**Higher Level Review**

Decision Review Lane (form 20-0996)

What is it?

If a Veteran or their representative disagrees with the VA’s decision, they can request to have a senior reviewer take a new look at their case. The reviewer will determine whether the decision can be changed based on a difference of opinion or an error.

Currently, Veterans or their representatives are able to submit a Higher Level Review paper form. This guide is for the Higher Level Review online form which is anticipated to launch in Spring 2020.

**How do users access this tool?**

Users are able to access this tool via the root-level decision review index on va.gov. A user will be able to directly access the form (if logged in) by typing this into the URL:

<https://www.va.gov/decision-reviews/higher-level-review/request-higher-level-review-form-20-0996/>

What if a user is not logged in?

In order to access the online form, a user must be signed into their account. If they reach this page and are not signed in, they will be given the opportunity to sign in via a call-to-action button on the information page.

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After signing in, the user will be redirected to that page and they can continue on the process outlined below.

**Inside the Higher Level Review form**

**Step 1 of 4: Veteran Details**

Once inside the form, the user will encounter a section to confirm, update or add their personal information.

**STEP 1**

**Screen one: Personal information**

Once inside the form, the first screen the user will encounter is a section to confirm or update their contact information.

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The only form actions a user can take on this screen are to either go back or continue.

**STEP 1**

**Screen two: Contact information**

The next screen within the form will be for the user to confirm or edit their contact information.

A picture containing knife

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A screenshot of a cell phone

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|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Possible user action | Result |
| Phone & email – edit button | User will be able to edit their phone and email information |
| Mailing Address – edit button | User will be able to edit their address information |
| Go to my profile page – link | Will take user away from form flow and to their profile page (progress should be saved) |
| Back button | Takes user back one screen |
| Continue button | Takes user forward one screen |

**Contact Information – Edit State**

When a user clicks on ‘edit’ for either of the contact information buttons, it will look like this (see image on next page):

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The user is put into this edit state and can click cancel to return (changes will not be saved) or can click save (to save all changes they have made).

**Contact Information – Edit State - Errors**

If a user is editing the contact information, there are a number of required fields and errors will look like this (see image on next page):

A screenshot of a cell phone

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The fields are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Field | Required |
| Phone number | Yes |
| Email address | Yes |

**PHONE AND EMAIL EDIT BOX**

**MAILING ADDRESS EDIT BOX**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Field | Required |
| Country | Yes |
| Street address | Yes |
| Line 2 (street address cont.) | No |
| Line 3 (street address cont.) | No |
| City | Yes |
| State | Yes |
| Postal Code | Yes |

**Step 2 of 4: Contested Issues**

The user will then select the issues they wish to contest for the Higher Level Review.

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The fields are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Field | Required |
| Contestable issue (user must select at least one from the list) - checkbox | Yes |
| If possible, I would like to have a different office conduct this review - checkbox | No |

**State changes**

When a user selects a contestable issue, it looks like this:

**A screenshot of a cell phone

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When a user selects the checkbox for another office to review, it will look like this:

**A screenshot of a social media post

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A contextual box will appear, giving the user more information on the process of requesting a different office for review.

**Step 3 of 4: Informal conference**

The user has the option to request a phone call between themselves / their accredited representative and the reviewer to discuss why they believe the decision should be changed and identify factual errors.

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The fields are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Field | Required |
| No, I do not want an informal conference – radio button | Yes – one selection required |
| Yes, call me to schedule an informal conference – radio button | Yes – one selection required |
| Yes, call my representative – radio button | Yes – one selection required |

**The user must choose one option here.**

**State changes**

**Option 1 – No, I do not want an informal conference**

When a user chooses option 1, it looks like this:

**A screenshot of a social media post

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There is no further requirement from the user.

**Option 2 – Yes, call me to schedule an informal conference**

**A screenshot of a cell phone

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The user will then be prompted to select a time they are available to receive a phone call to schedule the informal conference (this is NOT the informal phone conference itself). This is essentially a phone call to schedule a phone call. This is a required field – the user must select at least one time they are available to receive a call.

A screenshot of a cell phone

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When the user selects a time, a contextual box will appear, giving the user more information on the process.

The fields are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Field | Required |
| 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. ET – checkbox | Yes – one selection required |
| 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. ET – checkbox | Yes – one selection required |
| 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. ET – checkbox | Yes – one selection required |
| 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET – checkbox | Yes – one selection required |

**The user must make at least one selection but no greater than two**. If the user selects more than two and chooses ‘continue’, they will encounter this error state:

A screenshot of a cell phone

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At this point, there is no further requirement from the user.

**Option 3 – Yes, call my representative**

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When the user selects call my representative, they are asked to fill in a few more details so the VA is able to get into contact with their representative.

The fields are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Field | Required |
| Representative’s Name | Yes |
| Representative’s phone number | Yes |

The user will then be prompted to select a time their representative is available to receive a phone call to schedule the informal conference (this is NOT the informal phone conference itself). This is essentially a phone call to schedule a phone call. This is a required field – the user must select at least one time their representative is available to receive a call.

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The fields are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Field | Required |
| 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. ET – checkbox | Yes – one selection required |
| 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. ET – checkbox | Yes – one selection required |
| 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. ET – checkbox | Yes – one selection required |
| 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET – checkbox | Yes – one selection required |

**Step 4 of 4: Review & Submit Application**

The user has the opportunity to review the information and confirm the accuracy or edit as needed.

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**State changes**

The user is able to open each accordion on the review screen.

**Accordion - Veteran information**

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**Veteran information – Edit**

The user is able to click the edit button and edit information as needed (seen on the next page). Field requirements are the same as step 1 screen 2: Contact information (see page 9).

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**Accordion - Contested Issues**

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**Contested Issues – Edit**

The user is able to click the edit button and edit information as needed (seen on the next page). Field requirements are the same as step 2: Contested Issues (see page 11).

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**Accordion – Informal conference**

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**Informal conference – Edit**

The user is able to click the edit button and edit information as needed (seen on the next page). Field requirements are the same as step 3: Informal conference (see pages 16-20).

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**Outside of the accordions, there is one field:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Field | Required |
| I have read and accept the Privacy Policy | Yes |

**Submit**

When the user has satisfied all of the field requirements and is ready to submit the form, they can click the ‘submit application’ button at the bottom of the review page.

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Which will take them to the submission confirmation page (seen on next page).

**Submission confirmation**

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