



Date

Dear **[insert Veteran's Name]**:

Your status in the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers has changed. During our conversation on **[Date]**, we discussed that your clinical team has determined you no longer meet the eligibility requirements for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. **[Insert additional information here regarding the Veteran's progress and gained independence and date of the discharge]**.

If you do not agree with this decision, you may appeal to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facility where you are receiving care. Instructions for appeal can be found on the next page or on our website at www.caregiver.va.gov.

Although your status has changed and you no longer qualify for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, your caregiver may still qualify for caregiver services and benefits. In accordance with the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers regulations, your primary family caregiver's Civilian Health and Medical Program (CHAMPVA) and stipend benefits will continue for 90 days after the discharge date. The Office of Community Care will send a detailed letter to the primary family caregiver regarding benefit termination.

Based on statute and regulations, caregivers of enrolled Veterans of all eras receive the following general caregiver services and benefits: education and training on caring for a Veteran; counseling and other services; and respite care. To access these services, please contact **[name of CSC]** at **[insert CSC's telephone number]** to help link you to these programs.

Caregivers also have access to the **National Caregiver Support Line**, which can be reached toll free at **1-855-260-3274**. The line is staffed by licensed social workers who are available to answer caregiver questions, listen to concerns, and provide education on VA supportive services and community resources that may assist caregivers.

You may also visit our website www.caregiver.va.gov to find helpful resources and tools. In addition, the Caregiver Support Program offers many unique programs such as Building Better Caregivers, Peer Support Mentoring, Caregiver Support Line National Education Calls, Caregiver Self Care Courses as well as **[insert local caregiver support services]**. If you have any questions about this letter, the appeals process, information on supportive programs and services or other matters, please feel free to contact **[name of CSC]** at **[insert CSC's telephone number]**.

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

[insert name of signer]

[title of signer]

cc: [insert Primary Family Caregiver's name]

YOUR RIGHTS TO APPEAL THE DECISION

HOW CAN I APPEAL A CLINICAL DECISION?

If you disagree with this decision, you may appeal to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facility where you are receiving care. Attempts will be made to resolve clinical disputes at the clinical team level. Clinical disputes not resolved at the clinical team level will be elevated to the medical facility's Chief of Staff. If you are not satisfied with the decision of the VA medical facility, you may request to have your decision reviewed by the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Director or his/her designee.

NOTE: To avoid unnecessary delays, the appeal should be submitted in accordance with the local clinical appeals process. Please contact me, your clinical team or your Patient Advocate for local VA medical facility policy, procedures and timelines for appeals.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT IF I APPEAL TO THE VA MEDICAL FACILITY AND/OR VISN DIRECTOR?

A clinical appeal is your formal request to have the VA medical facility, review your dispute. Submit your disagreement to me or your local VA Patient Advocate. The Patient Advocate at the facility enters the clinical appeal into a national computerized Patient Advocate Tracking System. The Chief of Staff or designee will contact you or your representative to notify you of receipt of your dispute and may request information that will support your appeal.

If you are not satisfied with the VA medical facility's decision, you can appeal to the VISN Director. The VISN Director or designee, if necessary, may request an independent external review of your dispute. In general, you can expect to have a final decision within 30 days of the initial receipt of the appeal request. However, if an external review is requested, the time frame for a final decision will be extended to 45 days from the appeal request.

CAN I GET A HEARING WITH THE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS?

No. The clinical appeals process does not allow for you or your representative to appeal a clinical decision to the Board of Veterans' Appeals. Pursuant to 38 C.F.R. § 20.1010(b), medical determinations are beyond the Board's jurisdiction. You should follow the clinical appeals process as outlined in this letter. The clinical decision is final and cannot be appealed to a higher authority.

CAN I GET SOMEONE TO HELP ME WITH MY APPEAL?

Yes. You can have a Veterans' Service Organization representative, an attorney-at-law, or an "agent" help you with your appeal. But you are not required to have someone represent you. It is your choice.