The minimum information needed is provided to employees per these examples above.

Principle of Individual Participation: Information from the veteran is provided to establish identity, establish symptoms and history for the DBQ exam process in a provider/patient relationship, and to personally correct any errors in the historic data.

Principle of Data Quality and Integrity: All policies and procedures, previously outlined, regarding data quality provide the most accurate and available data for the veteran. Data integrity is maintained through security procedures, policies, and systems including encryption at rest and in transit. Thumb drives are prohibited to protect PII data.

## Section 2. Uses of the Information

The following questions are intended to clearly delineate the use of information and the accuracy of the data being used.

### 2.1 Describe how the information in the system that will be used in support of the program's business purpose.

Contact information such as the Name, address, zip code, phone numbers, and Email address are used to establish the initial veteran contact and continued contact for scheduling. Information like the date of birth and/or File Numbers are used to validate the identity of the veteran and ensure data integrity. Medical records and current medication data is used to establish any conditions as part of the provider/patient exam. Metadata such as the IP address is used for security purposes.

*Identify and list each use (both internal and external to VA) of the information collected or maintained. This question is related to privacy control AP-2, Purpose Specification.*

PII/PHI Data Element	Internal Use	External Use
Name	File Identification purposes	Not used
Data of Birth	File Identification purposes	Not used
Personal Mailing Address	File Identification purposes	Not used
Personal Phone Number(s)	File Identification purposes	Not used
Personal Email Address	File Identification purposes	Not used
Sex	File Identification purposes	Not used
Diagnostic test results	File Identification purposes	Not used
File number	File Identification purposes	Not used
Completed Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQ) form	File Identification purposes	Not used

## **2.2 Describe the types of tools used to analyze data and what type of data may be produced.**

*These questions are related to privacy controls DI-1, Data Quality, DI-2, Data Integrity and Integrity Board, and SE-1, Inventory of Personally Identifiable Information.*

*2.2a Many systems sift through large amounts of information in response to a user inquiry or programmed functions. Systems may help identify areas that were previously not obvious and need additional research by agents, analysts, or other employees. Some systems perform complex analytical tasks resulting in, among other types of data, matching, relational analysis, scoring, reporting, or pattern analysis. Describe any type of analysis the system conducts and the data that is created from the analysis?*

The back-end database of Veterans Evaluation Services (VES) is a Microsoft SQL database and many reports are used within VES for operational improvement only. Native SQL is used without a reporting server, data mart, or other data analysis services. No individual or aggregate information of individuals is performed for analysis for internal use or external consumption by a 3rd party.

On occasion VAROs have requested reports for their geographic area or case load for their area. In addition, reports for billing history and detail have been requested by the VA. VES has consistently provided data to these divisions of the VA as requested.

Internally data is collected regarding providers per area, provider specialties in a geographic area, case load by area, turn-around time for cases, wait time for providers, or other criteria to improve VES operations.

None of these reports utilize PII for individual veterans and are primarily tailored for improvement in operations. As a result, no reports would constitute any invasion into a veteran's privacy.

*2.2b If the system creates or makes available new or previously unutilized information about an individual, explain what will be done with the newly derived information. Will it be placed in the individual's existing record? Will a new record be created? Will any action be taken against or for the individual identified because of the newly derived data? If a new record is created, will the newly created information be accessible to Government employees who make determinations about the individual? If so, explain fully under which circumstances and by whom that information will be used.*

No. The VA provides all data to VES and no new records are created.

## **2.3 How the information in the system is secured.**

*These questions are related to security and privacy controls SC-9, Transmission Confidentiality, and SC-28, Protection of Information at Rest.*

*2.3a What measures are in place to protect data in transit and at rest?*

FIPS140-2 encryption in transit and at rest. In transit using SSL and at rest using Self Encrypting Drives (SED)

*2.3b If the system is collecting, processing, or retaining Social Security Numbers, are there additional protections in place to protect SSNs? (refer to PTA question 3.8).*

This system does not collect or process or store SSNs.

*2.3c How is PII/PHI safeguarded in accordance with OMB Memorandum M-06-15?*

VES has Data Lost Prevention (DLP) enabled on the VES email servers. DLP value is configured to prevent emailing of string values that resembles SSN and others flagged as PII.

All VES employees undergo mandatory annual corporate ethics and rules and behavior training to ensure they comply with protecting all VA data in accordance to VA 6500.1. Data quality checks are completed through deployed on-premise automated tools that alerts the SOC of any changes or anomalies. The product features data profiling, data discovery and monitoring, as well as a 360-degree view that lets users uncover information about extended relationships within data. Workflow management functionality lets customers construct and modify workflows while hierarchy management enables a graphical display and navigational tools.

## **2.4 PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Use of the information.**

*Describe any types of controls that may be in place to ensure that information is handled in accordance with the uses described above. Example: Describe if training for users of the project covers how to appropriately use information. Describe the disciplinary programs or system controls (i.e. denial of access) that are in place if an individual is inappropriately using the information.*

*Consider the following FIPPs below to assist in providing a response:*

*Principle of Transparency:* *Is the PIA and SORN, if applicable, clear about the uses of the information?*

*Principle of Use Limitation:* *Is the use of information contained in the system relevant to the mission of the project?*

*This question is related to privacy control AR-4, Privacy Monitoring and Auditing, AR-5, Privacy Awareness and Training, and SE-2, Privacy Incident response.*

*2.4a How is access to the PII determined?*

Within the Veterans Evaluation Services system security controls exhibit the least-access rule of information in providing the minimum information necessary for VES employees to complete the requirements of their position. For the vast majority of our employees the majority of the PII is blocked from viewing. No SSNs are visible to the employee and more than 90% of the company does not have the permission to view full SSNs. In a tiny minority

of cases VES has received incorrect SSNs and a minority of employees can override the SSN value within cases. Only employees previously approved by upper management within the call center have access to the full SSN. This is less than 10% of the company and approximately 10x individuals.

*2.4b Are criteria, procedures, controls, and responsibilities regarding access documented? How are the documented, i.e. Policy, SOP, other. And where is this documentation located?*

PII data is relegated to each department as well on a least-access rule as well. Only the bookmarking, QA, and case builder teams can see PII data while the Call center and many other departments cannot see any PII data. This reduces the privacy risks to veterans as well. A privacy statement is included in all documentation sent to veterans such as the paperwork behind a scheduled appointment whether Emailed or sent in printed form. This provides a clear statement to the veteran regarding the use of their PII data and the veteran's rights.

*2.4c Does access require manager approval?*

Yes. TMS training is required prior to any access being granted.

*2.4d Is access to the PII being monitored, tracked, or recorded?*

Yes. Solar Winds is used for all log reviews and managed by VES.

*2.4e Who is responsible for assuring safeguards for the PII as identified in eMASS?*

The System Owner and the assigned ISSO.

## **Section 3. Retention of Information**

The following questions are intended to outline how long information will be retained after the initial collection.

### **3.1 What information is retained?**

*Identify and list all information collected from question 1.1 that is **retained** by the system. This question is related to privacy controls DM-1, Minimization of Personally Identifiable Information, and DM-2, Data Retention and Disposal*

All case information outlined in question 1.1 is retained within OMS for a 2 year plus case lifetime period. The case lifetime period is defined as the time it took to process a case. Medical records, or PII, are also retained for the same time-period. The information includes:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Personal Mailing Address
- Sex
- Personal Phone Number

- Personal Email Address
- Diagnostic Test Results
- File Number
- Completed Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQ) form

### **3.2 How long is information retained?**

*In some cases, VA may choose to retain files in active status and archive them after a certain period of time. State active file retention periods, as well as archived records, in number of years, for the information and record types. For example, financial data held within your system may have a different retention period than medical records or education records held within your system, please be sure to list each of these retention periods. If the system is using cloud technology, will it be following the NARA approved retention length and schedule <https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/grs>? This question is related to privacy control DM-2, Data Retention and Disposal.*

Per the contract, all case information and PII are retained for a 3 year plus case lifetime period. The data lifetime is the case Over 95% of cases are processed in < 30 days with the remaining minority of cases typically processed in < 90 days. This makes the maximum time retention 3 years plus 90 days at most. The longest retention requirements are at most 4 years (1 year for the case + 3 years retention).

### **3.3 The retention schedule approved by the VA records office and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).**

*An approved records schedule must be obtained for any IT system that allows the retrieval of a record via a personal identifier. The VA records officer will assist in providing a proposed schedule. Please work with the system VA Records Officer to answer these questions. This question is related to privacy control DM-2, Data Retention and Disposal.*

*3.3a Are all records stored within the system of record indicated on an approved disposition authority?*

Yes

*3.3b Please indicate each records retention schedule, series, and disposition authority?*

VES uses the General Records Schedule 3.1 and 3.2 (GRS 20), approved by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) as our record retention and disposal schedule. The links to the records schedules are:

- <https://www.archives.gov/files/records-mgmt/grs/grs03-1.pdf>
- <https://www.archives.gov/files/records-mgmt/grs/grs03-2.pdf>

### **3.4 What are the procedures for the elimination or transfer of SPI?**

*Explain how records are destroyed, eliminated, or transferred to NARA at the end of their mandatory retention period. Please give the details of the process. For example, are paper records shredded on site, or by a shredding company and accompanied by a certificate of destruction, etc.? This question is related to privacy control DM-2, Data Retention and Disposal.*

All SPI comprised of PII are automatically purged from the VES system via a record deletion on a 3 year plus 9- day cycle. PII is archived after 1 year to tape and after 1 year the tape is purged or available to be overwritten. Both tapes and all storage is encrypted so data at rest is secure as well. Tapes are physically destroyed once this lifecycle is exceeded. In all cases automated SQL scripts or batch files delete the data in question.

Electronic data and files of any type, including PII are destroyed in accordance with VA Directive 6500 VA Cybersecurity Program (February 24, 2021) and VA Handbook 6500.1 Electronic Media Sanitization. When required, this data is deleted from their file location and then permanently deleted from the deleted items or Recycle bin. Magnetic media is wiped and sent out for destruction. Digital media is shredded or sent out for destruction.

### **3.5 Does the system, where feasible, use techniques to minimize the risk to privacy by using PII for research, testing, or training?**

*Organizations often use PII for testing new applications or information systems prior to deployment. Organizations also use PII for research purposes and for training. These uses of PII increase the risks associated with the unauthorized disclosure or misuse of the information. Please explain what controls have been implemented to protect PII used for testing, training, and research. This question is related to privacy control DM-3, Minimization of PII Used in Testing, Training and Research.*

**Privacy Risk:** The PII being separated by department, permissions structure, and physical placement already reduces the privacy risk to all retained cases and PII. As a result, the SPI risks are the same for a new case as well as a retained case which has been processed. Annual privacy and security training occurs for all employees working with cases.

**Mitigation:** Extensive encryption of production and archived/retained cases protects all data at rest including PII. Audit records within OMS outline any activity on any case so a full history of activity on an archived case can be built.

### **3.6 PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Retention of information**

*Discuss the risks associated with the length of time data is retained and what steps, if any, are currently being taken to mitigate those identified risks. (Work with your System Privacy Officer (PO) to complete all Privacy Risk questions inside the document in this section).*

*While we understand that establishing retention periods for records is a formal process, there are policy considerations behind how long a project keeps information. The longer a project retains information, the longer it needs to secure the information and assure its accuracy and integrity. The proposed schedule should match the requirements of the Privacy Act to keep the minimum amount of PII for the minimum amount of time, while meeting the Federal Records Act. The schedule should align with the stated purpose and mission of the system.*

*Consider the following FIPPs below to assist in providing a response:*

**Principle of Minimization:** *The project retains only the information necessary for its purpose, additionally, the PII is retained only for as long as necessary and relevant to fulfill the specified purposes.*

**Principle of Data Quality and Integrity:** *The PIA should describe policies and procedures for how PII that is no longer relevant and necessary is purged.  
This question is related to privacy controls DM-1, Minimization of Personally Identifiable Information, and DM-2, Data Retention and Disposal.*

Follow the format below:

**Privacy Risk:**

A privacy risk here is the potential for unauthorized access to sensitive information retained beyond its necessary lifespan. This is characterized as a Medium.

**Mitigation:** The data purging processes are designed to be fully FIPPS compliant and to destroy all unnecessary data. Through keeping the minimum amount of data the minimum amount of time Veterans Evaluation Services works to fulfill the necessary data to complete a case and also protect the private information of our Veterans.

## **Section 4. Internal Sharing/Receiving/Transmitting and Disclosure**

The following questions are intended to define the scope of information sharing/receiving/transmitting within VA.

### **PII Mapping of Components**

4.1a Managed Services - Veterans Evaluation Services (VES) Assessing consists of 71 key components (servers/databases/instances/applications/software/application programming interfaces (API)). Each component has been analyzed to determine if any elements of that component collect PII. The type of PII collected by Managed Services - Veterans Evaluation Services (VES) Assessing and the reasons for the collection of the PII are in the table below.

**Note:** Due to the PIA being a public facing document, please do not include server names in the table. The first table of 3.9a in the PTA should be used to answer this question.

*Internal Components Table*

<b>Component Name (Database, Instances, Application, Software, Application Program Interface (API) etc.)</b>	<b>Does this system collect PII? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Does this system store PII? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Type of PII (SSN, DOB, etc.)</b>	<b>Reason for Collection/ Storage of PII</b>	<b>Safeguards</b>
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<b>that contains PII/PHI</b>					
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**4.1b List internal organizations information is shared/received/transmitted, the information shared/received/transmitted, and the purpose, and how the information is transmitted.**

**NOTE: Question 3.9b (second table) on Privacy Threshold Analysis should be used to answer this question.**

*Identify and list the names of any program offices, contractor-supported IT systems, and any other organization or IT system within VA with which information is shared.*

*State the purpose for the internal sharing. If you have specific authority to share the information, provide a citation to the authority.*

*For each interface with a system outside your program office, state what specific data elements (PII/PHI) are shared with the specific program office, contractor-supported IT system, and any other organization or IT system within VA.*

*Describe how the information is transmitted. For example, is the information transmitted electronically, by paper, or by some other means? Is the information shared in bulk, on a case-by-case basis, or does the sharing partner have direct access to the information?*

*This question is related to privacy controls AP-2, Purpose Specification, AR-3, Privacy Requirements for Contractors and Service Providers, AR-8, Accounting of Disclosures, TR-1, Privacy Notice, and UL-1, Internal Use.*

**Data Shared with Internal Organizations**

<b><i>IT system and/or Program office. Information is shared/received with</i></b>	<b><i>List the purpose of the information being shared /received with the specified program office or IT system</i></b>	<b><i>List PII/PHI data elements shared/received/transmitted.</i></b>	<b><i>Describe the method of transmittal</i></b>
Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) Exam Management System (EMS) via Data Access Service (DAS)	Exam Requests are sent to the VES from VBMS via DAS. Results are sent back to VBMS via DAS.	Veteran's Name Veteran's DOB Veteran's e-mail address Veteran's phone number Completed Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQ) forms Diagnostic test results File numbers	Secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP) or XML packages

<i>IT system and/or Program office. Information is shared/received with</i>	<i>List the purpose of the information being shared /received with the specified program office or IT system</i>	<i>List PII/PHI data elements shared/received/transmitted.</i>	<i>Describe the method of transmittal</i>
		Personal Mailing Address Sex	

#### **4.2 PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Internal sharing and disclosure**

*Discuss the privacy risks associated with the sharing of information within the VA network and what steps, if any, are currently being taken to mitigate those identified risks. (Work with your System ISSO to complete all Privacy Risk questions in this section.).*

*This question is related to privacy control UL-1, Internal Use.*

**Privacy Risk:** Medium-An example would be an employee attempting to abuse PHI/PII information through sharing with an unauthorized 3rd party (hackers, etc.).

**Mitigation:** The use of security groups, data protection from data leaks via Email, USB, etc., and encryption for all PHI/PII data are some of the basic measures. Internally, group-based controls allow PII/PHI scrubbing for the data views that the majority of the employees see, with a minority, where deemed appropriate, having access to PII/PHI data.

Secure test and development efforts use only scrubbed data for of all test/development data devoid of valid PHI/PII.

Finally, HR and IT driven policies and procedures outline the best practices for intra-company use of Veteran data. These cover the usage and training to prevent the leakage of any Veteran records.

## **Section 5. External Sharing/Receiving and Disclosure**

The following questions are intended to define the content, scope, and authority for information sharing external to VA, which includes Federal, State, and local governments, and the private sector.

**5.1 List the external organizations (outside VA) that information shared/received. and information shared/received, and the purpose, and how the information transmitted and what measures are taken to ensure it is secure.**

**The sharing of information outside the agency must be compatible with the original collection. The sharing must be covered by an appropriate routine use in a SORN. If not covered, please describe under what legal mechanism the IT system is allowed to share the information in identifiable form or personally identifiable information outside of VA.**

**NOTE: Question 3.10 on Privacy Threshold Analysis should be used to answer this question.**

*Identify and list the names of any Federal, State, or local government agency or private sector organization with which information is shared.*

*For each interface with a system outside VA, state what specific data elements (PII/PHI) are shared with each specific partner.*

*What legal mechanisms, authoritative agreements, documentation, or policies are in place detailing the extent of the sharing and the duties of each party? For example, is the sharing of data compatible with your SORN? Then list the SORN and the applicable routine use from the SORN. Is there a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Computer Matching Agreement (CMA), or law that mandates the sharing of this information?*

*Describe how the information is transmitted to entities external to VA and what security measures have been taken to protect it during transmission.*

*This question is related to privacy control UL-2, Information Sharing with Third Parties*

**Data Shared with External Organizations**

<b><i>List IT System or External Program Office information is shared/received with</i></b>	<b><i>List the purpose of information being shared / received / transmitted</i></b>	<b><i>List the specific PII/PHI data elements that are processed (shared/received/transmitted)</i></b>	<b><i>List agreements such as: Contracts, MOU/ISA, BAA, SORN. etc. that permit external sharing (can be more than one)</i></b>	<b><i>List the method of transmission and the measures in place to secure data</i></b>
MuleSoft FedRAMP ID FR1818161169 Moderate 07/31/2019	Information is shared with MuleSoft to assist in information processing and patient interactions with the VES disability examination workflows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Veteran's Name</li> <li>•Veteran's DOB</li> <li>•Veteran's e-mail address</li> <li>•Veteran's phone number</li> <li>•Completed Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQ) forms</li> <li>•Diagnostic test results</li> <li>•File numbers</li> <li>•Personal Mailing Address</li> <li>•Sex</li> </ul>	ISA, Contract	Secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP) or XML packages

## **5.2 PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT: External sharing and disclosure**

*Discuss the privacy risks associated with the sharing of information outside the Department and what steps, if any, are currently being taken to mitigate those identified risks.*

*If no External Sharing listed on the table above, (State there is no external sharing in both the risk and mitigation fields).*

*Discuss whether access controls have been implemented and whether audit logs are regularly reviewed to ensure appropriate sharing outside of the Department. For example, is there a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), contract, or agreement in place with outside agencies or foreign governments.*

*Discuss how the sharing of information outside of the Department is compatible with the stated purpose and use of the original collection.*

*This question is related to privacy control AR-2, Privacy Impact and Risk Assessment, AR-3, Privacy Requirements for Contractors and Service Providers, and AR-4, Privacy Monitoring and Auditing*

Follow the format below:

### **Privacy Risk:**

The privacy risk of sharing data externally is the possibility of unauthorized access or misuse of sensitive information by third parties. This could include data breaches, unauthorized disclosure or exploitation of data for malicious purposes. This is characterized as Medium.

### **Mitigation:**

The mitigation is that Secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP) or XML packages are utilized and minimizes unauthorized access.

## **Section 6. Notice**

The following questions are directed at providing notice to the individual of the scope of information collected, the right to consent to uses of the information, and the right to decline to provide information.

**6.1 The notice provided to the individual before collection of the information. Please provide a copy and/or screen shot of a web notice of the notice as an Appendix-A 6.1 on the last page of the document. (A notice may include a posted privacy policy, a Privacy Act notice on forms, notice given to individuals by the sources system, or a system of records notice published in the Federal Register.) If notice was not provided, explain why.**

*These questions are related to privacy control TR-1, Privacy Notice, and TR-2, System of Records Notices and Privacy Act Statements, and TR-3, Dissemination of Privacy Program Information.*

*6.1a Provide the Privacy Notice provided to the public by this system or any source systems. Include a copy of the notice in Appendix A of the PIA, the Federal Register citation, or Privacy Statement from collection of information such as forms or surveys.*

As a contractor to the VA, all privacy acts are applicable to VES to implement in full. In addition, as a contractor to the VA all privacy notices are used within VES documents and grandfathered in use. VA privacy notices are posted within all physician forms for all Veterans utilizing VES services as a contractor for the VA.

Congress enacted Public Law 104-275, which authorized VA to contract for medical examinations from non-VA medical sources. The report stated a desire to see the contract medical examination authority expanded and made permanent. A subsequent contract was awarded under the same public law authority. The current contracts provided over 724,000 examination referrals during fiscal year 2017, and each referral, on average, results in 2-3 unique examination types, plus additional ancillary diagnostic services and Veteran travel benefits. This contract is anticipated to execute approximately of 7.7 million examination scheduling requests over the life of the 10-year contract.

Under VA awarded contract 36C10X19D0003 - project: Medical Disability Examinations (MDEs) under Section 504 of the Veterans' Benefits Improvements Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-275; 38 U.S.C. 5101) | Region 1 (Northeast) awarded to VES gives the authority to collect PII as documented in Title 38, United States Code, section 501(a) and Chapters 11, 13, 15, 18, 23, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 39, 51, 53, 55. The VA describes the purpose(s) for which PII is collected, used, maintained, and shared in its privacy notices. The SORN (58VA21/22/28) defines the information collected from Veterans and used in this system, and how the information is accessed and stored. The information collected is used to support the individual claim or claims the Veteran has been granted. VA SORN 58VA 21/22/28 is published at published at 84 FR 4138, November 8, 2021 and can be found at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-11-08/pdf/2021-24372.pdf> and meets the federal requirements for notification. Further, VA public publishes a Privacy Act Statement and Notice of Privacy Practices on its public facing websites where individuals request services.

*6.1b If notice was not provided, explain why.*

No notice. Not applicable because notice is provided.

*6.1c Provide how the notice provided at the time of collection meets the purpose of use for this system.*

As a contractor to the VA, all privacy acts are applicable to VES to implement in full. In addition, as a contractor to the VA all privacy notices are used within VES documents and grandfathered in use. VA privacy notices are posted within all physician forms for all Veterans utilizing VES services as a contractor for the VA.

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Under VA awarded contract VA119A-16-D-0039 - project: Medical Disability Examinations (MDEs) under Section 504 of the Veterans' Benefits Improvements Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-275; 38 U.S.C. 5101) | Region 1 (Northeast) awarded to VES gives the authority to collect PII as documented in Title 38, United States Code, section 501(a) and Chapters 11, 13, 15, 18, 23, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 39, 51, 53, 55. The VA describes the purpose(s) for which PII is collected, used, maintained, and shared in its privacy notices. The SORN (58VA21/22/28) defines the information collected from Veterans and used in this system, and how the information is accessed and stored. The information collected is used to support the individual claim or claims the Veteran has been granted. VA SORN 58VA 21/22/28 is published at published at 84 FR 4138, November 8, 2021, and can be found at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-11-08/pdf/2021-24372.pdf> and meets the federal requirements for notification. Further, VA public publishes a Privacy Act Statement and Notice of Privacy Practices on its public facing websites where individuals request services.

**6.2 Do individuals have the opportunity and right to decline to provide information? If so, is a penalty or denial of service attached?**

*This question is directed at whether the person from or about whom information is collected can decline to provide the information and if so, whether a penalty or denial of service is attached. This question is related to privacy control IP-1, Consent, IP-2, Individual Access, and IP-3, Redress.*

There is no penalty to decline information as all applicable information has been supplied by the VA as part of the case. PII is provided by the VA to VES with the initial case delivery. When verifying PII, all call center employees are instructed to correct or redact any PII that the Veteran electively chooses to. As long as VES can verify the identity of the Veteran, no other requirements exist to provide service to the Veteran and no penalties or denials of service will result.

**6.3 Do individuals have the right to consent to particular uses of the information? If so, how does the individual exercise the right?**

*This question is directed at whether an individual may provide consent for specific uses, or the consent is given to cover all uses (current or potential) of his or her information. If specific consent is required, how would the individual consent to each use? This question is related to privacy control IP-1, Consent.*

The only use of PII information for VES is to perform a disability benefits questionnaire (DBQ) for the Veteran. With the initial contact from the call center the Veteran can

choose to have his or her case returned to the VA. Yes, individuals can electively choose not to provide any PII to VES. If the case is returned, then the data is deleted from VES systems.

#### **6.4 PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Notice**

*Describe the potential risks associated with potentially insufficient notice and what steps, if any, are currently being taken to mitigate those identified risks. (Work with your Privacy Officer (PO) to complete all Privacy Risk questions inside the document this section).*

*Consider the following FIPPs below to assist in providing a response:*

*Principle of Transparency:* *This is referring to sufficient notice provided to the individual.*

*Principle of Use Limitation:* *The information used only for the purpose for which notice was provided either directly to the individual or through a public notice. The procedures in place must ensure that information is used only for the purpose articulated in the notice.*

*This question is related to privacy control TR-1, Privacy Notice, AR-2, Privacy Impact and Risk Assessment, and UL-1, Internal Use.*

Follow the format below:

**Privacy Risk:** : The only risks which exist are within a lack of clarity between the VA, the Veteran, and VES. The VA's privacy requirements are clearly outlined. The only risk is that the Veteran is unaware of the limits or extent of their privacy rights.

**Mitigation:** VES always works to communicate the rights and expectations to Veterans through forms. Additional training is planned for providers and additional information is planned to be released on the VES website

## **Section 7. Access, Redress, and Correction**

The following questions are directed at an individual's ability to ensure the accuracy of the information collected about him or her.

### **7.1 The procedures that allow individuals to gain access to their information.**

*These questions are related to privacy control IP-2, Individual Access, and AR-8, Accounting of Disclosures.*

*7.1a Cite any procedures or regulations your program has in place that allow access to information. These procedures, at a minimum, should include the agency's FOIA/Privacy Act practices, but may also include additional access provisions. **For example, if your program has a customer satisfaction unit, that information, along with phone and email contact information, should be listed in this section in addition to the agency's procedures. See 5 CFR 294 and the VA FOIA Web page at VA Public Access Link-Home (efoia-host.com) to obtain information about FOIA points of contact and information about agency FOIA processes.***

N/A. All customer request are managed by the VA to include FOIA request.

*7.1b If the system is exempt from the access provisions of the Privacy Act, please explain the basis for the exemption or cite the source where this explanation may be found, for example, a Final Rule published in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)?*

No exemption.

*7.1c If the system is not a Privacy Act system, please explain what procedures and regulations are in place that covers an individual gaining access to his or her information?*

Veterans may request access to Privacy Act records maintained by VA in writing. All requests to review must be received by direct mail, fax, in person, or by mail referral from another agency or VA office. All requests for access must be delivered to and reviewed by the System Manager for the concerned VBA system of records, the Regional Office Privacy Officer, or their designee. Each request must be date stamped and reviewed to determine whether the request for access should be granted. This process is outlined in the published SORN for the system.

## **7.2 What are the procedures for correcting inaccurate or erroneous information?**

*Describe the procedures and provide contact information for the appropriate person to whom such issues should be addressed? If the correction procedures are the same as those given in question 7.1, state as much. This question is related to privacy control IP-3, Redress, and IP-4, Complaint Management.*

Veterans may request amendment to Privacy Act records maintained by VA in writing. All requests for amendment must be received by direct mail, fax, in person, or by mail referral from another agency or VA office. All requests for amendment must be delivered to and reviewed by the Privacy Officer for the concerned VBA system of records This process for amendment of records outlined in the published SORN for the system.

## **7.3 How are individuals notified of the procedures for correcting their information?**

*How are individuals made aware of the procedures for correcting his or her information? This may be through notice at collection or other similar means. This question is meant to address the risk that even if procedures exist to correct information, if an individual is not made fully aware of the existence of those procedures, then the benefits of the procedures are significantly weakened. This question is related to privacy control IP-3, Redress, and IP-4, Complaint Management.*

Veterans may request amendment to Privacy Act records maintained by VA in writing. All requests for amendment must be received by direct mail, fax, in person, or by mail referral from another agency or VA office. All requests for amendment must be delivered to and reviewed by the Privacy Officer for the concerned VBA system of records This process for amendment of records outlined in the published SORN for the system.



This is guided by 38 CFR § 1.579 - Amendment of records.

(a) Any individual may request amendment of any Department of Veterans Affairs record pertaining to him or her. Not later than 10 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) after the date or receipt of such request, the Department of Veterans Affairs will acknowledge in writing such receipt. The Department of Veterans Affairs will complete the review to amend or correct a record as soon as reasonably possible, normally within 30 days from the receipt of the request (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) unless unusual circumstances preclude completing action within that time. The Department of Veterans Affairs will promptly either:

(1) Correct any part thereof which the individual believes is not accurate, relevant, timely or complete; or

(2) Inform the individual of the Department of Veterans Affairs refusal to amend the record in accordance with his or her request, the reason for the refusal, the procedures by which the individual may request a review of that refusal by the Secretary or designee, and the name and address of such official.

(Authority: 5 U.S.C. 552a(d)(2))

(b) The administration or staff office having jurisdiction over the records involved will establish procedures for reviewing a request from an individual concerning the amendment of any record or information pertaining to the individual, for making a determination on the request, for an appeal within the Department of Veterans Affairs of an initial adverse Department of Veterans Affairs determination, and for whatever additional means may be necessary for each individual to be able to exercise fully, his or her right under 5 U.S.C. 552a.

(1) Headquarters officials designated as responsible for the amendment of records or information located in Central Office and under their jurisdiction include, but are not limited to: Secretary; Deputy Secretary, as well as other appropriate individuals responsible for the conduct of business within the various Department of Veterans Affairs administrations and staff offices. These officials will determine and advise the requester of the identifying information required to relate the request to the appropriate record, evaluate and grant or deny requests to amend, review initial adverse determinations upon request, and assist requesters desiring to amend or appeal initial adverse determinations or learn further of the provisions for judicial review.

(2) The following field officials are designated as responsible for the amendment of records or information located in facilities under their jurisdiction, as appropriate: The Director of each Center, Domiciliary, Medical Center, Outpatient Clinic, Regional Office, Supply Depot, and Regional Counsels. These officials will function in the same manner at field facilities as that specified in the preceding subparagraph for headquarters officials in Central Office.

(Authority: 5 U.S.C. 552a(f)(4))

(c) Any individual who disagrees with the Department of Veterans Affairs refusal to amend his or her record may request a review of such refusal. The Department of Veterans Affairs will complete such review not later than 30 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) from the date on which the individual request such review and make a final determination unless, for good cause shown, the Secretary extends such 30-day period. If, after review, the Secretary or designee also refuses to amend the record in accordance with the request the individual will be advised of the right to file with the Department of Veterans Affairs a concise statement setting forth the reasons for his or her disagreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs refusal and also advise of the provisions for judicial review of the reviewing official's determination. (5 U.S.C. 552a(g)(1)(A))

(d) In any disclosure, containing information about which the individual has filed a statement of disagreement, occurring after the filing of the statement under paragraph (c) of this section, the Department of Veterans Affairs will clearly note any part of the record which is disputed and provide copies of the statement (and, if the Department of Veterans Affairs deems it appropriate, copies of a concise statement of the Department of Veterans Affairs reasons for not making the amendments requested) to persons or other agencies to whom the disputed record has been disclosed. (5 U.S.C. 552a(d)(4)) (38 U.S.C. 501)

#### **7.4 If no formal redress is provided, what alternatives are available to the individual?**

*Redress is the process by which an individual gains access to his or her records and seeks corrections or amendments to those records. Redress may be provided through the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and also by other processes specific to a program, system, or group of systems. **Example: Some projects allow users to directly access and correct/update their information online. This helps ensure data accuracy.***

*This question is related to privacy control IP-3, Redress, and IP-4, Complaint Management.*

Any changes to the case are submitted back to the VA through the case completion via the VES clarifications department. If a Veteran requests changes to contact information, etc. this is handled by the VES call center after the Veteran's identity is established. If there are significant changes to the PII for the veteran this is sent by VES clarifications to the VA.

#### **7.5 PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Access, redress, and correction**

*Discuss what risks there currently are related to the Department's access, redress, and correction policies and procedures for this system and what, if any, steps have been taken to mitigate those risks. **For example, if a project does not allow individual access, the risk of inaccurate data needs to be discussed in light of the purpose of the project. For example, providing access to ongoing law enforcement activities could negatively impact the program's effectiveness because the individuals involved might change their behavior.** (Work with your Privacy Officer (PO) to complete all Privacy Risk questions in this section).*

*Consider the following FIPPs below to assist in providing a response:*

*Principle of Individual Participation: The individual must be provided with the ability to find out whether a project maintains a record relating to them.*

*Principle of Individual Participation: If access and/or correction is denied, then is the individual must be provided notice as to why the denial was made and how to challenge such a denial.*

*Principle of Individual Participation: The mechanism by which an individual is able to prevent information about them obtained for one purpose from being used for other purposes without their knowledge.*

*This question is related to privacy control IP-3, Redress.*

Follow the format below:

**Privacy Risk:** Medium and risks to PII and privacy are addressed under the framework of privacy protection and rights that the VA has created. Since VES does not originate the data, and since no information is shared with 3rd parties, VES does not have the risks associated with the creation or dissemination of PII or PHI data.

**Mitigation:** Existing steps outline the procedures to the call center employees of VES, which are the first line of Veteran communications. This and role-based security groups help secure the IT side of the PII management process. Per prior statements, the process and frameworks governing PII and PHI are defined under VA and NIST standards and followed by all VES employees. Furthermore, all employees must undergo annual PII training through the TMS process.

## **Section 8. Technical Access and Security**

The following questions are intended to describe technical safeguards and security measures. (Work with your ISSO to complete this section).

### **8.1 The procedures in place to determine which users may access the system, must be documented.**

*These questions are related to privacy control AR-7, Privacy-Enhanced System Design and Development.*

#### *8.1a Describe the process by which an individual receives access to the system?*

All VES employees must undergo the hiring process and interview, a criminal background check, and successfully complete TMS training before their account is created. Accounts are created based upon defined templates so that permissions for an employee title flow through the system. Most employees see masked PII data with selected groups having access to the full PII data (also editing rights). These permissions are based upon the employee's business group and provide the least access necessary.

#### *8.1b Identify users from other agencies who may have access to the system and under what roles these individuals have access to the system. Who establishes the criteria for what PII can be shared?*

No external roles with an associated agency is applicable to VES because is not shared. The system does not share information with any other agencies. Therefore, there cannot be any other users from other agencies.

*8.1c Describe the different roles in general terms that have been created to provide access to the system? For example, certain users may have "read-only" access while others may be permitted to make certain amendments or changes to the information.*

- Read Only, Write
- IT Administrators - access to the VES system infrastructure to make changes to configurations.
- Call Center Agents – Read, write to a medical record
- Call Center Manager – Read, write, approve to a medical record

## **8.2. Contractor signed Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), Business Associate Agreement (BAA) etc. in place.**

*How frequently are contracts reviewed and by whom? Describe the necessity of the access provided to contractors to the system and whether clearance is required. If Privacy Roles and Responsibilities have been established to restrict certain users to different access levels, please describe the roles and associated access levels. Explain the need for VA contractors to have access to the PII. This question is related to privacy control AR-3, Privacy Requirements for Contractors, and Service Providers.*

8.2a Has a contractor confidentiality agreement, Business Associate Agreement (BAA), or a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) been developed for contractors who work on the system?

VES is a contractor to the VA and no other contractors have access to any VA data under our control. The company does not hire contractors with access to production VA-supplied data and all employees fall under the previously outlined controls. TMS training for the employee and the prior ATO for the company are the clearances required.

8.2a. Will VA contractors have access to the system and the PII?

No

8.2b. What involvement will contractors have with the design and maintenance of the system?

None.

## **8.3 Describe what privacy training is provided to users either generally or specifically relevant to the program or system.**

*VA offers privacy and security training. Each program or system may offer training specific to the program or system that touches on information handling procedures and sensitivity of information. Please describe how individuals who have access to PII are trained to handle it appropriately. This question is related to privacy control AR-5, Privacy Awareness and Training.*

All users are required to annually complete VA Privacy and Information Security Awareness and Rules of Behavior training. This documentation and monitoring is performed using the Talent Management System (TMS).

#### **8.4 The Authorization and Accreditation (A&A) completed for the system.**

*8.4a If completed, provide:*

1. *The Security Plan Status: Fully Approved*
2. *The System Security Plan Status Date: Approved*
3. *The Authorization Status: Authorized*
4. *The Authorization Date: 6/9/2025*
5. *The Authorization Termination Date: 6/9/2027*
6. *The Risk Review Completion Date: 5/28/2025*
7. *The FIPS 199 classification of the system MODERATE*

*Please note that all systems containing SPI are categorized at a minimum level of “moderate” under Federal Information Processing Standards Publication 199.*

*8.4b If not completed or In Process, provide your **Initial Operating Capability (IOC) date.***

NA

## **Section 9 – Technology Usage**

The following questions are used to identify the technologies being used by the IT system or project.

### **9.1 Does the system use cloud technology? If so, what cloud model is being utilized?**

*If so, Does the system have a FedRAMP provisional or agency authorization? If the system does use cloud technology, but does not have FedRAMP authorization, explain how the Cloud Service Provider (CSP) solution was assessed and what FedRAMP documents and processes were used for the assessment in order to comply with VA Handbook 6517. Types of cloud models include: Software as a Service (SaaS), Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), Platform as a Service (PaaS), Commercial off the Shelf (COTS), Desktop as a Service (DaaS), Mobile Backend as a Service (MBaaS), Information Technology Management as a Service (ITMAaaS). This question is related to privacy control UL-1, Information Sharing with Third Parties. (Refer to question 1.8 of the PTA)*

VES is an on-premise solution and is a private stand-alone cloud for the VA. VES is also vendor owned and operated system and not hosted on the VA network. VES has an agreement with AWS GovCloud.

### **9.2 Does the contract with the Hosting Cloud Service Provider, Contractors and VA customers establish who has ownership rights over data including PII? (Provide contract number and supporting information about PII/PHI from the contract). (Refer to question 3.3.1 of the PTA) This question is related to privacy control AR-3, Privacy Requirements for Contractors, and Service Providers.**

VA owns all rights to PII under contract order 36C10X19D0003. Executed on 03/19/2021.

**9.3 Will the CSP collect any ancillary data and if so, who has ownership over the ancillary data?**

*Per NIST 800-144, cloud providers hold significant details about the accounts of cloud consumers that could be compromised and used in subsequent attacks. Ancillary data also involves information the cloud provider collects or produces about customer-related activity in the cloud. It includes data collected to meter and charge for consumption of resources, logs and audit trails, and other such metadata that is generated and accumulated within the cloud environment.*

*This question is related to privacy control DI-1, Data Quality.*

N/A. No ancillary data is collected.

**9.4 NIST 800-144 states, “Organizations are ultimately accountable for the security and privacy of data held by a cloud provider on their behalf.” Is this principle described in contracts with customers? Why or why not?**

*What are the roles and responsibilities involved between the organization and cloud provider, particularly with respect to managing risks and ensuring organizational requirements are met? This question is related to privacy control AR-3, Privacy Requirements for Contractors and Service Providers.*

None

**9.5 If the system is utilizing Robotics Process Automation (RPA), please describe the role of the bots.**

*Robotic Process Automation is the use of software scripts to perform tasks as an automated process that executes in parallel with or in place of human input. For example, will the automation move or touch PII/PHI information. RPA may also be referred to as “Bots” or Artificial Intelligence (AI).*

N/A

## **Section 10. References**

### **Summary of Privacy Controls by Family**

Summary of Privacy Controls by Family

<b>ID</b>	<b>Privacy Controls</b>
<b>AP</b>	<b>Authority and Purpose</b>
AP-1	Authority to Collect
AP-2	Purpose Specification
<b>AR</b>	<b>Accountability, Audit, and Risk Management</b>
AR-1	Governance and Privacy Program
AR-2	Privacy Impact and Risk Assessment
AR-3	Privacy Requirements for Contractors and Service Providers
AR-4	Privacy Monitoring and Auditing
AR-5	Privacy Awareness and Training
AR-7	Privacy-Enhanced System Design and Development
AR-8	Accounting of Disclosures
<b>DI</b>	<b>Data Quality and Integrity</b>
DI-1	Data Quality
DI-2	Data Integrity and Data Integrity Board
<b>DM</b>	<b>Data Minimization and Retention</b>
DM-1	Minimization of Personally Identifiable Information
DM-2	Data Retention and Disposal
DM-3	Minimization of PII Used in Testing, Training, and Research
<b>IP</b>	<b>Individual Participation and Redress</b>
IP-1	Consent
IP-2	Individual Access
IP-3	Redress
IP-4	Complaint Management
<b>SE</b>	<b>Security</b>
SE-1	Inventory of Personally Identifiable Information
SE-2	Privacy Incident Response
<b>TR</b>	<b>Transparency</b>
TR-1	Privacy Notice
TR-2	System of Records Notices and Privacy Act Statements
TR-3	Dissemination of Privacy Program Information
<b>UL</b>	<b>Use Limitation</b>
UL-1	Internal Use
UL-2	Information Sharing with Third Parties

## **Signature of Responsible Officials**

**The individuals below attest that the information they provided in this Privacy Impact Assessment is true and accurate.**

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**Privacy Officer, Lakisha Wright**

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**Information System Security Officer, Lorraine Sobrado**

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**Information System Owner, Linsay Knopf**



## **APPENDIX A-6.1**

Please provide a link to the notice or verbiage referred to in Section 6 (a notice may include a posted privacy policy; a Privacy Act notice on forms; screen shot of a website collection privacy notice).

<https://www.ves.com/privacy-policy/>

### **HELPFUL LINKS:**

#### **Records Control Schedule 10-1 (va.gov)**

##### **General Records Schedule**

<https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/grs.html>

##### **National Archives (Federal Records Management):**

<https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/grs>

##### **VA Publications:**

<https://www.va.gov/vapubs/>

##### **VA Privacy Service Privacy Hub:**

<https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/OITPrivacyHub>

##### **Notice of Privacy Practice (NOPP):**

VHA Directive 1605.04

[IB 10-163p \(va.gov\)](#)

##### **VA SORN 58VA 21/22/28**

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-11-08/pdf/2021-24372.pdf>