

SUPPORTING STATEMENT A

VA Health Professional Scholarship Programs

Health Professional Scholarship Program (HPSP) and Visual Impairment and Orientation and Mobility Professional Scholarship Program (VIOMPSP)

VA Forms: 10-0491, 10-0491c-e, 10-0491g-k

OMB Control Number: 2900-0793

Summary:

- There is an increase in the number of respondents (applicants) and burden hours based upon program data since the last PRA clearance.
- VHVMAESP was a pilot program that has been discontinued by VA and is removed from this collection.
- EACFMAF was a pilot program and has been discontinued by VA and is removed from this collection.
- The forms have been updated to clarify instructions, program requirements, and remove VHVMAESP and EACFMAF references.
- VA Forms 10-0491a, 10-0491n are no longer used by the programs and have been removed from the collection.
- VA received one comment on the 60-day FRN; the comment was not specifically related to this information collection, and a response is included in the ICR.

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection of information.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Health Professional Scholarship Program (HPSP) and the VA Visual Impairment and Orientation and Mobility Professionals Scholarship Program (VIOMPSP) were authorized under Public Law 111-163 on May 5, 2010, and extended through December 31, 2033, by Section 301 of P.L. 115-182, VA Mission Act of 2018. These programs help address health care workforce needs and allow VA to provide services to the public by awarding scholarships to VA employees, and non-VA employees who will be required to become VA employees, in the professions for which they were educated under these programs. This information collection is necessary for VA to determine an applicant's eligibility to receive a scholarship award and compliance with program requirements.

Removal: The Educational Assistance for Certain Former Members of the Armed Forces (EACFMAF) Program, initially authorized under section 246 of Public Law 115-141, Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018, has been discontinued by VA. The EACFMAF program was created as a five-year pilot focused on recruiting Veterans into the workforce as PAs during a period when this occupation was identified as a critical shortage. Continuation of EACFMAF was contingent upon outcomes and assessment of workforce and healthcare needs. Due to PAs no longer being recognized as a critical shortage, as evidenced by the FY20-FY25 OIG Determination of VHA Occupational Staffing Shortages and challenges faced with securing program participants to VA employees, it has been determined the extension of the pilot does not maximize effective use of resources. Since beginning the

EACFMAF, VA has deployed other recruitment and retention initiatives to meet evolving workforce and healthcare needs.

Removal: The Veterans Healing Veterans Medical Access and Education Scholarship Program (VHVMAESP), authorized under 38 USC Section 7601, has been discontinued by VA. The VHVMAESP was initiated as a four-year pilot focused on recruiting eligible Veterans from specific academic institutions outlined in the Mission Act 2018. Continuation of VHVMAESP was contingent upon outcomes and assessment of workforce and healthcare needs. It has been determined that, after launching the pilot program as a separate initiative targeting eligible Veterans from specific academic institutions, the extension of the pilot does not maximize effective use of resources. VA has deployed other recruitment and retention initiatives to meet evolving workforce and healthcare needs.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purposes the information is to be used; indicate actual use the agency has made of the information received from current collection.

The information collected is needed to determine the eligibility or suitability of an applicant desiring to receive an award under the provisions for HPSP and VIOMPSP.

The HPSP awards scholarships to students receiving education or training in a direct or indirect health care services discipline to assist in providing an adequate supply of such personnel for VA and for the United States. The VIOMPSP awards scholarships to students pursuing a program of study leading to a degree in visual impairment or orientation and mobility in order to increase the supply of qualified blindness rehabilitation specialists for VA and the nation.

1. Academic Verification, VA Form 10-0491.
2. Annual VA Employment or Deferment Verification, VA Form 10-0491c.
3. Obligated Service, VA Form 10-0491d.
4. Evaluation and Recommendation Form, VA Form 10-0491e.
5. Application, VA Form 10-0491g.
6. Notice of Expected Graduation, VA Form 10-0491h.
7. Notice of Change, VA Form 10-0491i.
8. Request for Deferment, VA Form 10-0491j.
9. VA Scholarship Offer Response, VA Form 10-0491k.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

VA will allow applicants to submit and update application packages online. This method allows VA to receive, validate submission, and electronically transmit applications to technical reviewers before selecting officials for approval.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

Each of these scholarship programs was established by legislation to serve a distinct health care professional specialty recruitment purpose. The programs share certain forms in this collection for applications, etc., which require similar types of information for each program. There also are forms that apply only to a specific program in this collection, such as individual awardee agreements.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

As these are applications for individual benefits, no small businesses or other small entities are impacted by the information collection.

6. Describe the consequences to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

VA would not be responsive to the needs of the student and to the legal requirement to establish these scholarship programs if this information is not collected or is collected less frequently.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted more often than quarterly or require respondents to prepare written responses to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it; submit more than an original and two copies of any document; retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years; in connection with a statistical survey that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study and require the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB.

There are no such special circumstances.

8. a. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the sponsor's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the sponsor in responses to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

A 60-Day Federal Register Notice (FRN) for the collection published on Friday, May 15, 2026. The 60-Day FRN citation is 91 FR 28105. VA received one public comment on the 60-day FRN. The comment was not specifically related to this information collection, and no changes have been made based upon the comment. A response from the program office is included in the ICR in ROCIS.

A 30-Day Federal Register Notice for the collection published on Wednesday, August 5, 2026. The 30-Day FRN citation is 91 FR 50607.

b. Describe efforts to consult with people outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure or reporting format, and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed or reported. Explain any circumstances which preclude consultation every three years with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained.

Outside consultation is conducted with the public through the 60- and 30-day Federal Register notices.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payment or gift is provided to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of privacy, to the extent permitted by law, provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

Information on these forms will become part of a system of records that complies with the Privacy Act of 1974 as set forth in the Compilation of Privacy Act Issuances via online GPO access at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/privacyact/index.html>. The original System of Records (73VA14) for the HPSP was issued on 10/6/1982. It has been updated and amended on several other occasions (73VA10A2A) for the HPSP System of Records, including the VIOMPSP.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature (Information that, with a reasonable degree of medical certainty, is likely to have a serious adverse effect on an individual's mental or physical health if revealed to him or her), such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private; include specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimate of the hour burden of the collection of information:

a. The number of respondents, frequency of responses, annual hour burden, and explanation for each form are reported as follows:

Total Annual Number of Respondents: **2,050**
Total Annual Time Burden: **8,017 hours**

SUMMARY:

Category of Respondent	No. of Annual Respondents	Total Minutes for All Respondents	÷ by 60	Burden Hours
HPSP				
Individual Applicants	2,000	450,000	60	7,500
Individual Awardees Selected from Applicants	(200)	18,600		309
Total				7,809 hrs
VIOMPSP				
Individual Applicants	50	11,250	60	188

Individual Applicants Selected	(15)	1,180		20
Total				208 hrs
<u>GRAND TOTAL</u> (for HPSP and VIOMPSP)	2,050			<u>8,017</u> hours

b. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13.

ESTIMATES OF BURDEN HOURS BY PROGRAM:

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (HPSP)

APPLICANTS

VA Forms	# of respondents	x # of responses	Total responses	x # of minutes	Equals (minutes)	÷ by 60 =	Number of Hours
10-0491g- Application	2,000	1	2,000	90	180,000		3,000
10-0491- Academic Verification	2,000	1	2,000	45	90,000		1,500
10-0491e- Evaluation & Recommendation	2,000	3	6,000	30	180,000		3,000
TOTAL	2,000		10,000		450,000		7,500

APPLICANTS SELECTED TO RECEIVE A SCHOLARSHIP

VA Forms:	# of respondents	x # of responses	Total responses	x # of minutes	Equals (minutes)	÷ by 60 =	Number of Hours
10-0491k- VA Scholarship Offer Response	200	1	200	15	3,000		50
10-0491i- Notice of Change (NOC)	200	2	400	20	8,000		133
10-0491h- Notice of Expected Graduation	200	1	200	10	2,000		33
10-0491d- Obligated Service	200	1	200	15	3,000		50
10-0491j- Request for Deferment	60	1	60	10	600		10
10-0491c- Annual VA Employment/ Deferment Verification	200	1	200	10	2,000		33
TOTAL			1,260		18,600		309

GRAND TOTAL for HPSP (7,500 + 309)					7,809 hrs
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Note: The estimated 2,000 respondents for HPSP include the 200 applicants who will be selected to receive awards.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT AND ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY PROFESSIONALS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (VIOMPSP)

APPLICANTS

VA Forms:	# of respondents	x # of responses	Total responses	x # of minutes	Equals (minutes)	÷ by 60 =	Number of Hours
10-0491g- Application	50	1	50	90	4,500	60	75
10-0491- Academic Verification	50	1	50	45	2,250		38
10-0491e- Evaluation & Recommendation	50	3	150	30	4,500		75
TOTAL	50		250		11,250		~ 188

APPLICANTS SELECTED TO RECEIVE A SCHOLARSHIP

VA Forms:	# of respondents	x # of responses	Total responses	x # of minutes	Equals (minutes)	÷ by 60 =	Number of Hours
10-0491k- VA Scholarship Offer Response	15	1	15	15	225		3.75
10-0491i- Notice of Change (NOC)	20	1	20	20	400		6.5
10-0491h- Notice of Expected Graduation	15	1	15	10	150		2.5
10-0491d- Obligated Service	15	1	15	15	225		3.75
10-0491j- Request for Deferment	3	1	3	10	30		0.5
10-0491c- Annual VA Employment/ Deferment Verification	15	1	15	10	150		2.5
TOTAL			83		1,180		~ 20
GRAND TOTAL for VIOMPSP (188 + 20)							208 hrs

Note: The estimated 50 respondents for VIOMPSP include the 15 applicants who will be selected to receive awards.

c. **Provide estimates of annual cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included in Item 14.**

VA cannot make assumptions about the population of respondents because of the variability of factors, such as the educational background and wage potential of respondents. Therefore, VHA used general wage data to estimate the respondents' costs associated with completing the information collection.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) gathers information on full-time wage and salary workers. According to the latest available BLS data (May 2024), the mean hourly wage is \$32.66 based on the BLS wage code – "00-0000 All Occupations." This information was taken from the following website: https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm.

Legally, respondents may not pay a person or business for assistance in completing the information collection. Therefore, there are no expected overhead costs for completing the information collection. VHA estimates the total annualized cost to all respondents to be \$261,835.22 (8,017 burden hours x \$32.66 per hour).

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).

- a. There are no capital, start-up, operation or maintenance costs.
- b. Cost estimates are not expected to vary widely. The only cost is that for the time of the respondent.
- c. There is no anticipated recordkeeping burden beyond what is considered usual and customary.

14. Provide estimates of annual cost to the Federal Government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operation expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies also may aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.

Total Estimated Annual Costs to Federal Government:

HPSP	=	12,571,918
VIOMPSP	=	602,110
Total	=	\$13,174,028

HPSP

The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is **\$12,571,918** including:

- ***\$831,918** total salary and benefits include:
 - o (2) GS12 Financial Manager, FM at \$101,443 (GS12/5) + \$35,505 (Benefits)
Total: $136,948 \times 2 = \$273,896$
 - o (1) GS6 Program Support Assistant, PSA at \$51,463 (GS6/5) + \$18,012 (Benefits)
Total: \$69,475

- o (3) GS13 HR Specialist, HRS at \$120,629 (GS13/5) + \$42,220 (Benefits)
Total: \$162,849 x 3 = \$488,547
- **\$11,600,000** for 200 scholarship awards, based on average annual award of \$58,000 that includes tuition charges, miscellaneous expenses, and a monthly stipend.
- **\$140,000** operating costs from two areas: Information Technology (IT) scholarship management costs (\$120,000) and Marketing costs (\$20,000) associated with attending conferences, advertising, etc., to attract quality candidates for the program.

VIOMPSP

The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is **\$602,110** including:

- **\$277,110** total salary and benefits include:
 - o (1) GS13 HR Specialist, HRS at \$120,629 (GS13/5) + \$42,220 (Benefits)
Total: \$162,849
 - o (1) GS11 Program Support Specialist, PSS at \$84,638 (GS11/5) + \$29,623 (Benefits)
Total: \$114,261
- **\$225,000** for 15 scholarship awards up to \$15,000 each.
- **\$100,000** for operating costs, including Information Technology (IT) scholarship management costs.

*All salary was derived from the 2026 General Schedule using the Rest of US Table at the Step 5 level and includes a 35% FICA and Benefits increase.

15. Explain the reason for any burden hour changes or adjustments reported in items 13 or 14.

This is a revision of a previously approved collection and includes the following Health Professional Scholarship Programs: HPSP and VIOMPSP. VHVMAESP and EACFMAF are no longer included in this collection. However, the burden hours have increased based upon an increase in applicants and other program data.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

VA does not intend to publish this data.

17. If seeking approval to omit the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

VA will include the expiration date on all forms.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions," of OMB 83-I.

There are no exceptions.