



**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 24, 2009

Secretary Shinseki Moves to Simplify PTSD Compensation Rules

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki announced the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is taking steps to assist Veterans seeking compensation for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

“The hidden wounds of war are being addressed vigorously and comprehensively by this administration as we move VA forward in its transformation to the 21st century,” said Secretary Shinseki.

The VA is publishing a proposed regulation today in the *Federal Register* to make it easier for a Veteran to claim service connection for PTSD by reducing the evidence needed if the stressor claimed by a Veteran is related to fear of hostile military or terrorist activity. Comments on the proposed rule will be accepted over the next 60 days. A final regulation will be published after consideration of all comments received.

Under the new rule, VA would not require corroboration of a stressor related to fear of hostile military or terrorist activity if a VA psychiatrist or psychologist confirms that the stressful experience recalled by a Veteran adequately supports a diagnosis of PTSD and the Veteran's symptoms are related to the claimed stressor.

Previously, claims adjudicators were required to corroborate that a non-combat Veteran actually experienced a stressor related to hostile military activity. This rule would simplify the development that is required for these cases.

PTSD is a recognized anxiety disorder that can follow seeing or experiencing an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury to which a person responds with intense fear, helplessness or horror, and is not uncommon in war.

Feelings of fear, confusion or anger often subside, but if the feelings don't go away or get worse, a Veteran may have PTSD.

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PTSD 2/2/2/2

VA is bolstering its mental health capacity to serve combat Veterans, adding thousands of new professionals to its rolls in the last four years. The Department also has established a suicide prevention helpline (1-800-273-TALK) and Web site available for online chat in the evenings at www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/Veterans.

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