

119TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 3482

AN ACT

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish an online program through which an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs may schedule an appointment for a covered veteran with a non-Department health care provider under the Veterans Community Care Program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Community
5 Care Scheduling Improvement Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. SCHEDULING OF APPOINTMENTS UNDER THE VET-**
7 **ERANS COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM.**

8 (a) **ELECTRONIC PROCESS.**—Subsection (d) of sec-
9 tion 3101 of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D.
10 Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of
11 2020 (Public Law 116–315; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note) is
12 amended to read as follows:

13 “(d) **ELECTRONIC PROCESS.**—(1) The Secretary
14 shall implement an electronic process through which a
15 scheduler of the Department, using an information tech-
16 nology system, may schedule an appointment for health
17 care furnished by the Department or through the Veterans
18 Community Care Program, under section 1703 of this
19 title, by a non-Department health care provider.

20 “(2) The electronic process under this subsection
21 shall allow a scheduler, with regards to appointments de-
22 scribed in—

23 “(A) either clause of subparagraph (A) of sub-
24 section (a)(1), to view, search, and sort such ap-
25 pointments by type of care, location, and date; and

1 “(B) clause (ii) of such subparagraph—

2 “(i) to schedule such an appointment;

3 “(ii) to provide referral and authorization
4 documents directly to a non-Department pro-
5 vider; and

6 “(iii) to perform any other function the
7 Secretary determines necessary.

8 “(3) The Secretary shall ensure that the electronic
9 process allows a scheduler to schedule an appointment for
10 health care furnished by the Secretary through a health
11 care provider of the Department.

12 “(4) The Secretary shall implement the electronic
13 process through an existing agreement if practicable.

14 “(5) The Secretary shall submit to the Committees
15 on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Rep-
16 resentatives the following regarding the electronic process:

17 “(A) Not later than 90 days after the Secretary
18 makes a determination under subparagraph (B)(iii)
19 of paragraph (2), a briefing regarding the functions
20 the Secretary has determined necessary.

21 “(B) Not later than six months after the date
22 of the enactment of Veterans Community Care
23 Scheduling Improvement Act, and semiannually
24 thereafter during the following three years, a report
25 regarding operation of the electronic process during

1 both the semiannual period preceding the date of the
2 report and the cumulative period since the date of
3 the enactment of such Act. Such a report shall in-
4 clude the following for each such period:

5 “(i) The number of non-Department health
6 care providers that participated in such elec-
7 tronic process, disaggregated by—

8 “(I) category of hospital care or med-
9 ical services provided; and

10 “(II) medical center of the Depart-
11 ment;

12 “(ii) The number of appointments sched-
13 uled pursuant to the electronic process,
14 disaggregated by—

15 “(I) category of hospital care or med-
16 ical services provided;

17 “(II) medical center of the Depart-
18 ment; and

19 “(III) month.

20 “(iii) A comparison of the average wait
21 time for appointments scheduled through the
22 electronic process and through non-electronic
23 methods, disaggregated by medical center of the
24 Department.

1 “(iv) The rates at which veterans cancelled
2 appointments scheduled through the electronic
3 process.

4 “(v) The rates at which veterans did not
5 appear for appointments scheduled through the
6 electronic process.”.

7 (b) IMPLEMENTATION.—

8 (1) DATE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
9 shall implement the electronic process under sub-
10 section (d) of section 1703H of such title, as added
11 by this section, not later than two years after the
12 date of the enactment of this Act.

13 (2) GUIDELINES.—Not later than 90 days after
14 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
15 of Veterans Affairs shall establish guidelines. Such
16 guidelines shall include the following:

17 (A) Procedures for schedulers and other
18 employees of the Department involved in the
19 scheduling of appointments described in such
20 section.

21 (B) A directive that employees described in
22 subparagraph (A) use the electronic process to
23 the extent practicable.

24 (C) A directive that employees described in
25 subparagraph (A), when scheduling an appoint-

1 ment for a covered veteran (as such term is
2 used in section 1703 of such title) for health
3 care furnished by the Secretary, inform such
4 covered veteran of available appointments
5 through providers of the Department and
6 through providers under the Veterans Commu-
7 nity Care Program when eligible.

8 (D) Procedures for engaging with non-De-
9 partment health care providers in specialized
10 cases.

11 (E) Standards regarding timeliness and ac-
12 curacy.

13 (F) Escalation protocols for scheduling
14 failures or delays.

15 (3) TRAINING.—Not later than 180 days after
16 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
17 shall implement a mandatory training program for
18 employees described in paragraph (2) regarding the
19 guidelines under paragraph (2).

20 (4) EVALUATION.—Not later than 60 days after
21 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
22 shall prescribe performance benchmarks and out-
23 come-based metrics for the electronic process under
24 such section, including—

1 (A) time between a referral and a sched-
2 uled appointment;

3 (B) patient satisfaction; and

4 (C) the percentage of appointments sched-
5 uled exclusively through the electronic process.

6 (5) OUTREACH.—Not later than 90 days after
7 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
8 shall plan and carry out an outreach strategy to en-
9 courage non-Department of Veterans Affairs health
10 care providers that participate in the Veterans Com-
11 munity Care Program to participate in the electronic
12 process under such subsection. Such outreach
13 shall—

14 (A) include contacting each such provider
15 during such 90 days;

16 (B) include seeking to enter into an agree-
17 ment with each such provider under which the
18 provider shall participate in the electronic proc-
19 ess;

20 (C) include collaborating with State hos-
21 pital associations and rural health associations
22 to promote such participation;

23 (D) focus on providers in specialties or un-
24 derserved areas, as determined by the Sec-
25 retary; and

1 (E) include the publication, on a publicly
2 accessible website of the Department, of infor-
3 mation regarding—

4 (i) details of the electronic process;

5 (ii) how a provider may elect to par-
6 ticipate in the electronic process; and

7 (iii) a point of contact in the Depart-
8 ment regarding the electronic process.

9 (6) OVERSIGHT.—The Secretary shall submit to
10 the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate
11 and House of Representatives, with regards to the
12 electronic process under such subsection, the fol-
13 lowing:

14 (A) Not later than 30 days after the Sec-
15 retary establishes guidelines under paragraph
16 (2) of this subsection, a copy of such guidelines.

17 (B) Not later than 30 days after the Sec-
18 retary formulates the plan under paragraph (5)
19 of this subsection, a briefing on the outreach
20 strategy under such paragraph.

21 (C) Not later than 180 days after the date
22 of the enactment of this Act, the benchmarks
23 and metrics prescribed under paragraph (4).

24 (c) EXPANSION.—Not later than 90 days after the
25 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall sub-

1 mit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate
2 and House of Representatives a plan to integrate the
3 scheduling of appointments for health care furnished
4 through health care providers of the Department of Vet-
5 erans Affairs into the electronic process under subsection
6 (d) of section 1703H of such title. Such plan shall include
7 the following elements:

8 (1) A timeline to implement such plan.

9 (2) Estimated costs to carry out such plan.

10 (3) Changes to policies and procedures of the
11 Department the Secretary determines necessary to
12 implement such plan.

13 (d) CODIFICATION.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3101 of such Act, as
15 amended by subsection (a), is transferred to sub-
16 chapter I of chapter 17 of title 38, United States
17 Code, inserted after section 1703G, and redesign-
18 nated as section 1703H.

19 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section
20 1703H of such title, as transferred and redesignated
21 by this subsection, is amended—

22 (A) by striking any heading that is not a
23 section heading or subsection heading and con-
24 forming the margins accordingly;

1 (B) by striking “of title 38, United States
2 Code” both places it appears and inserting “of
3 this title”;

4 (C) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “Not
5 later than one year after the date of the enact-
6 ment of this Act, the Secretary” and inserting
7 “The Secretary”;

8 (D) in subsection (c)—

9 (i) in paragraph (1), in the matter
10 preceding subparagraph (A), by striking
11 “Not later than 180 days after the date of
12 the enactment of this Act, the Secretary”
13 and inserting “The Secretary”; and

14 (ii) in paragraph (2), by striking sub-
15 paragraphs (A) and (B) and inserting
16 “The Secretary shall require each medical
17 facility of the Department to use the meth-
18 od or tool described in paragraph (1).”;

19 (E) in the section enumerator, by striking
20 “**SEC.**” and inserting “**§**”; and

21 (F) in the section heading—

22 (i) by striking “**PROCESS AND RE-**
23 **QUIREMENTS FOR SCHEDULING AP-**
24 **POINTMENTS FOR HEALTH CARE**
25 **FROM DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**

1 **FAIRS AND NON-DEPARTMENT**
2 **HEALTH CARE.”** and inserting “**SCHED-**
3 **ULING OF APPOINTMENTS”**; and

4 (ii) by conforming the typeface and
5 typestyle, including capitalization, to the
6 typeface and typestyle used in the section
7 heading of section 1703G of such title.

8 (3) **TABLE OF SECTIONS.**—The table of sections
9 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by in-
10 serting, after the item relating to section 1703G, the
11 following new item:

“1703H. Scheduling of appointments.”.

12 **SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN LIMITS ON PAYMENT OF**
13 **PENSION.**

14 Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code,
15 is amended by striking “January 31, 2033” and inserting
16 “May 31, 2033”.

Passed the House of Representatives May 19, 2026.

Attest:

Clerk.

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