



**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**Veterans Benefits Administration**  
**Washington, D.C. 20420**

December 16, 2010

Director (00/21)  
All VA Regional Offices and Centers

In Reply Refer To: 211  
Fast Letter 10-53

SUBJ: Disability Benefits Questionnaires Update

The Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs) for Ischemic Heart Disease (VA Form 21-0690A-1), Hairy Cell and other B-Cell Leukemias (VA Form 21-0690B-1), and Parkinson's disease (VA Form 21-0690C-1) have been updated. The attached updated DBQs supersede the versions provided with Fast Letter (FL) 10-34, Disability Benefits Questionnaires, dated September 2, 2010.

This FL also introduces the official DBQ website [www.vba.va.gov/disabilityexams](http://www.vba.va.gov/disabilityexams). This website will be updated regularly and will serve as the official repository for current versions of the DBQs and current versions of the DBQ Fact Sheet.

The launch of the official DBQ website means that the formatted VCAA DBQ paragraph (included in this letter and previously provided in the DBQ training package dated 29 July 2010) must now be included in VCAA notification letters when a DBQ exists for a claimed condition. The appropriate language for the VCAA letter is included in the appendix to this letter.

- Print the DBQ Fact Sheet found on the DBQ website and attach to the VCAA notification letter. The DBQ Fact Sheet should be generated from the current version located on the DBQ website. Do not produce copies of the DBQ Fact Sheet from locally saved copies (e.g., a copy saved to your desktop computer).
- The DBQs should not be printed and attached to the VCAA notification letter. Rather, as stated in the formatted VCAA DBQ paragraph, the Veteran is responsible for obtaining a DBQ from the regional office.

In accordance with 38 CFR 3.159 and M21-1 MR III, iv, 5, remember to thoroughly review private and VHA medical records (to include completed DBQs) submitted in support of a claim and make a disability determination when the records are sufficient to do so. Additional disability examinations should only be requested when the available evidence is lacking pertinent information needed to decide the claim.

Page 2.

Director (00/21)

The VCAA DBQ paragraph instructs claimants to submit a VA Form 21-4142, Authorization and Consent to Release Information to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), for their private physician along with the DBQ.

If the DBQ is incomplete, use the authorization provided by VA Form 21-4142 to contact the physician directly and obtain any missing information by phone or fax. VA physicians may be contacted without a VA Form 21-4142.

A new corporate email account, [VAVBAWAS/CO/DBQComments](mailto:VAVBAWAS/CO/DBQComments), has been created to serve as a single point of contact for all questions, comments, and concerns regarding the DBQs. Therefore, email DBQ specific questions to VAVBAWAS/CO/DBQComments.

For all other questions e-mail VAVBAWAS/CO/21Q&A.

/S/  
Thomas J. Murphy  
Director  
Compensation and Pension Service

Appendix:

VCAA Letter Standard Text

Enclosures:

Ischemic Heart Disease Disability Benefits Questionnaire  
Hairy Cell and Other B-cell Leukemias Disability Benefits Questionnaire  
Parkinson's Disease Disability Benefits Questionnaire

## VCAA Letter Standard Text

If needed, we may ask you to attend a medical examination in connection with your claim. If an examination is scheduled, the medical facility will notify you of the date, time, and place of the examination. If you can't keep the appointment or want to be re-scheduled, contact the medical facility on the appointment notice as soon as possible.

When a claimant, without good cause, fails to report for an examination or reexamination, VA will decide the claim based on the evidence of record. Examples of good cause include, but are not limited to, illness or hospitalization, death of a family member, etc.

Please note that you have the option of submitting a *Disability Benefits Questionnaire* (DBQ). ***This may expedite the processing of your claim.*** If you choose to submit a DBQ, your private physician or VA medical provider **must** complete all applicable sections of the questionnaire and sign it. You may find the questionnaires at <http://www.vba.va.gov/disabilityexams> or you may call 1-800-827-1000 to request that we send the necessary DBQs to you. A DBQ Fact Sheet with additional information is enclosed.

Please note that if you have a non-VA medical provider complete the DBQ, you **must** also complete and return the enclosed VA Form 21-4142, *Authorization and Consent to Release Information*, for each private physician who submits a DBQ on your behalf. This is so we can request additional information if clarification is needed. If you are completing a VA Form 21-4142 only to accompany the DBQ, please fill out the medical provider information and indicate "For DBQ Purposes Only" under Comments in Box #8 and sign the form.

If a DBQ is not received, we will proceed with the claim and rate with the evidence of record, which may include examinations requested by VA.