

as their contents may become material in the administration of any internal revenue law. Generally, tax returns and tax return information are confidential, as required by 26 U.S.C. 6103.

Request for Comments: Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record. Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and (e) estimates of capital or start-up costs and costs of operation, maintenance, and purchase of services to provide information.

Approved: September 24, 2019.

Philippe Thomas,

Supervisory Tax Analyst.

[FR Doc. 2019-22844 Filed 10-18-19; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0018]

Agency Information Collection Activity Under OMB Review: Application for Accreditation as Service Organization Representative

AGENCY: Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, this notice announces that the Office of General Counsel (OGC), Department of Veterans Affairs, will submit the collection of information abstracted below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The PRA submission describes the nature of the information collection and its expected cost and burden and it includes the actual data collection instrument.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before November 20, 2019.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments on the collection of information through www.Regulations.gov, or to Office of

Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Attn: VA Desk Officer; 725 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20503 or sent through electronic mail to oira_submission@omb.eop.gov. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0018" in any correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Danny S. Green, Enterprise Records Service (005R1B), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20420, (202) 421-1354 or email danny.green2@va.gov. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0018" in any correspondence.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority: 38 U.S.C. 5901, 5902, 5904; 38 CFR 14.629, 14.633.

Title: Application for Accreditation as Service Organization Representative.

OMB Control Number: 2900-0018.

Type of Review: Reinstatement of a previously approved collection.

Abstract: Service organizations are required to file an application with VA to establish eligibility for accreditation for representatives of that organization to represent benefit claimants before VA. VA Form 21 is completed by service organizations to establish accreditation for representatives and recertify the qualifications of accredited representatives.

Organizations requesting cancellation of a representative's accreditation based on misconduct, incompetence, or resignation to avoid cancellation of accreditation based upon misconduct or incompetence are required to inform VA of the specific reason for the cancellation request. VA will use the information collected to determine whether service organizations' representatives continue to meet regulatory eligibility requirements to ensure claimants have qualified representatives to assist in the preparation, presentation and prosecution of their claims for benefits.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published at: Vol. 84, No. 143, Thursday, July 25, 2019, pages 35929 and 35930.

Affected Public: Individuals, not-for-profit institutions, and state, local, or tribal governments.

Estimated Annual Burden: 1,013 hours (650 hours for new applicants, 350 hours for recertifications, and 13 hours for accreditation cancellation information responses).

Estimated Average Burden per Respondent: 13 minutes (15 minutes for new applicants, 10 minutes for recertifications, and 60 minutes for accreditation cancellation information responses).

Frequency of Response: One time.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 4,713 (2,600 new applicants, 2,100 recertifications, and 13 accreditation cancellation information responses).

By direction of the Secretary.

Danny S. Green,

Interim VA Clearance Officer, Office of Quality, Performance and Risk, Department of Veterans Affairs.

[FR Doc. 2019-22845 Filed 10-18-19; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0605]

Agency Information Collection Activity Under OMB Review: Application for Accreditation as a Claims Agent or Attorney, Filing of Representatives' Fee Agreements and Motions for Review of Such Fee Agreements

AGENCY: Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, this notice announces that the Office of General Counsel (OGC), Department of Veterans Affairs, will submit the collection of information abstracted below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The PRA submission describes the nature of the information collection and its expected cost and burden and it includes the actual data collection instrument.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before November 20, 2019.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments on the collection of information through www.Regulations.gov, or to Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Attn: VA Desk Officer; 725 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20503 or sent through electronic mail to oira_submission@omb.eop.gov. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0605" in any correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Danny S. Green, Enterprise Records Service (005R1B), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20420, (202) 421-1354 or email danny.green2@va.gov.

Please refer to “OMB Control No. 2900–0605” in any correspondence.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority: 38 U.S.C. 5901, 5904; 38 CFR 14.629, 14.636.

Title: Application for Accreditation as a Claims Agent or Attorney, Filing of Representatives’ Fee Agreements and Motions for Review of Such Fee Agreements.

OMB Control Number: 2900–0605.

Type of Review: Reinstatement of a previously approved collection.

Abstract: Applicants seeking accreditation as claims agents or attorneys to represent benefits claimants before VA must complete VA Form 21a. The applicant is required to file the application with OGC to establish initial eligibility for accreditation. The information requested includes basic identifying information, as well as certain information concerning training and experience, military service, and employment. The information is used to evaluate qualifications, ensure against conflicts of interest, and to establish that statutory and regulatory eligibility requirements, *e.g.*, good character and reputation, are met. If a potential area of concern is identified on the application, additional information may be requested. Applicants who become accredited as agents and attorneys may not lawfully represent claimants without completing and maintaining accreditation requirements. The data is used to determine the applicant’s eligibility for accreditation as a claims agent or attorney. The information collected with regard to an attorney or agent’s good standing with other courts, bars, and Federal and State agencies and completion of their ongoing CLE requirements is used by OGC in monitoring accredited attorneys and agents to determine whether they continue to have the appropriate character and reputation and that they remain fit to prepare, present, and prosecute VA benefit claims.

The data collected under Filing of Representatives’ Fee Agreements is used by OGC to associate the fee agreement with the attorney or agent of record and for potential use in a reasonableness review. The fee agreement information is used by VA’s Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) to associate the fee agreement with the claimant’s claims file for potential use in processing as the direct payment of a fee from the claimant’s past-due benefits award. The information provided in the fee agreements are used by both VBA and OGC to determine whether they are in compliance with the statutes and regulations governing paid representation. The data collected under Motions for Review of Such Fee Agreements is used when a motion is filed by a claimant or raised sua sponte by VA to determine the reasonableness of an agent or attorney fee from a claimant’s award of VA benefits. Also, when a claimant receives an award of benefits and has retained more than one attorney or agent who has been found eligible for direct payment of fees, the data is used to determine each of the attorney’s or agent’s contribution to and responsibility for the ultimate outcome of the claimant’s claim.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published at: Vol. 84, No. 143, Thursday, July 25, 2019, pages 35931 and 35932.

Affected Public: Individuals and businesses or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Annual Burden:

a. *Application for Accreditation as a Claims Agent, VA Form 21a:* 2,137.5 hours (975 hours for initial responses by attorneys, 225 hours for initial responses by non-attorneys, 187.5 hours

for follow up responses by non-attorneys, and 750 hours for recertifications by accredited attorneys and agents).

b. *Filing of Representatives’ Fee Agreements:* 3,125 hours (750 hours for first time filers and 2,375 hours for repeat filers).

c. *Motions for Review of Such Fee Agreements:* 420 hours.

Estimated Average Burden per Respondent:

a. *Application for Accreditation as a Claims Agent or Attorney, VA Form 21a:* 20 minutes (45 minutes for initial responses by attorneys, 45 minutes for initial responses by non-attorneys, 45 minutes for follow up responses by non-attorneys, and 10 minutes for recertifications by accredited attorneys and agents).

b. *Filing of Representatives’ Fee Agreements:* 13 minutes (1 hour for first time filers and 10 minutes for repeat filers).

c. *Motions for Review of Such Fee Agreements:* 2 hours.

Frequency of Response: One time.

Estimated Number of Respondents:

a. *Application for Accreditation as a Claims Agent, VA Form 21a:* 6,350 (1,300 initial responses by attorneys, 300 initial responses by non-attorneys, 250 follow up responses by non-attorneys, and 4,500 recertifications by accredited attorneys and agents).

b. *Filing of Representatives’ Fee Agreements:* 15,000 (750 first time filers and 14,250 repeat filers).

c. *Motions for Review of Such Fee Agreements:* 210.

By direction of the Secretary.

Danny S. Green,

Interim VA Clearance Officer, Office of Quality, Performance and Risk, Department of Veterans Affairs.

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