

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
RETROSPECTIVE PLAN UPDATE -- FEBRUARY 2016

Agency	Sub-agency	Title Of Initiative/Rule or ICR	RIN/OMB Control Number	Summary of Initiative	Status of Initiative -- New to this update, Ongoing, or Completed	Target Completion Date (if completed, please add the publication date and cite in Federal Register for example)	Does the Initiative include regulatory flexibilities such as pilot projects, safe harbor exemptions, sunset provisions, trigger provisions, streamlined requirements, state flexibilities, or other similar strategies?	What methods will you engage in to Identify Improvements (public comment, analyses, third party assessments, etc). Please identify all that apply	If Available, anticipated or realized savings in costs &/or burdens and anticipated or realized changes in benefits
VA	Office of Acquisition, Logistics and Construction	Revise and Streamline VA Acquisition Regulation to Adhere to Federal Acquisition	Multiple RINs	VA is proposing to amend VA Acquisition Regulation (VAAR) as part of a project to update the VAAR. Under this initiative all parts of the regulation are being reviewed and updated in phased increments to incorporate any new regulations or policies and to remove any procedural guidance that is internal to VA. This project aims to streamline the VAAR to implement and supplement the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) only when required, and to eliminate internal agency guidance in keeping with the FAR principles concerning agency acquisition regulations.	Ongoing	Summer 2018	Streamlined requirements.	Although not required by law (41 USC 1707), VA plans to adhere to the principles of the Administrative Procedures Act by providing opportunity for public comment on all rulemakings for this project.	The overall impact of the new rules will be of benefit to small businesses owned by veterans or service-disabled veterans as the VAAR is being updated to remove extraneous procedural information that applies only to VAs internal operating procedures.
VA	Veterans Benefits Administration	VA Regulations on Fiduciaries for Disabled Veterans	AO53	VA proposes to amend its fiduciary program regulations, which govern the oversight of beneficiaries who, because of injury, disease, the infirmities of advanced age, or minority, are unable to manage their VA benefits, and the appointment and oversight of fiduciaries for these vulnerable beneficiaries. The proposed amendments would update and reorganize regulations consistent with current law, VA policies and procedures, and VA's reorganization of its fiduciary activities. They would also clarify the rights of beneficiaries in the program and the roles of VA and fiduciaries in ensuring that VA benefits are managed in the best interest of	Ongoing	Proposed rule published January 2014. Projected date for publication of Final Rule is June 2016.	Streamlined requirements.	In response to the proposed rule that VA published in January 2014, VA received comments from Veterans, banks that serve as fiduciaries, Veterans Service Organizations and the American Bar Association. VA is considering all these comments in drafting the final rule.	These new regulations will impact over 172,000 beneficiaries in receipt of almost \$2.9B in benefits per year. The new regulations will improve timeliness and accuracy in Fiduciary matters, which will ensure that VA protects this most vulnerable class of Veterans.
VA	Veterans Benefits Administration	VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities	Multiple RINs	VA is updating its Schedule for Rating Disabilities (VASRD, or Rating Schedule) to better reflect modern medicine. The VASRD, which is part 4 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, governs how claims processors evaluate the severity of disabilities. While VA has routinely updated parts of the VASRD, this proposal is the first time VA is working to update the entire VASRD since 1945. In 2009, a formal project management plan was created to outline how to update the VASRD. A working group of specialized physicians (VA and non-VA), stakeholders, and claims processors reviews each of the 15 body systems and provides analysis to assist VA in developing updates. After a thorough internal review and development of policy choices, VA submits each proposed rule change to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which clears it for publication in the Federal Register. The public has 60 days to provide VA with comments. VA will introduce the proposed updates to the VASRD incrementally and is committed to an update of the entire VASRD.	Ongoing	VA projects that the VASRD update will be 80% complete by end of CY2017 and entirely complete by March 2018.	No	Before they are published for public comment, all these rules are reviewed by VA's Veterans Health Administration, National Institutes of Health, Social Security Administration, and Department of Defense, which provide feedback to the drafting office (Veterans Benefits Administration). VA also keeps the Veterans Service Organizations abreast via quarterly meetings.	In conjunction with the VASRD project, VA is modernizing its Disability Benefits Questionnaire (DBQ) process. As VA updates each body system in the VASRD project, it updates the corresponding DBQ and posts it on www.va.gov. DBQs support VA's Fully Developed Claims Program by providing medical information that is directly relevant to determining a disability rating. When submitted with a fully developed claim, DBQs ensure VA's rating specialists have precisely the information they need to adjudicate the claim.