

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)

Statement of Regulatory Priorities

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is the custodian and administrator of important public obligations to those who served this Nation. The VA's regulatory responsibility is almost solely confined to carrying out the mandate of the laws enacted by Congress relating to programs for veterans and their beneficiaries. VA's major regulatory objective is to implement these laws with fairness, justice, and efficiency.

Most of the regulations issued by the VA involve three VA components: the Veterans Benefits Administration, the Veterans Health Administration, and the National Cemetery System. The basic goal of the Veterans Benefits Administration is to provide high-quality and timely nonmedical benefits to eligible veterans and their beneficiaries. The principal goal of the Veterans Health Administration is to provide high-quality health care on a timely basis to eligible veterans through its system of medical centers, nursing homes, domiciliaries, and outpatient medical and dental facilities. The National Cemetery System's primary mission is to bury eligible veterans, members of the Reserve components, and their dependents in VA National Cemeteries and to maintain those cemeteries as national shrines in perpetuity as a final tribute of a grateful Nation to honor the memory and service of those who served in the Armed Forces.

VA

FINAL RULE STAGE

93. SCHEDULE FOR RATING DISABILITIES—THE CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM

Priority:

Other Significant

Reinventing Government:

This rulemaking is part of the Reinventing Government effort. It will revise text in the CFR to reduce burden or duplication, or streamline requirements.

Legal Authority:

38 USC 1155

CFR Citation:

38 CFR 4.100; 38 CFR 4.101; 38 CFR 4.102; 38 CFR 4.103; 38 CFR 4.104

Legal Deadline:

None

Abstract:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is conducting the first comprehensive review of its rating schedule since 1945. These revisions will update the rating schedule to ensure that it uses current medical terminology and unambiguous criteria, and that it reflects medical advances that have occurred since the last review. This comprehensive review includes a review of the different body systems identified under additional information.

Statement of Need:

Because evaluation criteria in the rating schedule are based on medical findings, the advances that have occurred in medicine since the last overall revision of the rating schedule in 1945 need to be incorporated into the schedule so that it reflects the current state of medicine, including the use of new techniques and procedures, such as liver and heart transplants. Some medical terms and nomenclature in the current schedule are obsolete, and the course of some illnesses has changed because of modern therapy. The rating schedule criteria need to reflect these advances. There are also new disease entities that have been defined or become more common since the last revision.

Summary of the Legal Basis:

Under 38 USC 1155, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is required to establish a schedule for rating disabilities and has the authority to readjust the schedule from time to time in accordance with experience.

Alternatives:

Although VA has made some ad hoc revisions and additions to the rating schedule, this is the first comprehensive review since 1945. We could continue to make ad hoc revisions; however, we feel that this

would be inadequate. We also intend to review three to four body systems per year on a cyclical basis to ensure that the schedule remains current.

Anticipated Costs and Benefits:

There are no known administrative costs directly related to these regulatory amendments of 38 CFR part 4. The same personnel will adjudicate disability claims utilizing the same procedures. There are no readily ascertainable entitlement costs or savings related to these amendments. There is no accurate way to quantify their impact. We expect these revisions to result in greater precision and consistency within the disability evaluation process, but anticipate no net savings or cost within the entitlement account.

Risks:

None known.

Timetable:

Action	Date	FR Cite
ANPRM	02/26/90	55 FR 6658
ANPRM Comment Period End	04/27/90	
NPRM	01/19/93	58 FR 4954
NPRM Comment Period End	03/22/93	
Final Action	04/00/97	

Small Entities Affected:

None

Government Levels Affected:

None

Additional Information:

For the purposes of the Regulatory Plan, VA has identified the individual schedules for rating disabilities (AE89, AE91, AF00, AF01, AF02, AF22, AF23, AF24, AH05, AH43) under the umbrella RIN 2900-AE40.

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