

of the Roadmap to Excellence strategy of the Under Secretary for Benefits. The Committee will also finalize budgets for each subcommittee and schedule field visits for the coming year. On Wednesday, January 27, the Committee will focus on VA's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) to assess effectiveness of VA's contracting initiatives to increase the number of contracts to minority and other disadvantaged veterans. These sessions will be open to the public. Those who wish to attend should contact Mr. Anthony T. Hawkins, Department of Veterans Affairs, at (202) 273-6708, prior to January 20, 1999. The Committee will accept written comments from interested parties on issues affecting minority veterans. Such comments should be referred to the Committee at the following address: Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans, Center for Minority Veterans (OOM), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420.

Dated: December 4, 1998.

By Direction of the Secretary.

**Heyward Bannister,**

*Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 98-33083 Filed 12-11-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-M

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### Rehabilitation Research and Development Service Scientific Merit Review Board, Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs gives notice under Public Law 92-463 (Federal Advisory Committee Act) as amended, by section 5(c) of Public Law 94-409 that a meeting of the Rehabilitation Research and Development Service Scientific Merit Review Board will be held at the Wyndham Hotel, 1400 "M" Street NW, Washington, DC on January 12 through January 14, 1999. The session on January 12, 1999, is scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. and end at 9:30 p.m. The sessions on January 13 and January 14, 1999, are scheduled to begin at 8 a.m. and end at 5 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to review rehabilitation research and development applications for scientific and technical merit and to make recommendations to the Director, Rehabilitation Research and Development Service, regarding their funding.

The meeting will be open to the public for the January 12 session for the discussion of administrative matters, the

general status of the program, and the administrative details of the review process. On January 13-14, 1999, the meeting is closed during which the Board will be reviewing research and development applications.

This review involves oral comments, discussion of site visits, staff and consultant critiques of proposed research protocols, and similar analytical documents that necessitate the consideration of the personal qualifications, performance and competence of individual research investigators. Disclosure of such information would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. Disclosure would also reveal research proposals and research underway which could lead to the loss of these projects to third parties and thereby frustrate future agency research efforts.

Thus, the closing is in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(6), and (c)(9)(B) and the determination of the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs under Sections 10(d) of Pub. L. 92-463 as amended by Section 5(c) of Pub. L. 94-409. Those who plan to attend the open session should contact Ms. Victoria Mongiardo, Program Analyst, Rehabilitation Research and Development Service (122P), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20420, at least five days before the meeting. For further information, call (202) 275-0023.

Dated: December 4, 1998.

By Direction of the Secretary.

**Heyward Bannister,**

*Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 98-33082 Filed 12-11-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-M

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### Scientific Review and Evaluation Board for Health Services Research and Development Service; Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration, gives notice under Pub. L. 92-463, that a meeting of the Scientific Review and Evaluation Board for Health Services Research and Development Service will be held at the Embassy Suites, 9090 Southwest Freeway, Houston, TX, January 18 through January 20, 1999, from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. each day. The purpose of the meeting is to review research and development applications concerned with the measurement and evaluation of health care systems and

with testing new methods of health care delivery and management. Applications are reviewed for scientific and technical merit. Recommendations regarding funding are prepared for the Chief Research and Development Officer.

This meeting will be open to the public at the start of the January 18 session for approximately one-half hour to cover administrative matters and to discuss the general status of the program. The closed portion of the meeting involves discussion, examination, reference to, and oral review of staff and consultant critiques of research protocols and similar documents. During this portion of the meeting, discussion and recommendations will include qualifications of the personnel conducting the studies (the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy), as well as research information (the premature disclosure of which would be likely to frustrate significantly implementation of proposed agency action regarding such research projects). As provided by the subsection 10(d) of Pub. L. 92-463, as amended by Pub. L. 94-409, closing portions of these meetings is in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(6) and (9)(B).

Those who plan to attend the open session should contact the Review Program Manager (124F), Health Services Research and Development Service, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C., at least five days before the meeting. For further information, call (202) 273-8287.

Dated: December 4, 1998.

By Direction of the Secretary.

**Heyward Bannister,**

*Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 98-33084 Filed 12-11-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-M

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### Poverty Threshold

**AGENCY:** Department of Veterans Affairs.  
**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) hereby gives notice of the weighted average poverty threshold established for 1997 for one person (unrelated individual) as established by the Bureau of the Census. The amount is \$8,183.

**DATES:** For VA determinations, the 1997 poverty threshold is effective September 9, 1998, the date on which it was established by the Bureau of the Census.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Paul Trowbridge, Consultant,  
Compensation and Pension Service,  
Veterans Benefits Administration,  
Department of Veterans Affairs, 810  
Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC  
20420; (202) 273-7218.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** We  
published a final rule amending 38 CFR  
4.16(a) in the **Federal Register** of August  
3, 1990, 55 FR 31579. The amendment  
provided that marginal employment

generally shall be deemed to exist when  
a veteran's earned annual income does  
not exceed the amount established by  
the Bureau of the Census as the poverty  
threshold for one person. The  
provisions of 38 CFR 4.16(a) use the  
poverty threshold as a standard in  
defining marginal employment when  
considering total disability ratings for  
compensation based on unemployability  
of an individual. We stated we would  
publish subsequent poverty threshold

figures as notices in the **Federal  
Register**.

The Bureau of the Census recently  
published the weighted average poverty  
thresholds for 1997. The threshold for  
one person (unrelated individual) is  
\$8,183.

Dated: December 3, 1998.

**Togo D. West, Jr.,**

*Secretary of Veterans Affairs.*

[FR Doc. 98-33085 Filed 12-11-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-M