



VA Mobile App

# Status Update

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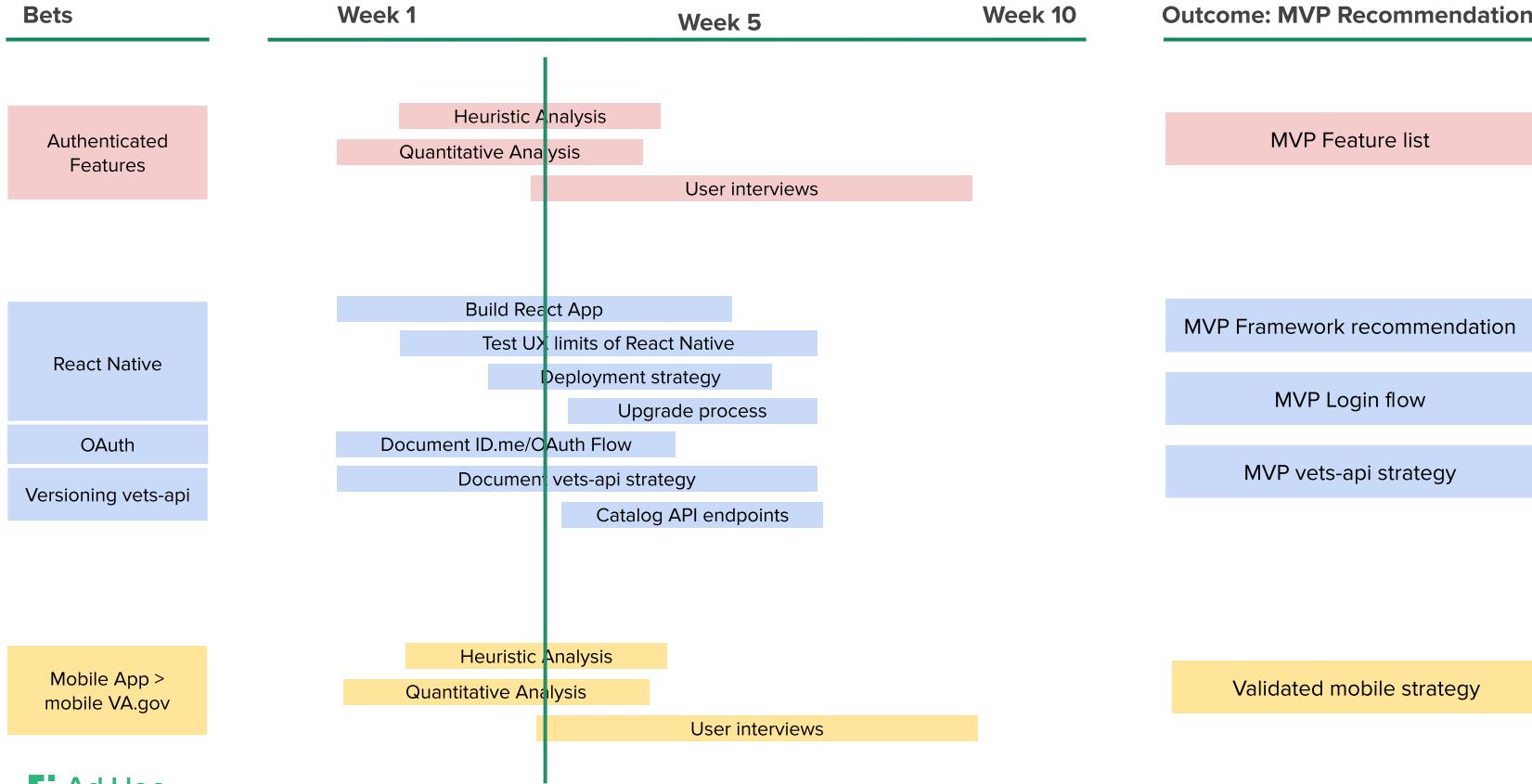
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# Integrated Roadmap

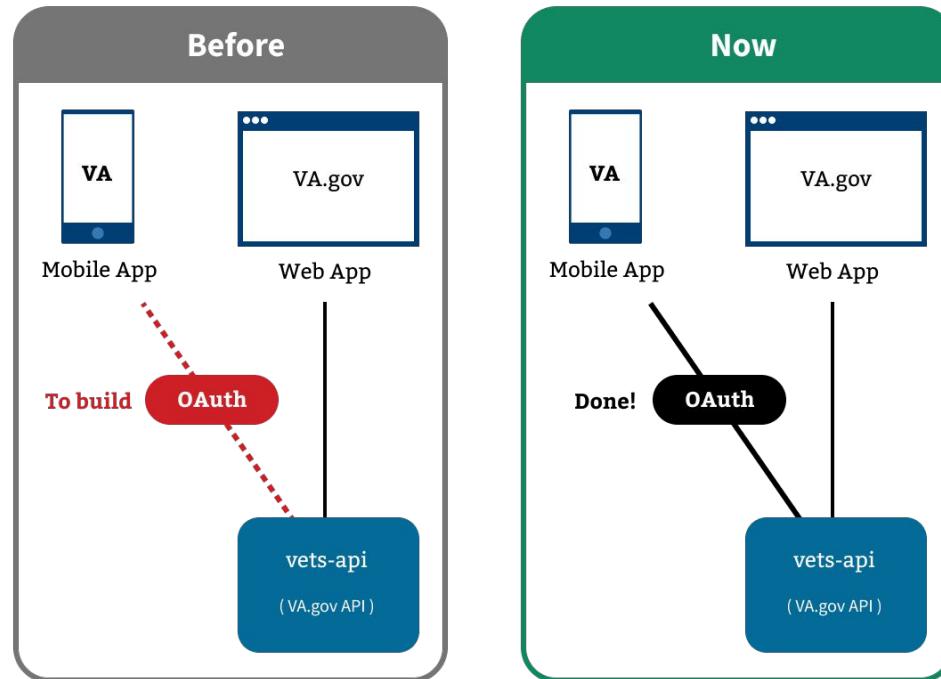


# Key Takeaways

1. Login works!
2. We have access to Lighthouse APIs
3. Using React Native sped up our development
4. Custom UX was relatively easy to implement with React Native
5. The existing VA experience can feel fragmented
6. A high volume of Veterans check their claims status online, and do so repeatedly
7. 50k people call each month about claims and correspondence, even though calling the VA is a frequently cited pain point.
8. Healthcare is the big driver for engagement with VA online
9. Mobile presents opportunities to expand the accessibility of VA digital tools

# Login works!

The VSP team added PKCE support for mobile oAuth in order to let us get an authentication token from Lighthouse to properly log in.



“

I use the [USAA] app more, because if I login on a desktop, it makes me request a passcode and I then have to say whether I want it texted or emailed...

On my phone, it reads my fingerprint, I put in a 4-digit pin and boom!"

—P5

Mobile login report & recommendation:  
<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/products/va-mobile-app/tech-research/Mobile%20App%20Discovery%20-%20Login%20Recommendation.pdf>

# We now have access to Lighthouse APIs

*We connected end to end: mobile client -> oAuth PKCE -> access tokens -> /claims*

## Available today

- Benefits API → Claims status
- Facilities API → Facility locator
- Veteran Verification API → Limited Veteran Profile (e.g., service history)

## Would need to be added to Lighthouse

- Appointments API → Scheduling
- Secure Messaging API → Mobile messaging
- Prescriptions API → RX Refill
- Profile API → Expanded Veteran Profile
- Upload supporting Evidence → Camera functionality

# React Native sped up development time

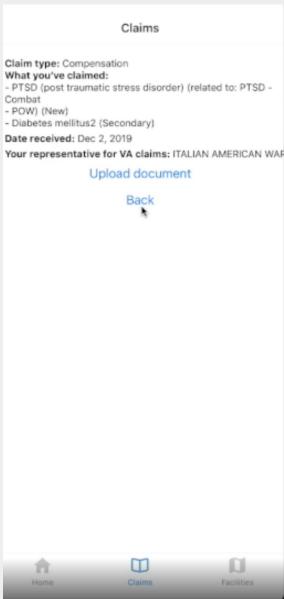
*In < 2 weeks, we built a 5 screen app with 5 API integrations, deployed to both platforms*

	React Native	Native iOS & Android
Number of screens to code	<b>5 screens</b>	<b>5 x 2 = 10 screens</b>
Number of codebases	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
Language/ecosystems	<b>JavaScript and React</b>	<b>Swift and Java or Kotlin</b>
Distribution	<b>Write once, deploy twice</b>	<b>Separate deploy paths</b>

# Custom designs were relatively easy to implement

Coding in React and CSS made it easy to create a custom, VA branded user interface with elements like a progress bar.

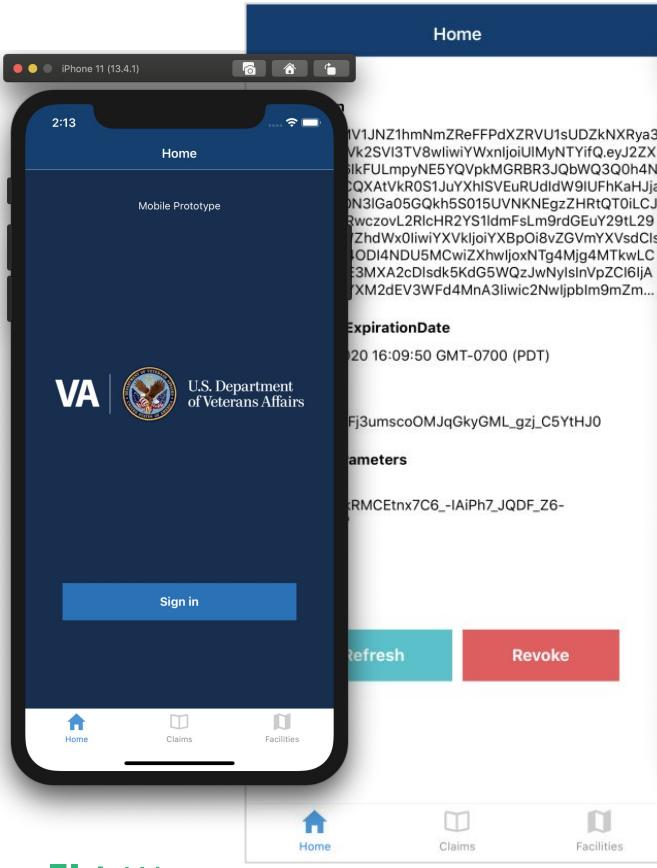
Last time ↓



New →

Three screenshots showing the evolution of the VA claims interface. The first is a simplified version with a "Claims" section. The second is a more complex version with a "VA" header, a "Your Claims" section, and a "Most recent" dropdown. It lists three claims: "Claim for Disability" (Current status: Evidence gathering, review, and decision), "Claim for Dependency" (Current status: Initial review, In progress), and another "Claim for Dependency" (Current status: Complete, Closed). A yellow banner at the bottom of the first two sections says "Additional documents needed". The third screenshot is the most complex, showing a progress bar with five steps (1-5). Step 3 is highlighted in yellow. A yellow arrow points to a "Please upload a copy of your DD-214" section. Below it is a "Why do we need this?" dropdown and a "Upload files" button. Further down, there is a "Disability claims are typically processed in about 100 days." section, a "For you, this probably means Mid-June 2020" section, and a "Claim received March 28, 2020" section. The final section lists "What you've claimed": PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder) (related to: PTSD - Combat, POW) and Diabetes mellitus2 (Secondary). It also lists the "Your representative for VA claims: ITALIAN AMERICAN WAR VETERANS OF THE U.S., INC".

# Demo

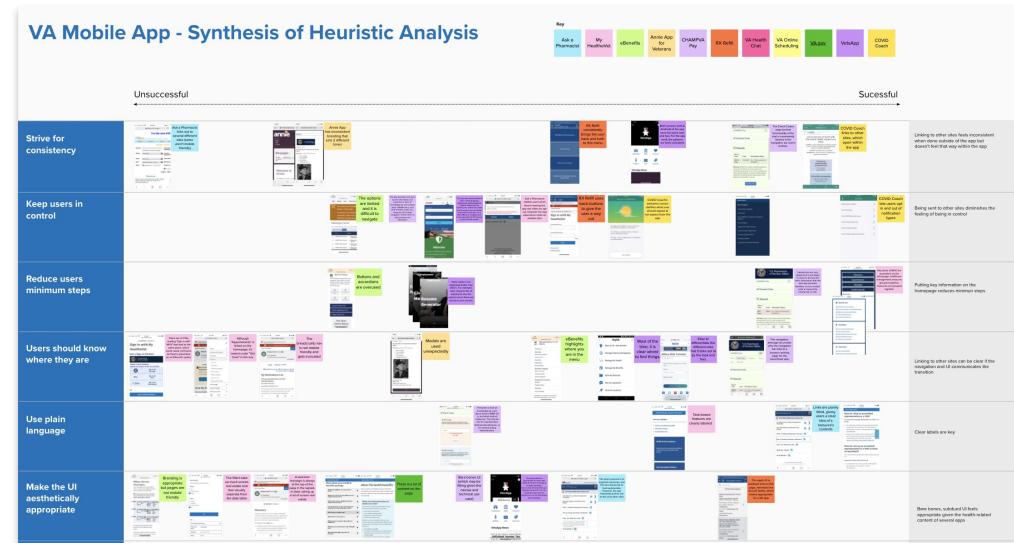


This image shows two overlapping mobile screens. The top screen is titled "Claims" and shows a list of claims. The first item is a "Claim for Compensation" with status "Open" (last updated December 5, 2019). The second item is a "Claim for Dependency" with status "Open" (last updated November 27, 2019). The third item is a "Claim for Compensation" with status "Closed" (last updated April 10, 2019). The fourth item is a "Claim for Dependency" with status "Closed" (last updated June 13, 2016). Each claim entry includes a "What does this mean?" link. The bottom screen is also titled "Claims" and shows the same list of claims, with the "Claims" icon highlighted in the navigation bar.

This screenshot shows a facilities search results screen. At the top, it says "3:49 AM". Below that is a blue header with "Facilities" and a "Search near me" input field. The results section shows 2418 results. Each result is a card with a location pin icon, the facility name, address, and city. The facilities listed are: "VetSuccess on Campus at Tarrant County College (North East Campus)" (828 W Harwood Road, Hurst, TX 76054), "VetSuccess on Campus at University of Texas (Arlington Campus)" (406 Summit Ave, Arlington, TX 76019), "Arlington Vet Center" (3337 West Pioneer Parkway, Pantego, TX 76013), "East Lancaster VA Clinic" (1518 East Lancaster Road, Fort Worth, TX 76102-6774), "Grand Prairie VA Clinic" (2737 Sherman Street, Grand Prairie, TX 75051-1027), "VetSuccess on Campus at Tarrant County College (South Campus)" (5301 Campus Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76119), and "Waco Regional Benefits Satellite Office at Fort Worth" (2201 SE Loop 820, Fort Worth, TX 76119). At the bottom are three navigation icons: "Login" (house icon), "Your Claims" (book icon), and "Facility Locator" (map icon).

# The VA can feel fragmented to Vets, both in person and online: 33 mobile and 15+ web apps

Heuristic analysis, revealed that most apps heavily link to other apps or websites, requiring users to interact with more than one app or site at a time. This diminishes the feeling of user control. Further, most interfaces did not feel as modern or mobile friendly as they could be.



<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/tree/master/products/va-mobile-app/ux-research/heuristic-analysis>

<https://app.mural.co/t/adhocvasu2804/m/adhocvasu2804/1588084628284/38297b32e1af307bbc385f87689995952a9802ba>

# The existing VA experience can feel fragmented to Veterans

This theme that has come up in the interviews we have conducted this week, both in relation to VA apps and sites, and interacting with the VA more broadly.

“

I don't want to have to deal with 3, 4, 5 apps...no one is going to want to figure out which app has what they want. That's worse than figuring out which website.”

P6

“

Once the ball is passed from Community Care to VA, [it would be nice to] know that is was received, be kept in the loop 24/7..I have spent 30 mins on phone one day, 30 mins on a phone another day.”

P5

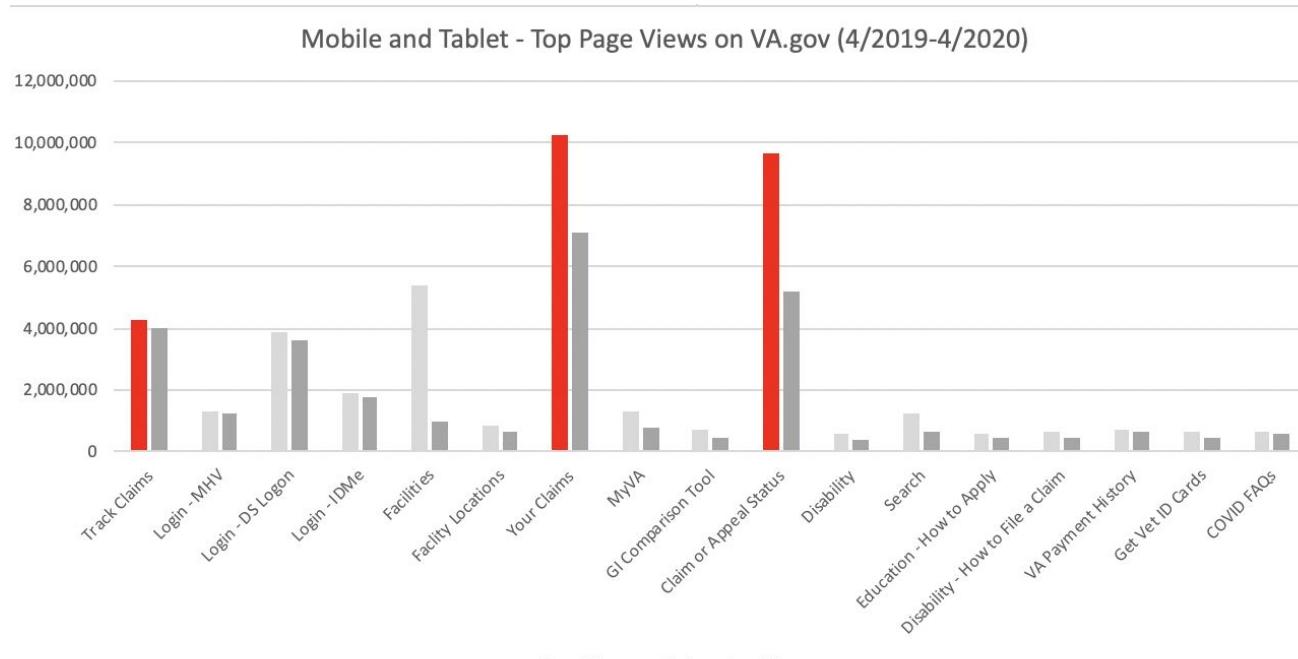
“

The VSO is awesome. I would actually be very upset if she left...I've seen my VSO 5-6 times since 2017 to have something explained to me in a bit further detail.”

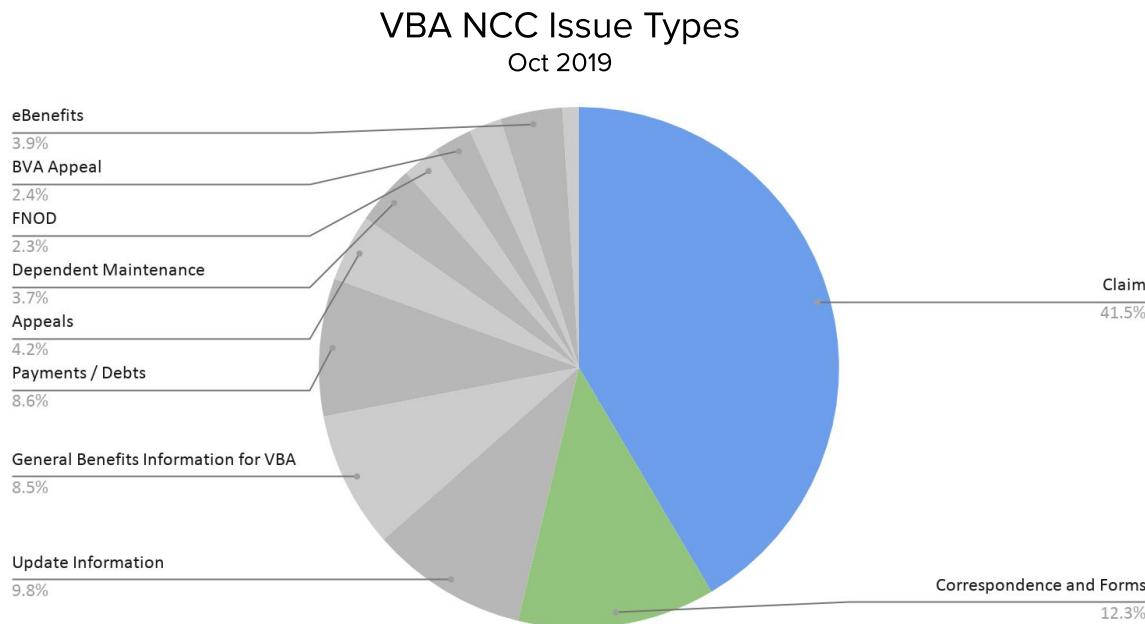
P1

# A high volume of Veterans check their claims status online, and do so repeatedly

*Claims has the highest volume of pageviews on VA.gov on mobile among both new and repeat users. The data suggests that Vets on their phones may make frequent checks to their claims status*



# 50k people call each month about claims and correspondence, even though calling the VA is a frequently cited pain point.



“

[I would use an app] so you don't have to call and get routed around to a lot of people.”

P5

“

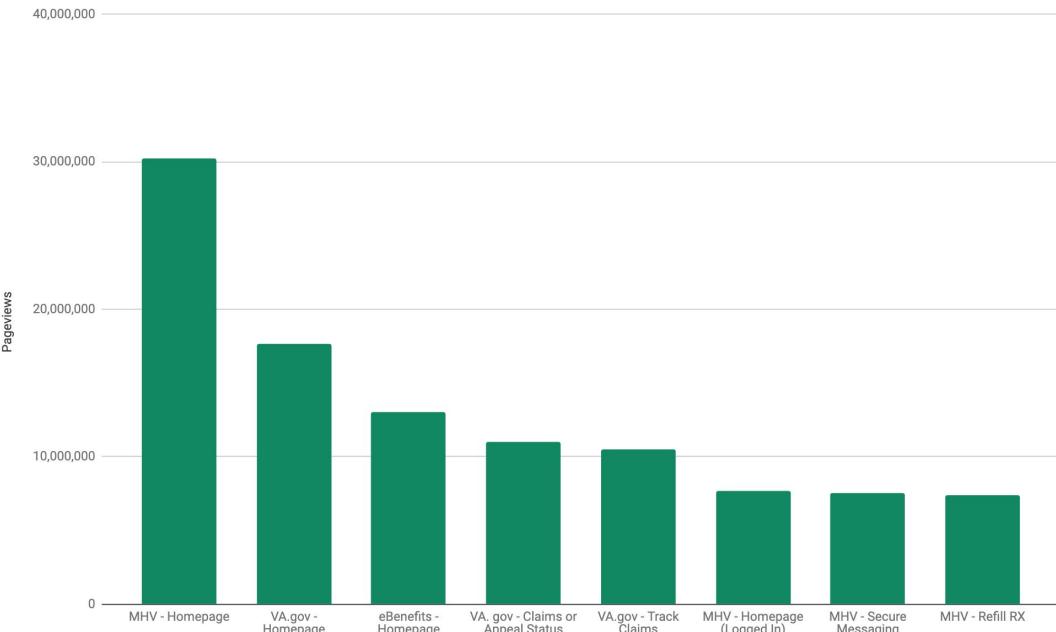
The only thing I do sometimes is call and get a letterhead that has my name, social and my rating.”

P1

# Healthcare is the big driver for engagement with VA online

Top Page Views

4/2019-4/2020



**3 out of 4 participants we have talked to so far use VA medical benefits for themselves. 2 out of 4 had managed medical benefits on behalf of another Veteran in their family.**

# Mobile presents opportunities to expand the accessibility of VA digital tools

- VSP Accessibility SME providing guidance
- Discovery on iOS Accessibility Inspector
- Validated we can add labels and traits to improve experience

“

Technology is in flux when it comes to low vision..the apps have gotten a lot better. If apps are developed for voiceover, they work pretty darn well.”

P6

“

If apps have accessibility built in they are easier to use because there's less clutter. Small screens are much more streamlined, so it's easier to find things.”

P6

“

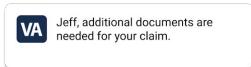
If [an app or website] is good, that goes back to the way it is designed. It has to be user friendly at all levels...it can't just be geared towards people who are tech savvy.”

P5

# Next Steps

- Finish this round of user interviews next week
- Iterate on mockups and plan concept testing
- Integrate basic accessibility using React Native and test
- Integrate native functionality (document scanning plugin)
- Explore persistent logged-in state

**Thank you!**



VA

Your Claims

Claim for Disability

Current status Evidence gathering, review, and decision

⚠ Additional documents needed

Claim for Dependency

Current status Initial review

In progress

Claim for Dependency

Current status Complete

Closed

VA

Back to Claims

Claim for Disability Compensation

1 2 3 4 5

⚠ Additional documents needed

Please upload a copy of your DD-214

Why do we need this?

Upload files

Disability claims are typically processed in about 100 days.

For you, this probably means **Mid-June 2020**

Claim received March 28, 2020

What you've claimed

- PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder)  
(related to: PTSD - Combat, POW)
- Diabetes mellitus2 (Secondary)

Your representative for VA claims  
**ITALIAN AMERICAN WAR VETERANS OF THE U.S., INC**

VA

Back to Claims

Claim for Disability Compensation

1 2 3 4 5

⚠ Additional documents needed

Please upload a copy of your DD-214

Why do we need this?

VA needs your DD214 to match your service records with your claimed conditions

Upload files

Disability claims are typically processed in about 100 days.

For you, this probably means **Mid-June 2020**

Claim received March 28, 2020

What you've claimed

- PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder)  
(related to: PTSD - Combat, POW)
- Diabetes mellitus2 (Secondary)

Your representative for VA claims  
**ITALIAN AMERICAN WAR VETERANS OF THE U.S., INC**

11:45

Claims

Back to Claims

Claim for Compensation

1 2 3 4 5

Disability claims are typically processed in about **100** days.

For you, this probably means **August 2017**

Claim received **May 2, 2017**

What you've claimed

- abnormal heart (New)
- abscess kidney (New)
- encephalitis lethargica residuals (New)
- dracunculiasis (New)
- gingivitis (New)
- abnormal weight loss (New)
- groin condition (New)
- metritis (New)

Your representative for VA claims  
**AMERICAN LEGION**



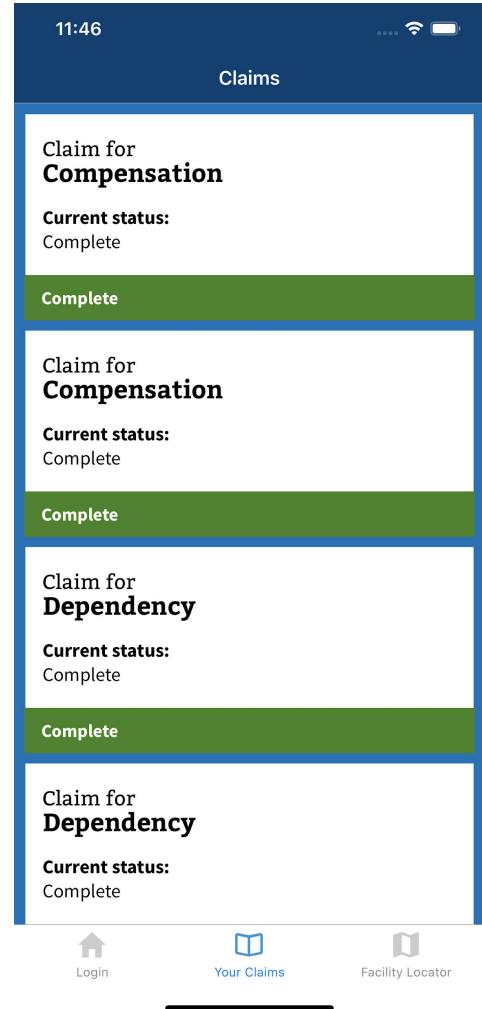
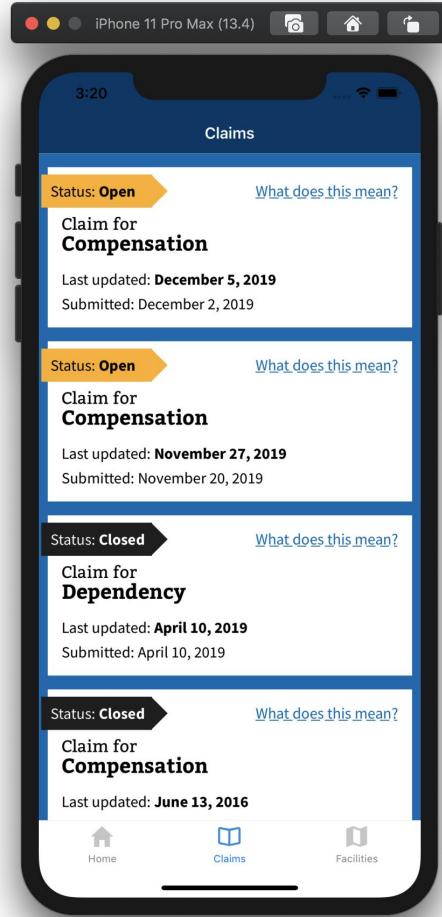
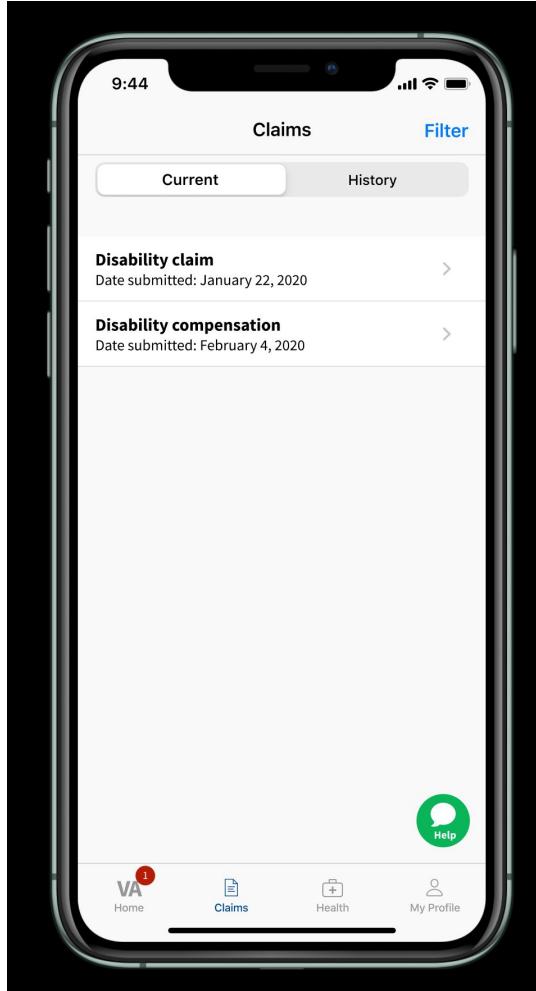
Login



Your Claims



Facility Locator





**accessToken**

```
eyJraWQiOjMV1JNZ1hmNmZReFFPdXZRVU1sUDZkNXRya3hiU1g1NGQjQV0k2SVI3TV8wliwiYWxnlijoIUIMyNTyifQ.eyJ2ZXIiOjEsImp0aSI6IKFUhmpyNE5YQVpkMGRBR3JQbWQ3Qoh4NmttaHZCb3NCQXatVkr0S1JuYXhlSVEuRUldwW9lUFhKaHjja2wzdnNrb0VON3lGa05GQkh5S015UVNKNEgzZHrtQToiLCJpc3MiOiJodHRwczovL2RlcHR2YS1ldmFsLm9rdGEuY29L29hdXRoMi9kZWZhdWx0liwiYXVkljoiYXBpOi8vZGVmYXVsdcIlsImhdCI6MTU4ODI4NDU5MCwiZXhwIjoxNTg4Mjg4MTkwLCJjaWQiOilwb2E3MXA2cDlsdk5KdG5WQzJwNyishnVpZC16ljAwdTN6NWU2YXM2dEV3WFd4MnA3liwic2Nwljpblm9mZm...
```

**accessTokenExpirationDate**

Thu Apr 30 2020 16:09:50 GMT-0700 (PDT)

**refreshToken**

02mljss5Y7txlFj3umscoOMJqGkyGML\_gzj\_C5YtHJ0

**additionalParameters**

```
{  
  "state": "uefkRMCEtnx7C6_-IAiPh7_JQDF_Z6-fc3p_An_Xt0"  
}
```

**tokenType**

Bearer

[Refresh](#) [Revoke](#)

[Home](#) [Claims](#) [Facilities](#)

## Facilities

[Search near me](#)

2418 results

 **VetSuccess on Campus at Tarrant County College (North East Campus)**  
828 W Harwood Road  
Hurst, TX 76054

 **VetSuccess on Campus at University of Texas (Arlington Campus)**  
406 Summit Ave  
Arlington, TX 76019

 **Arlington Vet Center**  
3337 West Pioneer Parkway  
Pantego, TX 76013

 **East Lancaster VA Clinic**  
1518 East Lancaster Road  
Fort Worth, TX 76102-6774

 **Grand Prairie VA Clinic**  
2737 Sherman Street  
Grand Prairie, TX 75051-1027

 **VetSuccess on Campus at Tarrant County College (South Campus)**  
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Fort Worth, TX 76119



Login



Your Claims

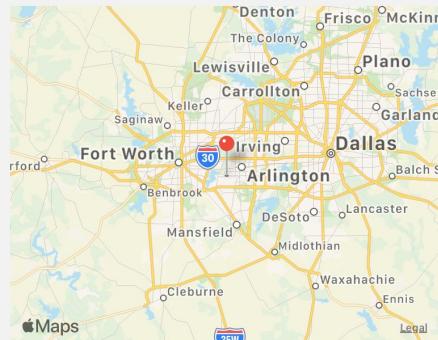


Facility Locator

[Facilities](#)

FacilityDetail

## Arlington Vet Center

**Mailing address**

N/A

**Physical address**3337 West Pioneer Parkway  
Pantego, TX 76013**Website**

N/A

**Phone**

817-274-0981

**Hours**

monday: 800AM-500PM  
tuesday: 800AM-730PM  
wednesday: 800AM-730PM  
thursday: 800AM-730PM  
friday: 800AM-500PM  
saturday: Closed  
sunday: Closed

# iOS Builds

The following builds are available to test. [Learn more about build status and expiration](#)

## ▼ Version 1.0.0

Build	App Store Connect Users	External Testers
 3	<span>● Testing</span> Expires in 89 days	<span>● Ready to Submit</span> Expires in 89 days
 2	<span>● Testing</span> Expires in 88 days	<span>● Ready to Submit</span> Expires in 88 days
 1	<span>● Testing</span> Expires in 84 days	<span>● Ready to Submit</span> Expires in 84 days

# A high volume of Veterans check their claims status online, and do so repeatedly

