## Avoiding VA Overpayments

It is important to let VA know whenever there is a change that could affect your benefits. Not keeping these records current can result in an overpayment. When discovered, those funds will be owed to VA, and those can often result in a deduction of the monthly benefit amount until the debt is repaid.

Some common overpayment situations are:

* A Veteran receives care at a VA medical facility and fails to pay a required co-pay
* A Veteran fails to report that a school-age child has married
* A Veteran receiving education benefits drops out of school
* A Veteran or beneficiary is incarcerated, and benefits are reduced or terminated for the period of incarceration
* The Vocational Rehabilitation program purchased a service or tools for a Veteran, who then dropped out of the program without a good reason
* A Veteran or beneficiary receiving an income-based pension doesn’t report a change in income
* A Veteran’s change in marital status without notifying VA
* Death of a dependent without notifying VA

Beneficiaries who receive an indebtedness notice from VA stating that an overpayment has taken place have 60 days to submit a Notice of Disagreement with evidence stating why the overpayment information is incorrect. It is important to work with a Service Officer in this initial notification period before the debt moves to the next level.

After 60 days, if no response is received, the debt is turned over to the VA Debt Management Center for recovery. The center will notify the beneficiaries of the planned recovery method – through either a reduction in benefits, or a payment program. If the debt cannot be resolved, it will be turned over to the Department of the Treasury for forced collection.