



## **DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS** **STATEMENT OF POLICY FOR REPRESENTATION**

Thank you for choosing the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) as your accredited representative. The DAV has a long history of advocacy and successful representation of veterans and their dependents seeking benefits and services from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other government agencies. Our National Service Officers (NSOs) and Transition Service Officers (TSOs) are highly trained, skilled professionals, who are experts in developing and prosecuting veterans' claims. These men and women are well-versed at conducting in-depth reviews of medical histories and the sound application of all relevant laws and regulations in prosecuting benefit claims.

DAV Chapter and Department Service Officers also play a vital role in assisting claimants. Chapter Service Officers may provide information about benefits available to veterans, their families and survivors. Accredited Department Service Officers, also highly trained and skilled professionals, advise and counsel claimants and provide assistance in the development of claims for various benefits to which they may be entitled. Once all necessary forms are completed and development has been accomplished, a duly accredited DAV NSO provides comprehensive representation services through every step of the claims adjudication process, including any necessary appellate-related proceedings.

DAV can best serve your interests if you deal directly with our Service Officers. The purpose of having a representative is to have an advocate, skilled in veterans' benefits, working for you. We can serve you best when we are involved in every step of the claims process. This teamwork is the key to success. Please do not take any action directly with the VA, and do not try to work the claim yourself. We are here to discuss your case with you and to take appropriate action following those discussions. Please understand the DAV is not responsible for any action taken by a claimant directly with the VA. Let us help you. That is why we're here!

When the VA reaches a decision on your claim, you may decide to appeal. The decision to file an appeal is *your* decision and right, but it is vital that you fully understand the process. We will file an appeal at your request as long as the appeal is not frivolous. We strongly encourage you to contact us about appeals and, again, we discourage you from filing an appeal yourself.

### **What You Need To Do To Assist DAV**

- Be truthful with us and the VA at all times.
- Provide adequate information in a timely manner whenever requested by us or the VA.
- Provide any and all legal documentation or evidence required for the processing of your claim directly to our office.
- Report to all examinations requested by the VA in a timely manner.
- Reply to any VA request for information through our office.
- Notify us immediately of any change in your address or telephone number.

### **What DAV Will Do For You**

DAV is your advocate. We will review the facts and circumstances of your claim and develop it for presentation to the VA. We will ensure your claim is properly filed and will monitor it as it proceeds through the VA claims process. We will advise you of significant developments with respect to your claim and do everything we ethically can to see that your claim is decided in your favor. If the VA decides against you, we will, at your request, advise you about the appellate process and, based on controlling laws and regulations, the probable outcome of your particular case.

**We are pleased to serve as your representative, however, your NSO will have to withdraw representation if you:**

- Threaten, abuse, mistreat or harass any employee of the DAV.
- Knowingly present a fraudulent claim.
- Initiate any action that would result in a conflict of interest in pursuing benefits with the VA.
- Fail to cooperate with DAV in the prosecution of your claim.
- Create or become involved in any situation that makes it inappropriate for DAV to continue as your representative.

Your understanding and cooperation with DAV's policy for representation is appreciated. You can be sure our Service Officers want to help you and that they will work hard for you. We appreciate the confidence you have placed in the DAV.