

## Veterans Come First: How to Prosecute a VA Benefits Claim

Developed by the KCMBF Military Matters Program and Legal Aid of Western Missouri's Volunteer Attorney Project

Thursday, May 28, 2015 • 8:30 AM – 2:15 PM

KCMBA Conference Center

Credit: Missouri – 4.0 / Kansas – 4.0

Cost: Free for Members & Legal Aid Volunteers

### DESCRIPTION

Kansas City has a scarcity of lawyers trained to represent veterans with respect to their claims for benefits before the Veterans Affairs Administration. Too many veterans are unrepresented or under represented when they file their claims with the VA regional offices and with the Board of Veterans Appeals when their claims are denied. A Missouri Bar Journal article has noted that 45% of the appeals to the Board are in error, a rate that would be unacceptable in our civil court system. Kansas City veterans need lawyers to help prepare these claims and any appeals on a pro bono basis, so that veterans get better service and ultimately justice.

This program will cover the many issues involved with filing a benefits claim with the VA and filing an appeal of a claim that has been by the VA and will include:

- Who is eligible to file a claim;
- Where the claim is filed and what must be proved to sustain a claim;
- Who initially reviews and rules on the claim;
- The initial decision and the Statement of the Case supporting the decision;
- The Notice of Disagreement and its effect;
- The effective date of payment of the claim;
- The denial of VA benefit claims and when to seek Decision Officer Review at the regional level;
- When and how to appeal and put together and obtain the documents supporting the claim; and
- Strategy on how to win the claim including determining the effective date of the claim, researching the veteran's service to prove service connection, when to retain expert testimony and how the disability rating system works.

### SCHEDULE

|          |                                                                                                                                          |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8:30 AM  | Registration                                                                                                                             |
| 9:00 AM  | Welcome<br><b>Jerry Wolf</b> , <i>Dentons US</i>                                                                                         |
| 9:05 PM  | Filing a claim with a VA Regional Office and the Notice of Decision<br><b>Angela Drake</b> , <i>University of Missouri School of Law</i> |
| 10:15 AM | Break                                                                                                                                    |
| 10:30 AM | Winning strategy, Appeals and Research<br><b>Celeste Krikorian</b> , <i>Military Order of the Purple Heart</i>                           |
| 11:30 AM | Break                                                                                                                                    |
| 11:45 AM | Program Resumes                                                                                                                          |
| 1:00 PM  | Lunch                                                                                                                                    |
| 1:30 PM  | Guest Speaker<br><b>Senator Claire McCaskill</b>                                                                                         |
| 2:15 PM  | Adjourn                                                                                                                                  |

KCMBA CONFERENCE CENTER  
TWO PERSHING SQUARE  
2300 MAIN ST., SUITE 100  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64108

### 4 WAYS TO PRE-REGISTER:

1. **Online** at [kcmba.org](http://kcmba.org)
2. **Mail** completed registration form with payment to KCMBA, Two Pershing Sq., 2300 Main St., Suite 100, Kansas City, MO 64108.
3. **Fax** (816) 474-0103
4. **Phone** (816) 474-4322

**Parking** is available at Two Pershing Square via OK Street, off Grand Blvd on level P3. Visit [kcmba.org/parking](http://kcmba.org/parking) for directions and a map. **Parking will be validated at the event.**

Event **cancellations** received 48 hours or more prior to the start of an event may receive a refund minus a \$25 processing fee, or a credit voucher in the full amount of the fees paid which will be valid for one year from the date of the event.

**Substitutions** for paid registrations are accepted. Credit vouchers are transferable.

**No shows** will not receive a refund or credit voucher. No shows requesting refunds due to emergency or hardship must be received in writing no more than 30 days after the event date.

**Special accommodations** can be made by contacting KCMBA at (816) 474-4322 prior to the program date.

**KCMBA.org**



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**REGISTRATION: 15-264**



**\*\*Please Print Clearly\*\***

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**E-MAIL ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

### PAYMENT INFORMATION

Cost: *Free for Members & Legal Aid Volunteers*

#### Credit Card:

- American Express     Discover     MasterCard     VISA

Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Name \_\_\_\_\_

Check No. \_\_\_\_\_ *Make checks payable to KCMBA*