

Appeals Modernization

The Veteran Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 became law on August 23, 2017 (Pub L. 115-55). It is also known as the Appeals Modernization Act (AMA). You can [read the law in full](#) on Congress.gov.

The law:

- Modernizes the claims and appeals process
- Includes three decision review options for disagreements with benefits decisions
- Requires improved notification of VA decisions
- Provides earlier claim resolution
- Ensures you receive the earliest effective date possible

What are the new options for review?

You have three options for review:

Option 1: Higher-Level Review

Your claim is reviewed by a more senior claims adjudicator and involves:

- A higher-level de novo review (new look) of the decision
 - No submission of new evidence allowed
- The possibility of overturning the decision based on
 - A difference of opinion
 - A clear and unmistakable error

The reviewer, who identifies or learns of a duty to assist error, can return the claim to the regional office for correction. At the time of application, you or your representative can request an informal conference to identify errors of law or fact in the decision.

Option 2: A Supplemental Claim

You can submit or identify new and relevant evidence to support your claim. VA will provide assistance in developing the evidence.

Option 3: Appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals

This option allows you to appeal directly to the Board of Veterans' Appeals. You can choose between three options:

- Direct review: You do not want to submit additional evidence or have a hearing.
- Evidence submission: You want to submit additional evidence without a hearing.
- Hearing: You choose to submit evidence and have a hearing with a Veterans Law Judge.