

birth defects resulting in permanent physical or mental disability.

38 U.S.C. 1805, Spina Bifida Benefits Eligibility, authorizes payment to a spina bifida child-claimant to parent(s) who performed active military, naval, or air service during the Vietnam era during the period January 9, 1962 to May 7, 1975. The child must be the natural child of a Vietnam veteran, regardless of age or marital status, who was conceived after the date on which the veteran first entered the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam era. Spina Bifida benefits are payable for all types of spina bifida except spina bifida occulta. The law does not allow payment of both benefits at the same time. If entitlement exists under both laws, benefits will be paid under 38 U.S.C. 1815.

VA Form 21-0304 is used to gather the necessary information to determine eligibility for a monetary allowance and appropriate level of payment.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households.

*Estimated Annual Burden:* 335 hours.

*Estimated Average Burden Per*

*Respondent:* 10 minutes.

*Frequency of Response:* On occasion.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 2,000.

Dated: November 28, 2003.

By direction of the Acting Secretary.

**Jacqueline Parks,**

*IT Specialist, Records Management Service.*

[FR Doc. 03-30573 Filed 12-9-03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 8320-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0578]

### Proposed Information Collection Activity: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) 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. This notice solicits comments on information needed to approve requests for preauthorization of certain health care services and benefits for children of Vietnam veterans.

**DATES:** Written comments and recommendations on the proposed collection of information should be received on or before February 9, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written comments on the collection of information to Ann Bickoff, Veterans Health Administration (193B1), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420 or e-mail [ann.bickoff@mail.va.gov](mailto:ann.bickoff@mail.va.gov). Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0578" in any correspondence.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ann Bickoff at (202) 273-8310.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Under the PRA of 1995 (Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C. 3501-3521), 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.

### Titles

a. Health Care for Certain Children of Vietnam Veterans—Spina Bifida and Covered Birth Defects—Regulation.

b. Claim for Miscellaneous Expenses, VA Form 10-7959e.

*OMB Control Number:* 2900-0578.

*Type of Review:* Extension of a currently approved collection.

*Abstract:* VA's medical regulations 38 CFR part 17 (17.900 through 17.905) established regulations regarding provision of health care for women Vietnam veterans' children born with spina bifida and certain other covered birth defects. The information collected will be used to determine whether to approve requests for preauthorization of certain health care services and benefits for children of Vietnam veterans; the appropriateness of billings for such services; and to make decisions during the review and appeal process.

Beneficiaries complete VA Form 10-7959e to claim payment/reimbursement of expenses related to spina bifida and certain covered birth defects. Health care providers complete standard billing forms such as: Uniform Billing-Forms (UB) 92, and HCFA 1500, Medicare Health Insurance Claims Form. Without the requested information VA will be unable to determine the correct amount to reimburse providers for their services or beneficiaries for covered expenses.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households, business or other for-profit, and not for profit institutions.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden:* 3,400 hours.

*Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent:* 6½ minutes.

*Frequency of Response:* On occasion.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 3,600.

*Estimated Total Annual Responses:* 31,400.

Dated: November 28, 2003.

By direction of the Secretary:

**Jacqueline Parks,**

*IT Specialist, Records Management Service.*

[FR Doc. 03-30574 Filed 12-9-03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 8320-01-P**