

VA published its final rule, [RIN 2900-AO81](#), Standard Claims and Appeals Forms, on September 25, 2014. This final rule, in part, created a standardized process, known as the “Intent to File” process, in which a claimant may preserve his or her effective date for benefits via submission of an intent to file. If a complete application for benefits is received by VA within 1 year of receipt of an intent to file, a claimant may be eligible for compensation from the date the intent to file was received.

Effective March 24, 2015, an intent to file may be submitted via telephone or on new VA Form 21-0966, *Intent to File a Claim for Compensation and/or Pension, or Survivors Pension/Dependency Indemnity Compensation*. VA will also interpret the initiation of a claim online through eBenefits or SEP as stating an “intent to file” for effective date purposes. Although the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved VA Form 21-0966, VA cannot release it for public use until the effective date of the final rule. As such, use of VA Form 21-0966 prior to March 24, 2015, is inappropriate. Further, any VA Form 21-0966 received prior to the effective date will not be treated as an intent to file. Therefore, VA discourages use of this form until March 24, 2015.

Because the information solicited on VA Form 21-0966 does not meet the threshold for consideration as an informal claim for non-original claims under current law, (see, e.g., *Brokowski v. Shinseki*, 23 Vet.App. 79, 84 (2009)), VA will treat prematurely-submitted 21-0966 forms that do not identify disability by body system, symptom, or anatomical segment, as a request for an application. Consistent with current practice, VA will consider 21-0966 forms that do identify claimed disabilities with sufficient specificity received before March 24, 2015, informal claims.