**8940**

**Participant #1, 9/13/2018**

**Notes**

Overall Experience

1. Approximately how long ago did you apply for unemployability compensation benefits (VA Form 21-8940)?   
About 3 years ago. Applied for medical disabilities and the counselor said, "You should apply for unemployability in case you don't get 100%" because I can't work. So I did and I got 100% and the next day I got 100% medical.

2. What did you think about the overall process of applying for Unemployability benefits?

3.    Please walk me through the process you used to gather information and submit your claim.   
"It took about 9 months. It took about 2 months to do the forms and get the background from the employers. About 7 months for the decision.

I had to do it all. And I had to spend a lot of time sweet talking the employers.

The VA gave me the number of the form and I went online and got it. I had 3 employers. They wouldn't accept any of my employment … from overseas. I only had 2 American employers. They required 3. "

4. Did you send a form to your previous employers or did the VA send it?   
"I had to do the follow-up and coax it out of them. After 2 months I didn't hear anything back from anyone until they approved it. I was working so hard to get the medical disability.

Employers didn't provide any feedback on the process.

Basically, what I did, I filled out everything I knew so all they had to do is put the comments on and sign it. If you put everything on it then all they have to do is sign it.

I just filled in the name & address and sent it."

5. What do you consider the easiest way to get your previous employer to fill out their half of the form? If you could make it available (for both the veteran and employer) to fill out online, that would make it easier. Do these dates have to be specific or can they be estimated?

**Impressions**

6 What part of the claim submission process went smoothly?   
ON the 8940 - all the way through 7 is easy.

7 What challenges did you face as you completed the claim process?   
"#10 dates of treatment is sometimes hard to remember.

Also, addresses of doctors is hard… I went from Italy to Texas and trying to remember what happened where. The Air Force doesn't talk to the Army so that makes it hard. I know my doctors here had trouble talking with the VA.

Would be helpful to have more space. I ended up putting all the extra information in Remarks. There needs to be more space."   
*Participant comments on which VA Facility they are requiring him to go to (not the one closest to him).*

8. Are you aware of any challenges that your previous employer(s) faced as they completed the employer form for your claim (VA Form 21-4192)? If yes, please describe.   
  
"For employers, a lot of us would come back and not be able to work full time so we would need room to list more employers.

For employers, it is pretty straightforward but not a lot of space to put all the info you may need.

School & training is easy enough.

26 (remarks) is a very important section. All the extra information you need to add would go here. I can't remember [if I added any other information in that section]. It's the small parts that are difficult to work in [in the form]. "

9. As you think about the Unemployability application process, how would you describe the thoughts you had or the feelings you experienced in a word or two?   
  
Overall I'd say it was fair to good.

**Opportunities for Improvement**

10. What recommendations do you have for improving the Unemployability application process?

Easy enough. I was glad you could do this instead of having it notarized. Just a simple witness is really good.

I filled out 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12. I filled in the first 12 blocks.

What is the veteran's current duty status (block 17, 18, 19, 20, 21) I filled out those parts too because they wouldn't have any idea bout that.

I would switch sections 2 & 3. You have your identification of who you are, then you should put your duty status. If you're still on active duty with the Guard, then you're employable. You have your info about who I am, then your duty status, then my work status. To me, that flows better.

If you could fill those parts in online, then I could print it and send it to them with an address and whatever… If you send this form to those guys with just your name, they toss it in the can. You don't work for them anymore so they don’t owe you anything. If you fill it in [and make it easier] for them.

Went back 2-3 years. 2 different hospitals in Italy then a VA (somewhere in Texas) and one in Austin. "

11. What, if any, questions or sections on the form that needed more explanation or clarification?   
  
Who is supposed to fill out Section III, Employer or Reserve / National Guard.