



For God and Country

bulletin

National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission

1608 K Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006

K. Robert Lewis, Chairman - Connecticut

Peter S. Gaytan, Director - Maryland

23 – 08

June 27, 2008

Volunteer Attorney Placement Program

There has been a large increase in the number of appeals pending before the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) and the Appeals Management Center (AMC). In an effort to help us address this large influx of appeals, The American Legion, in conjunction with the National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP), has enlisted the aid of hundreds of attorneys from many major law firms to help the veterans we represent with their appeals pending before either the BVA or AMC. NVLSP attorneys, who are also accredited American Legion representatives, screen American Legion-represented appeals pending at the BVA and AMC for possible placement with an attorney. Appellants whose appeals are selected for this program are notified, in writing, of the opportunity to have their case placed with an attorney. A copy of the initial letter sent to the appellant is included with this bulletin.

The specifics of this program are provided below:

1. The American Legion will retain the appellant's power of attorney.
2. The volunteer lawyer will communicate with the VA through The American Legion.
3. The volunteer lawyer will be selected and mentored by attorneys working for NVLSP in consultation with The American Legion.
4. The volunteer lawyers will not charge any fee to anyone.
5. Appellant's invited to take advantage of this program may decline to participate and The American Legion will still represent them.

We ask that you support this program. If a veteran contacts you and asks about the program please let the veteran know that it is an American Legion program that is fully supported by the National Headquarters. Please contact Steve Smithson, Deputy Director for Claims Service, VA&R, at (202) 263-2985 or ssmithson@legion.org if you have any questions or concerns.

Peter S. Gaytan, Director
National Veterans Affairs and
Rehabilitation Commission

XXXXXX, 2008

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Dear XXXX,

We have good news. The American Legion has arranged for volunteer attorneys to help the Legion represent you before the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The American Legion will continue to represent you. Attorneys from the National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP), who are also service officers of The American Legion, and the law firm of XXXXX will work on your case. This means you will still be represented by The American Legion, but now you will have volunteer attorneys working with the Legion to help you win your claim. **As before, you will not be charged any money for the work being done on your case.**

The object of this program is to have your attorney help you obtain evidence that will support the prompt award of your rightfully earned VA benefits. Because it may take some time to obtain the needed evidence do not expect a prompt VA decision.

An attorney from the law firm of XXXXXX will be contacting you in the near future. If you have questions, please feel free to call NVLSP Joint Executive Director, Ron Abrams at (202) 265-8305 #111 or Steven Smithson, Deputy Director of The American Legion at (202) 263-2985.

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

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Litigation Staff Attorney