

**Subject:** Role of the Post Service Officer

**Date:** Monday, August 9, 2021 at 1:35:45 PM Central Daylight Time

**From:** Karl E. Stuvengen

**CC:** Department Service Office

First District:

I have received a concern from the Department Service Office regarding the filing of VA claims. Please be aware that unless your Post Service Officer (PSO) is a VA accredited VSO, they CANNOT assist veterans in filing claims with the VA. In the rare instance that a PSO is also an accredited claims representative, they must ensure that the veteran understands that they are acting as an accredited representative and not as a Post Service Officer.

A situation has occurred where this exact thing happened in the First District. Because the claim was not filed correctly, it may result in delay, or outright denial of this veteran's claim, and could result in liability issues to the member, the PSO, the Post and the American Legion.

The role of a PSO is to provide information about benefits and other government programs, and to direct a veteran to the proper resources (County VSO, State Service Office) for filing a claim. Under no circumstances, may a PSO assist a veteran in filing a claim, or file the claim for the veteran. They are only to act as a clearinghouse for information, and to conduct/coordinate other Post-level programs (Buddy Checks, rides to appointments, sunshine committee, etc.).

Again, only a VA accredited representative may assist a veteran in preparing and filing a claim with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Please ensure that your PSO understands that this is a line that he/she cannot cross.

For more information on this, please contact the Department Service Office (cc'ed above) or at 414-902-5722.

County Commanders, please follow up with your Posts to make sure that everyone understands this issue.

Regards,

Karl E. Stuvengen  
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1<sup>st</sup> District  
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