



[OMB Control No. 2900-0556]

Agency Information Collection Activity: VA Advance Directive: Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care and Living Will

AGENCY: Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Veterans Health Administration (VHA), 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 extension 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 Grant Bennett, Office of Regulations, Appeals, and Policy (10BRAP), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20420 or e-mail to Grant.Bennett@va.gov. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0556" in any correspondence. During the comment period, comments may be viewed online through FDMS.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Maribel Aponte, Office of Enterprise and Integration, Data Governance Analytics (008), 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20420, (202) 266-4688 or email maribel.aponte@va.gov. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0556" in any correspondence.

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, VHA invites comments on: (1) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of VHA's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of VHA'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: Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C. 3501–3521.

Title: Advance Directive: Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care and Living Will, VA Form 10-0137.

OMB Control Number: 2900-0556.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: Section 7331 of title 38, United States Code (U.S.C.), requires, in relevant part, that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, upon the recommendation of the Under Secretary for Health, prescribe regulations to ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that all Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) patient care be carried out only with the full and informed consent of the patient, or in appropriate cases, a representative thereof. Based on VA's interpretation of this statute and our mandate in 38 U.S.C. 7301(b) to provide a complete medical and hospital service, we recognize

that patients with decision-making capacity have the right to state their treatment preferences in a VA or other valid advance directive.

VA Form 10-0137, *VA Advance Directive: Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care and Living Will*, is the VA recognized legal document that permits VA patients to designate a health care agent and/or specify preferences for future health care. The VA Advance Directive is invoked if a patient becomes unable to make health care decisions for himself or herself. Use of the VA Advance Directive is specified in VHA Handbook 1004.02, Advance Care Planning and Management of Advance Directives. Veterans' rights to designate a health care agent and specify health care preferences in advance are codified in 38 CFR 17.32. This regulation also obligates VA to recognize advance directives and to use the information contained therein when health care decisions must be made for a patient that has lost decision making capacity.

VA Form 10-0137 (both English and Spanish-English language versions) has a current OMB Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) clearance under OMB Control Number 2900-0556. In addition, 2900-0556 now includes the collection of a "Close Personal Friend Statement" for incapacitated Veterans who have not completed an Advance Directive and are in need of health care. When a Veteran is incapacitated and does not have an Advance Directive, the VA regulations allow a statement to be submitted from a "Close Personal Friend" who will be responsible for making health care decisions on behalf of the Veteran. It is estimated that 300 such statements will be collected annually. VA seeks to renew the PRA clearance for the information collection under OMB Control Number 2900-0556.

VA Form 10-0137:

Affected Public: Individuals and households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 171,811 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 30 minutes.

Frequency of Response: Once annually.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 343,622.

Close Personal Friend Statement:

Affected Public: Individuals and households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 50 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 10 minutes.

Frequency of Response: Once annually.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 300.

By direction of the Secretary:

Maribel Aponte,

VA PRA Clearance Officer,

Office of Enterprise and Integration/Data Governance Analytics,

Department of Veterans Affairs.

BILLING CODE 8320-01-P

[FR Doc. 2023-27656 Filed: 12/15/2023 8:45 am; Publication Date: 12/18/2023]