

Department of Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

Date: 28 January, 2014

From: Assistant Inspector General for Audits and Evaluations (52)

Subj: Request Close-out, Hotline Referral (2013-04097-HL-1096/referral 2013-15018),
Management Instructed VARO staff to not schedule required medical examinations at
VARO Boston, MA

To: For the Record

Request the close-out of the subject hotline referral. The Office of Audits and Evaluations (OAE) was unable to substantiate the allegations. On September 15, 2013, OAE accepted the subject referral and assigned it to our San Diego Inspections Division. OAE staff reviewed claims folders and interviewed leadership and staff at the Boston VARO from September 4, 2013 through September 6, 2013.

The complainant alleged VARO management instructed VARO staff to not schedule required medical examinations to support veterans claims processed under the Veterans Benefits Administrations 2-year old claims processing initiative. The complainant identified this guidance was disseminated by the VARO Director, Service Center manager, and Assistance Service Center.

The Benefits Inspection team reviewed a statistical sample of 30 claims completed under VBA's 2-year old claims processing initiative. We could not find any errors associated with those 30 claims related to scheduling medical examinations. Further, when required, staff properly scheduled the appropriate medical examinations. Interviews with staff revealed there was some confusing guidance disseminated from management when the initiative first began. However, the VARO Director issued subsequent, clarifying information to ensure consistency in processing claims under VBA's initiative.

OAE did not find data or testimonial support to give credence to the allegations.

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