

Congressional/Stakeholder Notification

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

February 2014

Summary:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is implementing a newly redesigned, more secure Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC) to replace the Veteran Identification Card (VIC), which was issued in 2004.

In 2010, VA initiated a redesign effort to remove the SSN from the barcode and magnetic stripe on the VIC to improve the protection of Veteran's private information in conformance with the Social Security number reduction and security mandates throughout the Federal Government. VA is preparing to implement a new Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC).

The new cards are distinguished by additional security features, which better protect the Veteran's personal information and have a different look and feel. In addition to being more secure, the card offers enhanced features -- transforming it into a Health Identification Card. Similar to a typical health insurance card, the VHIC displays the Veteran's Member ID, a new unique identifier, as well as a Plan ID, reflecting the Veteran's enrollment in VA health care.

As part of a phased rollout, in February 2014, the card will be offered to newly enrolled and other Veterans who have not been issued a VIC. Then, in early April, VA will begin a three month effort to automatically issue the more secure VHIC to each VIC cardholder. VA recommends Veterans safeguard their VIC as they would a credit card, and cut up or shred the card once it is replaced.

While a VHIC is not required to receive VA health care, VA wants all enrolled Veterans to have a card that protects their personal information.

Card Features:

- **Secure** – Redesigned card contains new identifiers – a Member ID and Card Number eliminate the need for the Veteran's SSN to be on the card
- **Personalized** -- Displays emblem of Veteran's branch of service, and identifies if the Veteran was disabled from a service-connected condition, is a former POW or recipient of a Purple Heart or Medal of Honor
- **Accessible** – Braille "VA" helps visually impaired Veterans to recognize and use the card
- **Interoperable** - Can be used to look up Veteran's health records at VA and Department of Defense health care facilities when arrangements are in place.
- **Anti-Counterfeiting** – Microtext helps prevent card reproductions
- **Compliant** -- Meets national standard for health identification cards
- **Informative** – Displays VA phone numbers and emergency care instructions

Facts:

- Enrolled Veterans use the VHIC within VA health care facilities as proof of identity and to facilitate check-in to appointments.
- The Plan ID displayed on the VHIC is a unique number issued to VA by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and identifies the health plan offered to enrolled

Veterans. Starting in 2016, this number will be used by doctors and hospitals to assist them when they send in health related claims for payment to VA.

- Veterans can continue to use their VIC until their VHIC is received. VA health care applications have been enhanced to read both the new VHIC as well as the old card. VA communications to Veterans will advise them that upon receipt of the VHIC, to destroy their VIC either by cutting up the card or by shredding it.
- To receive the VHIC, the Veteran must show appropriate identification document(s) and be enrolled in the VA health care system.
- Starting February 21, 2014, VA will process VHIC requests for new enrollees and other enrolled Veterans who do not have a VIC.
- Production of the replacement VHICs will begin in early April 2014 and will be automatically mailed to Veterans who have been issued a VIC. All cards are expected to be replaced within three months.
- Enrolled Veterans can get more information by calling 1-877-222-VETS (8387), by visiting their VA medical facility Enrollment Coordinator or online at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vhic.

The following documents are acceptable proof of identity. Documents presented as proof must be current (not expired) and original. Photocopies are not acceptable.

Primary Identification	Secondary Identification
Present ONE form of Primary Identification	If a Primary form of Identification is not available, present TWO forms of Secondary Identification
State-Issued Driver's License	Certified Birth Certificate
State issued ID	Original Social Security Card
United States (U.S.) Passport	DD214 or equivalent certificate issued by Department of Defense or War Department
VA Identification Card (VIC) or VHIC	Marriage License (certified copy)
Military ID Card	State Voter Registration Card
Temporary Resident Card	Student ID Card
Resident Alien Card	Native American Tribal Document
Permanent Resident Card	Certificate of U.S. Citizenship (INS Form N-560 or N-561)
Other Federal or State issued photo ID	Certificate of Naturalization (INS Form N-550 or N-570)
	Certificate issued by US Consular Offices documenting the birth of a child on foreign soil to a US citizen. (Form FS-545, Form DS-1350, DS Form 240 or FS Form 240)