



# VETERANS HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE

## MISSION Act Section 132 Implementation Update

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*September 27, 2019*

In September 2019, VA mailed the Notice of Privacy Practices to every enrolled Veteran. This notice included a reference to changes to VA health information sharing practices, as outlined in Section 132 of the VA MISSION Act. VA is proactively engaging Veterans, employees, Veterans Service Organizations, and other stakeholders to inform Veterans about these changes and give them an opportunity to take action if they do not want their electronic VA health records shared by submitting the form now or any time after January 2020. VA only shares Veteran health information with a specific community provider when a Veteran is seeking medical care from that provider.

#### **Background**

VA is changing its procedures for electronic health information sharing in accordance with Section 132 of the VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act of 2018 ([MISSION Act](#)). This change moves VA from an 'opt-in' to an 'opt-out' model of electronic health information sharing. This electronic exchange of information dramatically improves patient safety by allowing a community provider to understand a Veteran's health condition before developing a treatment plan.

Beginning in January 2020, Veterans will no longer be required to provide signed, written authorization for VA to release electronic health information to community providers for the purposes of receiving medical treatment. VA only shares Veteran health information with a specific community provider when a Veteran is seeking medical care from that provider.

#### **Protecting Veteran Privacy**

VA is committed to protecting Veteran privacy. Only community health care providers and organizations that have partnership agreements with VA and are part of VA's approved, trusted network may receive VA health information. VA shares health information with community providers using a secure and safe electronic system called the Veterans Health Information Exchange.

Veterans who do not want their health information shared electronically can submit VA Form [10-10164](#) (Opt Out of Sharing), by mail or in person, to the Release of Information Office at the nearest VA medical center. Veterans who previously opted out on VA Form 10-0484 prior to September 30, 2019 do not need to submit new forms. However, Veterans who restricted what information VA shared by submitting VA Form 10-0525 (Restriction Request) will need to opt out entirely by submitting Form 10-10164.

To learn more about health information sharing, or to download and print form 10-10164 (Opt Out of Sharing) or 10-10163 (Opt In for Sharing), visit [www.va.gov/vler](http://www.va.gov/vler) or contact the release of information office at the nearest VA medical center.