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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0500]

Agency Information Collection Activity: Mandatory Verification of Dependents

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), is announcing an opportunity for public comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, Federal agencies are required to publish notice in the Federal Register concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed revision of a currently approved collection, and allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice.

DATES: Written comments and recommendations on the proposed collection of information should be received on or before **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments on the collection of information through Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) at www.Regulations.gov or to Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20M33), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420 or e-mail to nancy.kessinger@va.gov. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0500" in any correspondence. During the comment period, comments may be viewed online through FDMS.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Danny S. Green at (202) 421-1354.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Under the PRA of 1995, Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. This request for comment is being made pursuant to Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA.

With respect to the following collection of information, VBA invites comments on:

(1) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of VBA's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of VBA's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology.

Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501.

Title: Mandatory Verification of Dependents (VA Form 21-0538).

OMB Control Number: 2900-0500.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: VA Form 21-0538 is used to request verification of the status of dependents for whom additional compensation is being paid to veterans. Without this information, continued entitlement to the benefits for dependents could not be determined.

VA Form 21-0538 has been revised; (1) letter template removed as it was a duplicate of a VA cover letter already in use, (2) the title has been changed from 'Mandatory Status of Dependents' to Mandatory Verification of Dependents, (3) Section

II: Status Certification, was added to help delineate whether the veteran is needed to provide additional information on the status of their dependents, or not, (4) the form was changed to include removals only as these are dependents that have already been previously added to the veteran's benefits, as another collection is used to add dependents, and (5) an e-signature has been added to provide a digital format for online signatures. The burden estimate has also been decreased.

Affected Public: Individuals and households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 29,233 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 10 minutes.

Frequency of Response: Once.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 175,400.

By direction of the Secretary:

Danny S. Green,

VA PRA Clearance Officer,

Office of Quality, Performance and Risk (OQPR),

Department of Veterans Affairs.

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