

Office Building, Room 10235, Washington, DC 20503 (202) 395-4650. Do not send requests for benefits to this address.

DATES: Comments on the collection of information should be directed to the OMB Desk Officer on or before December 26, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ron Taylor, VA Clearance Officer (045A4), (202) 273-8015.

Dated: November 7, 1996.

By direction of the Secretary.

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.

[FR Doc. 96-30109 Filed 11-25-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-P

Agency Information Collection: Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs, has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) the following proposals for the collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

OMB Control Number: 2900-0120.

Title and Form Number: Report of Treatment by Attending Physician, VA Form Letter 29-551A.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Need and Uses: The form letter is used for collecting information from attending physicians to determine the insured's eligibility for disability insurance benefits.

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 5,069 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 15 minutes.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 20,277.

ADDRESSES: Copies of these submissions may be obtained from Ron Taylor, VA Clearance Officer (045A4), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420.

Comments and recommendations concerning the submissions should be directed to VA's OMB Desk Officer, Allison Eydt, OMB Human Resources and Housing Branch, New Executive Office Building, Room 10235, Washington, DC 20503 (202) 395-4650.

Do not send requests for benefits to this address.

DATES: Comments on the information collections should be directed to the OMB Desk Officer on or before December 26, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ron Taylor, VA Clearance Officer (045A4), (202) 273-8015.

Dated: November 7, 1996.

By direction of the Secretary:

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.

[FR Doc. 96-30110 Filed 11-25-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-P

Agency Information Collection: Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs, has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) the following proposals for the collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

OMB Control Number: 2900-0131.

Title and Form Number: Request for Supplemental Information on Medical and Nonmedical Applications, VA Form Letter 29-615.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Need and Uses: This form letter is used by the policyholder to apply for new issue, reinstatement, or change of plan on National Service Life Insurance (NSLI) policies.

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 3,000 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 20 minutes.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 9,000.

ADDRESSES: Copies of these submissions may be obtained from Ron Taylor, VA Clearance Officer (045A4), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420.

Comments and recommendations concerning the submissions should be directed to VA's OMB Desk Officer, Allison Eydt, OMB Human Resources and Housing Branch, New Executive Office Building, Room 10235, Washington, DC 20503 (202) 395-4650. Do Not send requests for benefits to this address.

DATES: Comments on the information collections should be directed to the OMB Desk Officer on or before December 26, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ron Taylor, VA Clearance Officer (045A4), (202) 273-8015.

Dated: November 7, 1996.

By direction of the Secretary:

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.

[FR Doc. 96-30111 Filed 11-25-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-P

Privacy Act of 1974; Altered System of Records

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice of altered system of records.

SUMMARY: The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 522a(e)(4)) requires that all agencies publish in the Federal Register a notice of the existence and character of their systems of records. Notice is hereby given that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is altering a system of records entitled "Accounts Receivable Records—VA" (88VA20A6).

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments, suggestions or objections regarding the proposed changes to the system of records. All relevant materials received before December 26, 1996, will be considered. All written comments received will be available for public inspection at the Office of Regulations Management, room 1158, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, only, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday (except holidays). If no public comment is received during the 30-day review period allowed for public comment, or unless otherwise published in the Federal Register by VA, the altered system of records is effective December 26, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Written comments concerning the altered system of records may be mailed to the Director, Office of Regulations Management (02D), 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Daniel D. Osendorf, Director, Debt Management Center (389/00), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building, 1 Federal Drive, Ft. Snelling, Minnesota 55111, (612) 725-1844.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On November 3, 1994, The Department published original notice of this system of records at 59 FR 55155. That notice incorporated a recitation of the history

of debt collection within the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). The new system was established,

* * * to reflect the centralized environment VBA continues to build for collection activity as well as to provide the public with one reference for routine use disclosures related to debt collection.

In furtherance of these goals, and to broaden their application to a department-wide basis, collection responsibilities for additional types of debts are being consolidated under the administration of VA's Debt Management Center (DMC) in Ft. Snelling, Minnesota. These additional debts include: (1) First-party medical billings (including delinquent billings) resulting from treatment or prescriptions provided by or on behalf of VA health care facilities; (2) debts arising from participation in the VA Civilian Health and Medical Program (CHAMPVA); and (3) certain miscellaneous debts associated with VA home loan programs. Miscellaneous home loan debts include (but are not limited to) those incurred by virtue of veteran-borrowers' defaults on home loans guaranteed under The Veterans Benefits Act of 1989 (Pub. L. 101-237) and more commonly referred to as "Guaranty and Indemnity Fund" (GIF) loans.

Statutory citations to the Selected Reserve component of the All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program (Also known as Montgomery G.I. Bill—Selected Reserve) and been changed from "chapter 106" to "chapter 1606". This change is the result of renumbering of title 10, U.S.C., as set forth in the Department of Defense Authorization Act for FY 1995, Pub. L. 103-337.

The debt collection program adheres to VA security and Reporting requirements under title 38, Code of Federal Regulations and other Federal regulations, as well as the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (5 U.S.C. 552a), and the appropriate provisions of the Internal Revenue Code, title 26, United States Code.

Approved: November 15, 1996.

Jesse Brown,
Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Report of Intention To Publish an Altered System of Records for "Accounts Receivable Records—VA" (88VA20A6)

Purpose

This system of records has been amended to further consolidate notice to the public of the types of information disclosed, and to whom it is disclosed, in the course of collection of debts

arising from participation in benefit, health care and other programs administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This amendment also serves to revise citations related to the All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program. Previous publication of this system of records consolidated notice for debts arising from most VA benefit programs [see 55 FR 55155 (November 3, 1994)]. The revised system of records adds notice of the types of disclosure, and to whom disclosure is made, for the following types of indebtedness accounts: (1) First-party medical billings (including delinquent billings) resulting from treatment or prescriptions provided by or on behalf of VA health care facilities; (2) debts arising from participation in the VA Civilian Health and Medical Program (CHAMPVA); and, (3) certain miscellaneous debts associated with VA home loan programs. Miscellaneous home loan debts include (but are not limited to) those incurred by virtue of veteran-borrowers' default on home loans guaranteed under The Veterans Benefits Act of 1989 (Pub. L. 101-237) and more commonly referred to as "Guaranty and Indemnity Fund" (GIF) loans. Changes in the revised system of records are not individually bracketed.

Authority

Title 38, United States Code, sections 501(a), 5314 and 5315; Federal Claims Collection Act of 1966 (Pub. L. 89-508), 31 U.S.C. chapter 37, subchapter I (General) and subchapter II (Claims of the United States Government), 31 U.S.C. 3711, Collection and Compromise, 31 U.S.C. 3716, Administrative Offset; Debt Collection Act of 1982 (Pub. L. 97-365), 5 U.S.C. 5514, Installment Deduction for Indebtedness.

Probable Privacy Impact

Information concerning indebtedness accounts added to the system of records under this revision is currently disclosed under "Categories of Records in the System" set forth in the Privacy Act system of records, 88VA20A6. Disclosure is limited to that which is relevant and necessary to obtain the debtor's whereabouts or telephone number to identify a source of collection, provide an incentive for payment and to comply with certain requirements associated with the operation of the Government. The routine uses set forth in the accompanying notice of an altered system of records describe, generally, the data disclosed to various third parties, all of whom are, in turn,

obligated to protect that data under statute, contract or both.

Risk Assessment

Access to working spaces and record storage areas associated with VA debt collection is restricted to VA employees on a "need-to-know" basis. Access to computer rooms, magnetic media storage and documents classified as sensitive is even further restricted to certain designated employees. The repositories for debt collection records are automated systems accessible only by a limited number of computer terminals and only by employees with specific passwords and knowledge of computer systems dedicated to debt collection. Most paper documentation that must be kept at Debt Management Center is microfilmed and forwarded to the regional office or medical center of jurisdiction or the CHAMPVA Center for filing. The security measures for those documents are set forth in the Privacy Act system of records, 88VA20A6.

Routine Uses

The routine uses of this system are compatible with the purposes for which this information is collected. Disclosures under the routine uses are limited to those necessary for the management of debt collection operations, including answering inquiries from or on behalf of debtors.

Compatibility Requirement

The routine uses of this system are compatible with the purpose for which the information is collected and maintained.

New Rules or Changes to Published Rules

This system of records does not require any new regulations or changes to published regulations.

Information Collection Requirements

Establishing this system of records does not require any new information collection requirements.

88VA20A6

SYSTEM NAME:

Accounts Receivable Records-VA.

SYSTEM LOCATION:

Automated indebtedness records for first-party medical billing, compensation, pension, educational assistance, survivors' and dependents' educational assistance and most home loan debts are maintained at the VA's Austin Automation/Systems Development Center in Austin, Texas. Extracts of benefit and home loan debt automated records are maintained in the

Benefits Delivery Network for accounting and adjudication purposes. The Benefits Delivery Network is administered by the Benefit Delivery Center (BDC), Hines, Illinois. First-party medical billing information is extracted from records maintained at VA medical facilities and in automated media as more fully described in the Privacy Act system of records, 24VA136, "Patient Medical Records—VA" (56 FR 1054, Jan. 10, 1991). Automated and paper indebtedness records for the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) are maintained at the CHAMPVA Center in Denver, Colorado and are more fully described in the Privacy Act system of records, 54VA136, "Veteran's Spouse or Dependent Civilian Health and Medical Care Records—VA" 40 FR 38095 (Aug. 26, 1975), as amended at 53 FR 23845 (Jun. 24, 1988), 53 FR 25238 (Jul. 5, 1988) and 56 FR 26186 (Jun. 6, 1991). Certain paper records, microfilm and microfiche are maintained at the VA Debt Management Center (DMC), Ft. Snelling, Minnesota. Education loan and miscellaneous home loan automated, paper, microfilm and microfiche records are maintained at DMC. Automated and paper indebtedness records related to the All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program are also maintained at DMC. Paper records related to benefit and home loan accounts receivable may be maintained in individual file folders located at the VA regional office having jurisdiction over the domicile of the claimant or the geographic area in which a property securing a VA guaranteed, insured or direct loan is located. Similarly, paper and automated records related to first-party medical billing and CHAMPVA are also maintained in individual patient medical records at VA health care facilities and CHAMPVA Center. Generally and with the exception of claims against third-party insurers and certain first-party medical debts, automated records and papers maintained at regional offices, health care facilities and CHAMPVA Center are not used directly in the debt collection process unless they are forwarded by conventional mail, electronic mail or facsimile to DMC. Records provided to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for inclusion in the Credit Alert Interactive Voice Response System (CAIVRS) are located at the HUD Data Processing Center in Lanham, Maryland.

CATEGORIES OF INDIVIDUALS COVERED BY THE SYSTEM:

Persons indebted to the United States Government as a result of their participation in benefit programs (including health care programs) administered by VA under title 38, United States Code, chapters 11, 13, 15, 17, 21, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36 and 37, including persons indebted to the United States Government by virtue of their ownership, contractual obligation or rental of property owned by the Government or encumbered by a VA-guaranteed, insured, direct or vendee loan. Persons indebted to the United States Government as a result of their participation in a benefit program administered by VA under 10 U.S.C. or 10 U.S.C. ch. 1606. Persons who received benefits or services under 38 U.S.C. or 10 U.S.C. ch. 1606, but who did not meet the requirements for receipts of such benefits or services.

CATEGORIES OF RECORDS IN THE SYSTEM:

Information varies depending on the benefit type (including health care and home loan) from which the debt arose. Identifying information, including VA claim number, Social Security number, name and address and, when appropriate, loan reference number obtained from the following Privacy Act systems of records: "Compensation, Pension, Education and Rehabilitation Records—VA" (58VA21/22); "Loan Guaranty Home, Condominium and Manufactured Home Loan Applicant Records, Specially Adapted Housing Applicant Records, and Vendee Loan Applicant Records—VA" (55VA26); "Patient Medical Records—VA" (24VA136); and, "Veteran's Spouse or Dependent Civilian Health and Medical Care Records—VA" (54VA136). Initial indebtedness amount, dates of treatment, amounts claimed for reimbursement type of benefit from which the debt arose, identifying number of the VA regional office with jurisdiction over the underlying benefit claim or property subject to default or foreclosure, station number of the VA health care facility rendering services, name of co-obligor and property address of the defaulted home loan from 58VA21/22, 55VA26, 24VA136 and 54VA136. History of debt collection activity on the individual, including correspondence, telephone calls, referrals to other Government agencies, VA district counsel, private collection and credit reporting agencies. Payments received, refunds made, interest amount, current balance of debt and indication of status or current VA benefit payments. Federal employment status obtained by computer matching

with Government agencies and the United States Postal Service. No personal medical information concerning the nature of disease, injury or disability is transmitted to or maintained in this system of records.

AUTHORITY FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE SYSTEM:

Title 38, United States Code, sections 501(a), 5314 and 5315. Federal Claims Collection Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 89-508), 31 U.S.C. Chapter 37, Subchapter I (General) and Subchapter II (Claims of the United States Government), 31 U.S.C. 3711, Collection and Compromise, 31 U.S.C. 3716, Administrative Offset; Debt Collection Act of 1982 (Pub. L. 97-365), 5 U.S.C. 5514, Installment Deduction for Indebtedness.

ROUTINE USES OF RECORDS MAINTAINED IN THE SYSTEM, INCLUDING CATEGORIES OF USERS AND THE PURPOSE OF SUCH USES:

For purposes of the following routine uses:

- (a) The term "veteran", includes present, former or retired members of the United States Armed Forces, the reserve forces or national guard;
- (b) The term, "debtor", means any person falling within the categories of individuals covered by this system, as set forth above. A "debtor" may be a veteran, as defined above, a veteran's dependent entitled to VA benefits (including health care) in his or her own right or a person who is neither a veteran nor a veteran's dependent for benefit purposes; and,
- (c) The terms "benefit", "benefit program" and "VA program" include any gratuitous benefit, home loan (including miscellaneous home loan) or health care (including CHAMPVA) program administered by the Secretary.

1. The record of an individual who is covered by this system may be disclosed to a member of Congress or staff person acting for the member when the member or staff person requests the record on behalf of and at the written request of that individual.

2. Any information in this system may be disclosed to a Federal agency, upon its official request, to the extent that it is relevant and necessary to that agency's decision regarding: The hiring, retention or transfer of an employee; the issuance of a security clearance; the letting of a contract or the issuance or continuance of a license, grant or other benefit given by that agency. However, in accordance with an agreement with the U.S. Postal Service, disclosures to the U.S. Postal Service for decisions concerning the employment of veterans will only be made with the veteran's prior written consent.

3. Any information in this system may be disclosed, by computer matching or otherwise, in connection with any proceeding for the collection of an amount owed the United States by virtue of a person's participation in any benefit program administered by VA when in the judgment of the Secretary, or official generally delegated such authority under standard agency delegation of authority rules (38 CFR 2.6), such disclosure is deemed necessary and proper in accordance with 38 U.S.C. 5701(b)(6).

4. The name and address of a veteran or the dependent of a veteran and other information as is reasonably necessary to identify such veteran or dependent may be disclosed to a consumer reporting agency for the purpose of locating the veteran or dependent indebted to the United States under a VA benefit program or to obtain a consumer report in order to assess the ability of a veteran or dependent to repay an indebtedness, provided the disclosure is consistent with 38 U.S.C. 5701(g)(2).

5. The name and address of a veteran or dependent, other information as is reasonably necessary to identify such persons, including personal information obtained from other Federal agencies through computer matching programs, and any information concerning the person's indebtedness to the United States by virtue of the person's participation in a VA benefit program may be disclosed to a consumer reporting agency for purposes of making such information available for inclusion in consumer reports regarding that person and for purposes of locating that person, provided that the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 5701(g)(4) have been met.

6. Any information in this system, including available identifying information regarding a person, such as the person's name, address, Social Security number, VA insurance number, VA claim number, VA loan number, date of birth and employment information, may be disclosed, except to consumer reporting agencies, to a third party in order to obtain current name, address and credit report in connection with any proceeding for the collection of an amount owed the United States by virtue of the person's participation in a VA benefit program. Such disclosure may be made in the course of computer matching having the purpose of obtaining the information indicated above. Third parties may include other Federal agencies, State probate courts, State drivers' license bureaus, State automobile title and license bureaus and private commercial concerns in the

business of providing the information sought.

7. Identifying information, including the debtor's name, Social Security number and VA claim number, along with the amount of indebtedness, may be disclosed to any Federal agency, including the U.S. Postal Service, in the course of conducting computer matching to identify and locate delinquent debtors employed by or receiving retirement benefits from those agencies. Such debtors may be subject to offset of their pay or retirement benefits under the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 5514.

8. Any information in this system, including the nature and amount of a financial obligation as well as the history of debt collection activity against a debtor, may be disclosed to the Federal agency administering salary or retirement benefits to the debtor to assist that agency in initiating offset of salary or retirement benefits to collect delinquent debts owed the United States under VA benefit programs.

9. The name(s) and address(es) of a veteran or beneficiary may be disclosed to another Federal agency or to a contractor of that agency, at the written request of the head of that agency or designee of the head of that agency for the purpose of conducting Government research of oversight necessary to accomplish a statutory purpose of that agency.

10. Any information in the system, including the amount of debt, may be disclosed at the request of a debtor to accredited service organizations, VA-approved claims agents and attorneys acting under a declaration of representation so that these individuals can aid persons indebted to VA in the preparation, presentation and prosecution of debt-related matters under the laws administered by VA. The name and address of a debtor will not, however, be disclosed to these individuals under this routine use if the debtor has not requested the assistance of an accredited service organization, claims agent or an attorney.

11. Any information in this system such as the amount of indebtedness and collection history may be disclosed in the course of presenting evidence to a court, magistrate or administrative authority in matters of guardianship, inquests and commitments, to private attorneys representing debtors rated incompetent in conjunction with issuance of Certificates of Incompetence and to probation and parole officers in connection with court-required duties.

12. Any information in this system, including the amount of indebtedness and history of collection activity, may be disclosed to a VA or court-appointed

fiduciary or a guardian ad litem in relation to his or her representation of a debtor only to the extent necessary to fulfill the duties of the fiduciary or guardian ad litem.

13. Any relevant information in this system may be disclosed to the Department of Justice and United States Attorneys in the defense or prosecution of litigation involving or pertaining to the United States. Any relevant information in this system may also be disclosed to other Federal agencies upon their request in connection with review of administrative tort claims and potential tort claims filed under the Federal Tort Claims Act, 28 U.S.C. 2672, the Military Claims Act, 10 U.S.C. 2733 and other similar claims statutes.

14. Any information concerning a person's indebtedness to the United States by virtue of that person's participation in a benefit program administered by VA, including personal information obtained from other Federal agencies through computer matching programs, may be disclosed to any third party, except consumer reporting agencies, in connection with any proceeding for the collection of any amount owed to the United States. Purposes of these disclosures may be to (a) assist VA in collection of title 38 and 10 U.S.C. ch. 1606 program debts and/or costs of services, and (b) initiate legal actions for prosecuting individuals who willfully or fraudulently obtain title 38 or 10 U.S.C. ch. 1606 benefits without entitlement.

15. The debtor's name, address, Social Security number and the amount (excluding interest) of any indebtedness waived, compromised or written off may be disclosed to the Treasury Department, Internal Revenue Service, as a report of income under 26 U.S.C. 61(a)(12).

16. The name of a debtor, any other information reasonably necessary to identify such individual and any other information concerning the individual's indebtedness under a VA program, may be disclosed to the Treasury Department, Internal Revenue Service, for the collection of that indebtedness by offset of Federal income tax refunds pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3720A.

17. Debtors' social security numbers, VA claim numbers, loan account numbers and other information as is reasonably necessary to identify individual VA indebtedness accounts may be disclosed to the Department of Housing and Urban Development for inclusion in the Credit Alert Interactive Voice Response System (CAIVRS). Information in CAIVRS may be disclosed to all participating agencies and lenders who participate in the

agencies' programs to enable them to verify information provided by new loan applicants and evaluate the creditworthiness of applicants. Records are disclosed to participating agencies and private-sector lenders by an ongoing computer matching program.

18. Name, Social Security numbers and any other information reasonably necessary to ensure accurate identification may be disclosed to the Department of the Treasury, Internal Revenue Service, to obtain the mailing address of taxpayers who are debtors under this system of records. Disclosure is made by computer matching and pursuant to 26 U.S.C. 6103(m)(2).

18. Any information in a record under this system of records may be disclosed to the United States General Accounting Office (GAO) to enabling GAO to pursue collection activities authorized to that office or any other activities within their statutory authority.

DISCLOSURE TO CONSUMER REPORTING AGENCIES:

Disclosures pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(b)(12) may be made from this record system to consumer reporting agencies as defined in the Fair Credit Reporting Act 15 U.S.C. 1681a(f) or the Federal Claims Collection Act of 1966 31 U.S.C. 3701(a)(3). The disclosure is limited to information necessary to establish the identity of the individual, including name, address, and taxpayer identification number (Social Security number), the amount, status and history of the claim; and the agency or program under which the claim arose for the sole purpose of allowing the consumer reporting agency to prepare a commercial credit report. 38 U.S.C. 5701(g) governs the release of names and addresses of any person who is a present or former member of the Armed Forces, or who is a dependent of such a person, to consumer reporting agencies under certain circumstances. Routine uses, above, provide for disclosure under those circumstances.

POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR STORING, RETRIEVING, ACCESSING, RETAINING AND DISPOSING OF RECORDS IN THE SYSTEM:

STORAGE:

Records are maintained on magnetic tape and disk, microfilm, microfiche, optical disk and paper documents. DMC does not routinely maintain paper records of individual debtors in file folders with the exception of correspondence, and replies thereto, from Congress, the White House, members of the Cabinet and other similar sources. Paper records related to accounts receivable may be maintained in individual file folders located at VA

regional offices, health care facilities and CHAMPVA Center. Generally and with the exception of claims against third-party insurers and certain first-party medical debts, such papers maintained outside of DMC are not used directly in the debt collection process unless they are first forwarded to DMC. Information stored on magnetic media for most benefit debts, including first-party medical, may be accessed through a data telecommunications terminal system designated as CAROLS (Centralized Accounts Receivable On-Line System). Most CAROLS terminals are located in DMC; however, VA regional offices generally each have one terminal for inquiry purposes. Information stored on magnetic media and related to the All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance, education loan, miscellaneous home loan or CHAMPVA debt collection programs may be accessed through personal computers. Records provided to the Department of Housing and Urban Development for inclusion in the Credit Alert Interactive Voice Response System (CAIVRS) are maintained on magnetic media at the HUD Data Processing Center in Lanham, Maryland. For benefit debts other than miscellaneous home loan, first-party medical and CHAMPVA, identifying information, the amount of the debt and benefit source of the debt may be stored on magnetic media in records that serve as the data base for the VA Benefits Delivery Network (BDN). The BDN is operated for the adjudication of claims and the entry of certain fiscal transactions. The identifying information, the amount of the debt and benefit source of the debt are transmitted to the Centralized Accounts Receivable System (CARS) or a personal computer local area network system before collection activity commences. When a debtor is awarded gratuitous benefits under VA programs, the BDN may operate to offset all or part of retroactive funds awarded, if any, to reduce the balance of the indebtedness. The Decentralized Hospital Computer Program (DHCP), through its various modules, is used to create and store first-party medical charges and debts associated with the provision of health care benefits. The identifying information about the person, the amount of the debt and program source of the debt may be transmitted to CARS as part of the collection process. When a person receives care under the auspices of VA, a VA medical facility may collect all or part of a charge or debt.

RETRIEVABILITY:

Paper documents, microfilm and microfiche are indexed by VA file number or date of receipt. Automated records are indexed by VA claim number, Social Security account number, name and loan account number in appropriate circumstances. Records in CAIVRS may only be retrieved by Social Security number.

SAFEGUARDS:

1. Physical Security: (a) Access to working spaces and document storage areas in DMC is restricted by cipher locks and to VA employees on a need-to-know basis. Generally, document storage areas in VA offices other than DMC are restricted to VA employees on a need-to-know basis. VA offices are generally protected from outside access by the Federal Protective Service or other security personnel. Strict control measures are enforced to ensure that access to and disclosure from documents, microfilm and microfiche are limited to a need-to-know basis. (b) Access to CAROLS data telecommunications terminals is by authorization controlled by the site security officer. The security officer is assigned responsibility for privacy-security measures, especially for review of violation logs, information logs and control of password distribution. (c) Access to data processing centers is generally restricted to center employees, custodial personnel, Federal Protective Service and other security personnel. Access to computer rooms is restricted to authorized operational personnel through electronic locking devices. All other personnel gaining access to computer rooms are escorted.

2. CAROLS and Personal Computer Local Area Network (LAN) Security: (a) Usage of CAROLS and LAN terminal equipment is protected by password access. Electronic keyboard locks are activated on security errors.

(b) At the data processing centers, identification of magnetic media containing data is rigidly enforced using labeling techniques. Automated storage media which are not in use are stored in tape libraries which are secured in locked rooms. Access to programs is controlled at three levels: programming, auditing and operations.

3. CAIVRS Security: Access to the HUD data processing center from which CAIVRS is operated is generally restricted to center employees and authorized contact employees. Access to computer rooms is restricted to authorized operational personnel through locking devices. All other persons gaining access to computer rooms are escorted.

Records in CAIVRS use Social Security numbers as identifiers. Access to information files is restricted to authorized employees of participating agencies and authorized employees of lenders who participate in the agencies' programs. Access is controlled by agency distribution of passwords. Information in the system may be accessed by use of a touch-tone telephone by authorized agency and lender employees on a need-to-know basis.

RETENTION AND DISPOSAL:

Microfilm and microfiche are retained in metal cabinets in DMC for 25 years. CARS records are retained until termination of debt collection (payment in full, write off, compromise or waiver). All other automated storage media are retained and disposed of in accordance with disposition authorization approved by the Archivist of the United States. DMC generally forwards all substantive paper documents to VA regional offices,

health care facilities and CHAMPVA Center for storage in claims files, patient treatment files, imaging systems or loan files. Those documents are retained and disposed of in accordance with the appropriate system of records. Information provided to HUD for CAIVRS is stored on magnetic tape. The tapes are returned to VA for updating each month. HUD does not keep separate copies of the tapes.

SYSTEM MANAGER(S) AND ADDRESS:

Director, Debt Management Center (389/00), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building, 1 Federal Drive, Ft. Snelling, MN 55111.

NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE:

An individual who wishes to determine whether a record is being maintained in this system under his or her name or other personal identifier, or wants to determine the contents of such record, should submit a written request to the system manager indicated above.

RECORD ACCESS PROCEDURES:

Individuals seeking information regarding access to and contesting of VA records may write, call or visit the nearest VA regional office. Address locations are listed in VA Appendix 1.

CONTESTING RECORD PROCEDURES:

See record access procedures, above.

RECORD SOURCE CATEGORIES:

The records in this system are derived from four other systems of records as set forth in "Categories of records in the system", above, persons indebted to the United States by virtue of their participation in programs administered by VA, dependents of those persons, fiduciaries for those persons (VA or court appointed), other Federal agencies, State and local agencies, private collection agencies, consumer reporting agencies, State, local and county courts and clerks, other third parties and other VA records.

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