



**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**Regional Office**  
**1240 East 9<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Cleveland, OH 44199**

April 8, 2013

In Reply Refer To: 325/00

Dear CVSO,

As you know, the Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) continues to transform its operations to better meet the needs of today's Veterans. I am pleased to share details on one transformation initiative, Fully Developed Claims, and offer a challenge to your organization to assist the Cleveland VA Regional Office in an exciting endeavor.

Fully Developed Claims (FDC) are critical to achieving VA Secretary Erik Shinseki's goals. An FDC is one that includes all Department of Defense service medical and personnel records, including entrance and exit examinations, applicable Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs), any private medical records, and a fully completed claim form.

An FDC is critical to reducing "wait time" and "rework". Today, VBA receives only 4.8 percent of claims in fully developed form, which equates to 5,600 claims this fiscal year through February. The Cleveland RO has received 5.9 percent of its FY 2013 receipts in FDC form. When a qualified FDC is received, VBA is able to discharge its evidence-gathering responsibilities under the Veterans Claims Assistance Act much more efficiently than in traditional claims. This evidence-gathering period is a major portion of the current 262-day process. Today, VBA completes these FDCs in 117 days. VBA's target for FY 2013 is to increase these FDCs to 20 percent - meaning VBA will have the ability, if this goal is reached, to decide 153,000 additional claims in 117 days. For more information on the FDC program, please access <http://benefits.va.gov/transformation/fastclaims/>.

As previously mentioned to you during our Journey to Green meeting, I am offering you a challenge. I have instructed my staff to monitor the number of FDC claims submitted by each county for the months of March and April 2013. I will recognize the county that increases its percentage of FDC submissions at the upcoming May School. I am hopeful that together, by encouraging Veterans to submit Fully Developed Claims, we can help ensure expedited decisions for these Veterans.

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If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to me. Thank you for assistance on FDCs and in helping to ensure Ohio Veterans receive the service they have earned.

Sincerely,

JOYCE A. CANGE

Director

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