

- Veterans initiate appeal of a decision with which they disagree by explaining their disagreement on VA Form 21-0958, *Notice of Disagreement*. Veterans, survivors, and their representatives currently use the form on an optional basis.

#### **How does this impact Veterans?**

- The most important impact for Veterans is that this improvement and standardization of the filing process will lead to faster claims decisions. By establishing standard forms for Veterans to use, the filing process will become much more efficient, allowing the Veteran to more clearly notify VA of what he or she is seeking.
- VA is required to have certain information prior to processing a claim. This form simplifies for the Veteran the way they provide that necessary information to VA.

#### **How does this help VA process claims more quickly?**

- By requiring claims on standard forms – as other public agencies do – VA will be able to quickly identify what the individual is claiming and initiate the process to gather evidence for that specific issue. This step is often delayed as, under current regulations, non-standard claims and appeals can be difficult to identify.
- By helping VA identify claims and appeals, VA can expeditiously begin developing the evidence necessary to process the claim or appeal.
- Standardized forms are a key component of VA's transformation, which will help achieve the Department's goal to eliminate the backlog in 2015.