



## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### Privacy Act of 1974; System of Records

**AGENCY:** Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

**ACTION:** Notice of a modified system of records.

**SUMMARY:** As required by the Privacy Act of 1974, notice is hereby given that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is amending the system of records currently entitled, "Education Debt Reduction Program-VA" (115VA10). VA is amending the system of records by revising the System Number; System Location; System Manager; Record Source Categories; Routine Uses of Records Maintained in the System, Including Categories of Users and the Purposes of Such Uses; Policies and Practices for Retention and Disposal of Records; Physical, Administrative and Procedural Safeguards; Record Access Procedure; and Notification Procedure. VA is republishing the system notice in its entirety.

**DATES:** Comments on this amended system of records must be received no later than **[Insert date 30 days after date of publication in the Federal Register]**. If no public comment is received during the period allowed for comment or unless otherwise published in the Federal Register by the VA, the new system will become effective **[Insert date 30 days after date of publication in the Federal Register]**.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments may be submitted through [www.Regulations.gov](https://www.Regulations.gov); by mail or hand-delivery to Director, Regulation Policy and Management (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Room 1064, Washington,

DC 20420; or by fax to (202) 273-9026 (Note: not a toll-free number). Comments should indicate they are submitted in response to “Education Debt Reduction Program-VA” (115VA102). Copies of comments received will be available for public inspection in the Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Room 1063B, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday (except holidays). Please call (202) 461-4902 for an appointment (Note: not a toll-free number). In addition, comments may be viewed online at [www.Regulations.gov](http://www.Regulations.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Stephania Griffin, Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Privacy Officer, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420; telephone (704) 245-2492.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The System Number will be changed from 115VA10 to 115VA10A2 to reflect the current organizational alignment.

The System Location is being amended to replace Austin Automation Center (AAC) with Austin Information Technology Center (AITC). Also being removed, “Address locations for VA facilities are listed in VA Appendix 1 of the biennial publication of VA Privacy Act Issuances.” which is replaced with “Address locations for VA facilities may be found at <https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp>.”

The System Manager, Record Source Categories, Record Access Procedure, and Notification Procedure has been amended to replace, “Director, Health Care Staff Development and Retention Office (10A2D), Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, 1555 Poydras Street, Suite 1971, New Orleans,

Louisiana 70112. The telephone number is (504) 589-5267.” with “Director, Human Capital Management (10A2A4) (HCM), Education Loan Repayment Services (ELRS), 55 N. Robinson Avenue, Suite 1010, Oklahoma City, OK 73102. The telephone number is (405) 552-4346.”

The Routine Uses of Records Maintained in the System has been amended by amending the language in Routine Use #11 which states that disclosure of the records to the DoJ is a use of the information contained in the records that is compatible with the purpose for which VA collected the records. VA may disclose records in this system of records in legal proceedings before a court or administrative body after determining that the disclosure of the records to the court or administrative body is a use of the information contained in the records that is compatible with the purpose for which VA collected the records. This routine use will now state that release of the records to the DoJ is limited to circumstances where relevant and necessary to the litigation. VA may disclose records in this system of records in legal proceedings before a court or administrative body after determining that release of the records to the court or administrative body is limited to circumstances where relevant and necessary to the litigation.

Routine Use #15 is clarifying the language to state, “VA may disclose any information or records to appropriate agencies, entities, and persons when (1) VA suspects or has confirmed that there has been a breach of the system of records; (2) VA has determined that as a result of the suspected or confirmed breach there is a risk to individuals, VA (including its information systems, programs, and operations), the Federal Government, or national security; and (3) the disclosure made to such

agencies, entities, or persons is reasonably necessary to assist in connection with VA efforts to respond to the suspected or confirmed breach or to prevent, minimize, or remedy such harm.”

Routine use #16 is being added to state, “VA may disclose information from this system to another Federal agency or Federal entity, when VA determines that information from this system of records is reasonably necessary to assist the recipient agency or entity in (1) responding to a suspected or confirmed breach or (2) preventing, minimizing, or remedying the risk of harm to individuals, the recipient agency or entity (including its information systems, programs, and operations), the Federal Government, or national security, resulting from a suspected or confirmed breach. VA needs this routine use for the data breach response and remedial efforts with another Federal agency.”

The Policies and Practices for Retention and Disposal of Records is being amended to remove, “Records will be maintained and disposed of in accordance with records disposition authority approved by the Archivist of the United States.” This section will now state that these records are under the following records schedule; Record Control Schedule (RCS) 10-1 item 1000.40a, Educational Activity Records. Temporary; destroy 7 years after the education activity is closed. (N1-015-11-4, Item 1) or 1140.1. Clinical Trainee Onboarding Case File (CTOCF). Temporary; cutoff, case files at the end of the calendar year in which the academic year is completed. Transfer to Federal Record Center (FRC) when 7 years old. Destroy 25 years after cutoff. (DAA-0015-2016-0004, item 1).

The Physical, Administrative and Procedural Safeguards is being amended to replace Austin Automation Center (AAC) with Austin Information Technology Center (AITC).

The Report of Intent to Amend a System of Records Notice and an advance copy of the system notice have been sent to the appropriate Congressional committees and to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as required by the Privacy Act and guidelines issued by OMB on December 12, 2000.

**Signing Authority**

The Senior Agency Official for Privacy approved this document and authorized the undersigned to sign and submit the document to the Office of the Federal Register for publication electronically as an official document of the Department of Veterans Affairs. James P. Gfrerer, Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology and Chief Information Officer, Department of Veterans Affairs approved this document on July 13, 2020 for publication.

Dated: July 21, 2020.

**Amy L. Rose,**

*Program Analyst,*

*VA Privacy Service,*

*Office of Information Security,*

*Office of Information and Technology,*

*Department of Veterans Affairs.*

**SYSTEM NAME AND NUMBER:** “Education Debt Reduction Program-VA”  
(115VA10A2)

**SECURITY CLASSIFICATION:** Unclassified.

**SYSTEM LOCATION:** Records will be maintained at the Health Care Staff Development and Retention Office (HCSDRO/10A2A7), Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), 1555 Poydras Street, Suite 1971, New Orleans, Louisiana 70112; the Austin Information Technology Center (AITC), Department of Veterans Affairs, 1615 East Woodward Street, Austin, Texas 78772; and the VA health care facilities and VISN offices where scholarship recipients are employed. Address locations for VA health care facilities may be found at <https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp>. Complete records will be maintained only at the HCSDRO address.

**SYSTEM MANAGER(S):** Crystal Cruz, Deputy Director, Human Capital Management (10A2A4) (HCM), Education Loan Repayment Services (ELRS), [Crystal.Cruz@va.gov](mailto:Crystal.Cruz@va.gov), (405) 552-4339, 55 N. Robinson Avenue, Suite 1010, Oklahoma City, OK 73102.

**AUTHORITY FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE SYSTEM:** Title 38, United States Code, sections 501, 503, 7451, 7452, and 7431-7440.

**PURPOSE(S) OF THE SYSTEM:** The records and information may be used for determining and documenting individual applicant eligibility for debt reduction awards;

determining the debt reduction payment amounts and the related service periods for award recipients; ensuring that award amounts are consistent with applicable law, regulations and policy; monitoring the employment status of scholarship recipients during their service periods; terminating an employee's participation in the program; and evaluating and reporting program results and effectiveness.

**CATEGORIES OF INDIVIDUALS COVERED BY THE SYSTEM:** VA employees who apply for and are granted or denied educational assistance awards under the provisions of the VA Education Debt Reduction Program (EDRP) serving under an appointment under Title 38 U.S.C., Section 7402(b) in a position for which retention of qualified healthcare personnel is difficult.

**CATEGORIES OF RECORDS IN THE SYSTEM:** Records (or information contained in records) in this system may include: Personal identification information related to the application material, award processes, employment, and EDRP service periods such as (1) name, (2) employing facility number, (3) telephone number(s), (4) social security number, (5) debt reduction payment amounts, (6) dates of service periods, (7) name and address of the lending institution, (8) academic degree obtained for which EDRP funding is requested, (9) name and address of academic institution, (10) original amount of loan, and (11) current loan balance. Most of this information is contained on the application for an EDRP award including the applicant's full name, employing facility number, home and work telephone numbers, social security number, job title, degree

obtained for which funding is requested, name and address of the academic institution, and the amount and number of debt reduction payments requested. The EDRP Loan Verification Form contains the candidate's name and social security number, name and address of the lending institution, original loan amount, current loan amount, and the purpose of the loan as stated on the loan application. The EDRP Acceptance of Conditions contains the name of a candidate approved for an award and the authorized number of debt reduction payments and their related amounts.

**RECORD SOURCE CATEGORIES:** Individuals seeking information regarding access to and contesting of VA records in this system may write, call or visit the Director, Human Capital Management (10A2A4) (HCM), Education Loan Repayment Services (ELRS), 55 N. Robinson Avenue, Suite 1010, Oklahoma City, OK 73102. The telephone number is (405) 552-4346.

**ROUTINE USES OF RECORDS MAINTAINED IN THE SYSTEM, INCLUDING CATEGORIES OF USERS AND THE PURPOSES OF SUCH USES:** To the extent that records contained in the system include information protected by 45 CFR parts 160 and 164, *i.e.*, individually identifiable health information, and 38 U.S.C. 7332, *i.e.*, medical treatment information related to drug abuse, alcoholism or alcohol abuse, sickle cell anemia or infection with the human immunodeficiency virus, that information cannot be disclosed under a routine use unless there is also specific statutory authority in 38 U.S.C. 7332 and regulatory authority in 45 CFR parts 160 and 164 permitting disclosure.

1. Disclosure of any information in this system that is necessary to verify authenticity of the application may be made to lending institutions and other relevant organizations or individuals.
2. Disclosure of any information in this system may be made to a Federal agency in order to determine if an applicant has any obligation under another Federal program that would render the applicant ineligible to participate in the Education Debt Reduction Program.
3. Any information in the system may be used to evaluate and report program results and effectiveness to appropriate officials including members of Congress on a routine and ad hoc basis.
4. VA may disclose information from the record of an individual in response to an inquiry from the congressional office made at the request of that individual.
5. Disclosure may be made to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and the General Services Administration (GSA) for the purpose of records management inspections conducted under authority of Title 44, Chapter 29 of the United States Code.
6. Disclosure of information to the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA), including its General Counsel, when requested in connection with the investigation and resolution of allegations of unfair labor practices, in connection with the resolution of exceptions to arbitrator awards when a question of material fact is raised, in connection with matters before the Federal Service Impasses Panel, and to investigate representation petitions and conduct or supervise representation elections.

7. Disclosure may be made to officials of labor organizations recognized under 5 U.S.C. chapter 71 when relevant and necessary to their duties of exclusive representation concerning personnel policies, practices, and matters affecting working conditions.

8. Disclosure may be made to the VA appointed representative of an employee, including all notices, determinations, decisions, or other written communications issued to the employee in connection with an examination ordered by VA under medical evaluation (formerly fitness-for duty) examination procedures or Department-filed disability retirement procedures.

9. Disclosure may be made to officials of the Merit Systems Protection Board, including the Office of the Special Counsel, when requested in connection with appeals, special studies of the civil service and other merit systems, review of rules and regulations, investigation of alleged or possible prohibited personnel practices, and such other functions, promulgated in 5 U.S.C. 1205 and 1206, or as may be authorized by law.

10. Disclosure may be made to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission when requested in connection with investigations of alleged or possible discrimination practices, examination of Federal affirmative employment programs, compliance with the Uniform Guidelines of Employee Selection Procedures, or other functions of the Commission as authorized by law or regulation.

11. VA may disclose information in this system of records to the Department of Justice (DoJ), either on VA's initiative or in response to DoJ's request for the information, after either VA or DoJ determines that such information is relevant to DoJ's representation of the United States or any of its components in legal proceedings before a court or adjudicative body, provided that, in each case, the agency also determines prior to

disclosure that release of the records to the DoJ is limited to circumstances where relevant and necessary to the litigation. VA may disclose records in this system of records in legal proceedings before a court or administrative body after determining that release of the records to the court or administrative body is limited to circumstances where relevant and necessary to the litigation.

12. Disclosure of relevant information may be made to individuals, organizations, private or public agencies, etc., with whom VA has a contract or agreement to perform such services as VA may deem practicable for the purposes of laws administered by VA, in order for the contractor or subcontractor to perform the services of the contract or agreement.

13. VA may disclose any information in this system, except the names and home addresses of Veterans and their dependents, which is relevant to a suspected or reasonably imminent violation of law, whether civil, criminal or regulatory in nature and whether arising by general or program statute or by regulation, rule or order issued pursuant thereto, to a Federal, State, local, tribal, or foreign agency charged with the responsibility of investigating or prosecuting such violation, or charged with enforcing or implementing the statute, regulation, rule or order. VA may also disclose the names and addresses of Veterans and their dependents to a Federal agency charged with the responsibility of investigating or prosecuting civil, criminal or regulatory violations of law, or charged with enforcing or implementing the statute, regulation, rule or order issued pursuant thereto.

14. Disclosure to other Federal agencies may be made to assist such agencies in preventing and detecting possible fraud or abuse by individuals in their operations and programs.

15. VA may disclose any information or records to appropriate agencies, entities, and persons when (1) VA suspects or has confirmed that there has been a breach of the system of records; (2) VA has determined that as a result of the suspected or confirmed breach there is a risk to individuals, VA (including its information systems, programs, and operations), the Federal Government, or national security; and (3) the disclosure made to such agencies, entities, or persons is reasonably necessary to assist in connection with VA efforts to respond to the suspected or confirmed breach or to prevent, minimize, or remedy such harm.

16. VA may disclose information from this system to another Federal agency or Federal entity, when VA determines that information from this system of records is reasonably necessary to assist the recipient agency or entity in (1) responding to a suspected or confirmed breach or (2) preventing, minimizing, or remedying the risk of harm to individuals, the recipient agency or entity (including its information systems, programs, and operations), the Federal Government, or national security, resulting from a suspected or confirmed breach.

**POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR STORAGE OF RECORDS:** Records are maintained on paper, electronic media and computer printouts.

**POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR RETRIEVAL OF RECORDS:** Records are retrieved by use of the award number or an equivalent participant account number assigned by HCSDRO, Social Security Number and the name of the individual.

**POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF RECORDS:**

These records are under the following records schedule; Record Control Schedule (RCS) 10-1 item 1000.40a, Educational Activity Records. Temporary; destroy 7 years after the education activity is closed. (N1-015-11-4, Item 1) or 1140.1. Clinical Trainee Onboarding Case File (CTOCF). Temporary; cutoff, case files at the end of the calendar year in which the academic year is completed. Transfer to Federal Record Center (FRC) when 7 years old. Destroy 25 years after cutoff. (DAA-0015-2016-0004, item 1).

**ADMINISTRATIVE, TECHNICAL AND PHYSICAL SAFEGUARDS:** Access to the basic file in HCSDRO is restricted to authorized VA employees and vendors. Access to the office spaces where electronic media is maintained within HCSDRO is further restricted to specifically authorized employees and is protected by contracted building security services. Records (typically computer printouts) at HCSDRO will be kept in locked files and made available only to authorized personnel on a need-to-know basis. During non-working hours the file is locked, and the building is protected by contracted building security services. Records stored on electronic media are maintained on a VA-approved and managed, password protected, secure local area network (LAN) located within HCSDRO office spaces and safeguarded as described above. Records stored

on electronic media at Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Offices, VA health care facilities and the AITC in Austin, Texas, are provided equivalent safeguards subject to local policies mandating protection of information subject to Federal safeguards.

**RECORD ACCESS PROCEDURE:** Individuals seeking information regarding access to and contesting of VA records in this system may write, call or visit the Director, Human Capital Management (10A2A4) (HCM), Education Loan Repayment Services (ELRS), 55 N. Robinson Avenue, Suite 1010, Oklahoma City, OK 73102. The telephone number is (405) 552-4346.

**CONTESTING RECORD PROCEDURES:** (See Record Access Procedures above.)

**NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE:** Any 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 records, should submit a written request or apply in person to Director, Human Capital Management (10A2A4) (HCM), Education Loan Repayment Services (ELRS), 55 N. Robinson Avenue, Suite 1010, Oklahoma City, OK 73102. The telephone number is (405) 552-4346.

**EXEMPTIONS PROMULGATED FOR THE SYSTEM:** None.

**HISTORY:** Last full publication provided in 74 FR 21432 dated May 8, 2009.

[FR Doc. 2020-16114 Filed: 7/23/2020 8:45 am; Publication Date: 7/24/2020]