



Testimony

Before the Subcommittee on Technology
Modernization, Committee on Veterans'
Affairs, House of Representatives

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VA DISABILITY BENEFITS

Opportunities and Challenges to Modernizing Technology and Adopting AI

Statement of Dr. Sterling Thomas, Chief Scientist

A testimony before the Subcommittee on Technology Modernization, Committee on Veterans' Affairs, House of Representatives

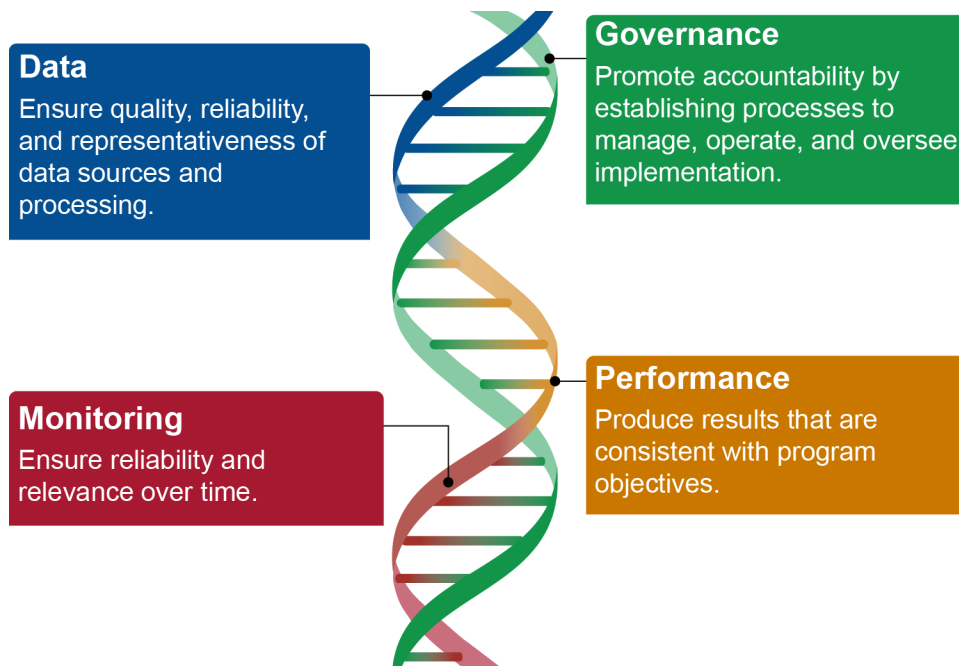
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What GAO Found

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is working to modernize its IT systems to increase efficiency and accuracy of claims processing for disability compensation. However, past GAO reports have found that VA faces long-standing challenges in managing its disability compensation program and implementing innovative technologies. For example, GAO found gaps in VA's oversight of the quality of exams provided by contracted medical providers and in the management of training for claims processors. Moreover, in 2009, VA began developing an electronic, paperless system called the Veterans Benefits Management System. GAO found that this effort was not driven by robust planning and did not include goals for system response times and user satisfaction, making it difficult to measure progress on efforts to improve user satisfaction with the system.

AI holds substantial promise for improving government operations, and VA is exploring multiple uses of AI for disability benefits, such as claims processing. However, GAO has reported that generative AI can increase risk and hinder accountability, in part because even its designers may not fully understand how it works. It can also require significant computational and technical resources. VA is exploring using AI to further automate the processing of disability claims, a use case that could benefit veterans. But this use could present a challenge in detecting errors or misuse, owing to AI's lack of transparency. GAO has a framework to help ensure accountability and responsible use of AI. VA and other agencies could use this framework as they consider, select, and implement AI systems (see figure).

Figure: GAO's AI Accountability Framework



Source: GAO (analysis and illustration). | GAO-26-109137

Why GAO Did This Study

VA administers one of the largest federal disability benefit programs, providing over \$195 billion to over 6.9 million veterans and their families in fiscal year 2025. Veterans with injuries or illnesses incurred or aggravated during military service may receive monthly compensation payments.

The Honoring our PACT Act of 2022 required VA to develop a plan to increase the speed and accuracy of claims processing decisions.

This statement summarizes (1) VA's long-standing challenges with managing its disability compensation program and implementing innovative technologies and (2) opportunities and challenges for using AI for VA's disability compensation program. This statement is based on GAO's body of work from September 2015 to June 2026 on VA disability compensation claims processing, IT modernization, and AI.

What GAO Recommends

Since 2021, GAO has made 43 recommendations to improve VA's disability compensation program. VA has implemented 28 of them. It has taken some steps to address the remaining 15, but has not fully implemented them. Doing so would help VA better ensure veterans receive timely and appropriate benefits.

Chairman Barrett, Ranking Member Budzinski, and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss technology innovation for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation program.

VA's Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) administers one of the largest federal disability benefit programs in the nation. It provided over \$195 billion in compensation to over 6.9 million veterans and their families in fiscal year 2025, according to VA. Veterans with service-connected disabilities (i.e., injuries or illnesses incurred or aggravated during military service) may receive monthly VA disability compensation payments according to the severity of their disability.¹

VA is working to modernize its IT systems to deliver an improved veteran experience and increase efficiency and accuracy in claims processing, among other goals. Section 701(b) of the Honoring our PACT Act of 2022 (PACT Act) required VA to develop a plan for the modernization of VBA's IT systems to increase the speed and accuracy of claims processing decisions.² It also called for embracing automated decision support tools.

In response, VBA and VA's Office of Information and Technology partnered to create VA's Five-Year Modernization Plan of Benefits Delivery IT Systems.³ A key strategy of the plan is developing automated decision support tools to improve the efficiency of claims processing. VA also plans to use AI to gather, structure, and pre-process medical data that vary in formatting, consistency, and quality.

To use new technology for the benefit of veterans, VA needs to proactively manage its complexities and risks. However, VA has faced long-standing challenges in managing programs and IT projects. Our prior reports, as well as reports from VA's Office of Inspector General (VA OIG), have identified opportunities for VA to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations and its ability to deliver intended technological capabilities. While innovative tools like AI could help with

¹See generally 38 U.S.C. Ch. 11.

²See Pub. L. No. 117-168, § 701(b), 136 Stat. 1759, 1794-95.

³Department of Veterans Affairs, "2024 Addendum to: The Department of Veterans Affairs 5-Year Benefits Systems Modernization Plan as Prescribed Under Section 701(b) of the PACT Act," (December 2024).

these efforts, they require careful implementation, high-quality data, and a workforce trained to use them.

My statement today discusses VA's (1) long-standing challenges with managing its disability compensation program and implementing innovative technologies and (2) opportunities and challenges with using AI for processing disability compensation claims.

This statement is based on a body of work from September 2015 to June 2026 on VA disability compensation claims processing, VA IT modernization, and artificial intelligence. Specifically, this statement is based on our prior reports on VA's disability compensation program, VA's modernization program focused primarily on the Electronic Health Records Management system, AI, and our High Risk List. More detailed information on the scope and methodology of our prior work can be found within the specific reports on which this statement is based, as well as information on actions VA has taken in response to our prior recommendations. These reports are listed in the related products page at the end of this statement. Appendix I lists selected GAO work on AI. For this statement, we also reviewed relevant VA OIG reports and publicly available statements and documents from VA on its current and planned uses of AI.⁴

We conducted the work on which this statement is based in accordance with all sections of GAO's Quality Assurance Framework that are relevant to our objectives. The framework requires that we plan and perform the engagement to obtain sufficient and appropriate evidence to meet our stated objectives and to discuss any limitations in our work. We believe that the information and data obtained, and the analysis conducted, provide a reasonable basis for any findings and conclusions in this product.

Background

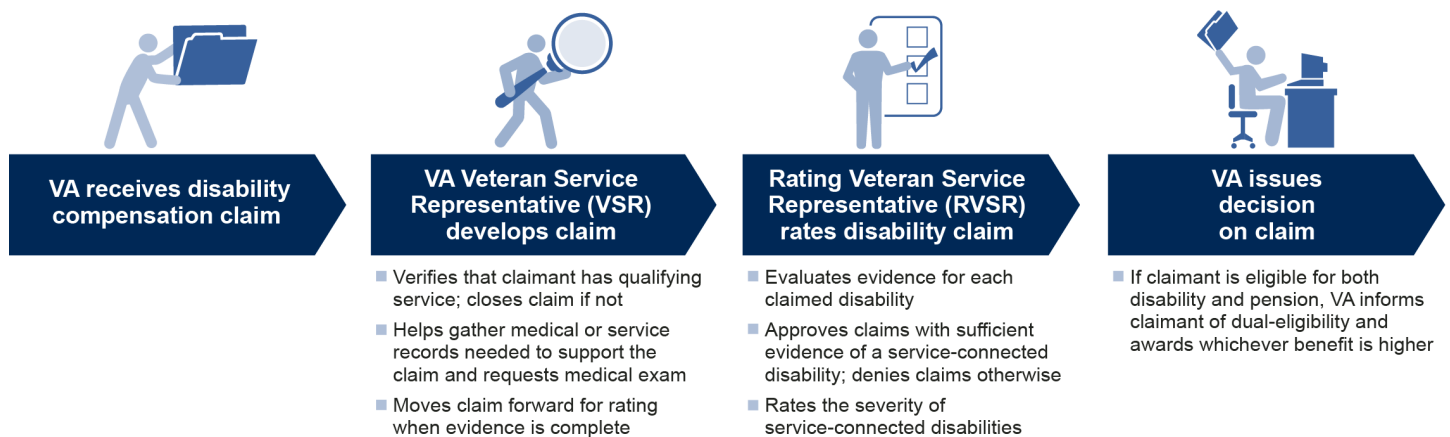
VA disability compensation program and related services. VA provides disability compensation to veterans with service-connected injuries or illnesses. Under statute, compensation levels are generally based on a disability rating. This rating, which VA assigns, represents the average percentage loss in earning capacity associated with the severity

⁴For example, see VA Office of Inspector General, *Review of Automated Decisions for Veterans' Service-Connected Death Claims*, VA OIG- 25-00153-47 (April 30, 2026).

of the veteran's service-connected disability.⁵ VA uses the Veterans Affairs Schedule for Rating Disabilities to determine a disability rating. Veterans may appeal if dissatisfied with VA's decision.

Besides financial compensation, VA provides health care, housing, vocational rehabilitation, and other employment-related services to eligible veterans. In many instances, a veteran first receives a disability rating from VA and then applies for these services. Figure 1 summarizes the VA disability compensation claim process.

Figure 1: Summary of VA Disability Compensation Claim Process



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) information; GAO (icons). | GAO-26-109137

GAO's High Risk List. Our High Risk List identifies government operations with serious vulnerabilities to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement, or that are in need of transformation. We use five criteria to assess progress in addressing high-risk areas: (1) leadership commitment, (2) agency capacity, (3) an action plan, (4) monitoring efforts, and (5) demonstrated progress. We have designated four areas of VA operations as high risk: VA health care, VA acquisition management,

⁵38 U.S.C. § 1155 provides that the "ratings shall be based, as far as practicable, upon the average impairments of earning capacity resulting from such injuries in civil occupations."

VA and other federal disability programs, and government-wide cybersecurity.⁶

VA Faces Long-Standing Challenges in Managing Its Disability Compensation Program and Implementing Innovative Technologies

VA Has Faced Challenges Managing Large Disability Workloads

As we reported in October 2025, over the past two decades, VA has faced surges in its workload of disability compensation claims.⁷ Some of these surges were related to changes in the eligibility determination process for certain claims. For example, in August 2010, VA created a presumption that certain diseases related to Agent Orange were connected to military service, leading to the need to adjudicate 260,000 new and previously denied disability compensation claims. More recently, an increase in claims, driven partly by the PACT Act, added to VA's workload, according to VA data. While VA has made progress in reducing its backlog of claims, additional surges may occur as VA continues to assess the possibility of adding presumptions for other medical conditions.⁸

⁶GAO's High-Risk List focuses attention on government operations that are vulnerable to fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement, or are in need of transformation to address economy, efficiency, or effectiveness challenges. GAO, *High-Risk Series: Heightened Attention Could Save Billions More and Improve Government Efficiency and Effectiveness*, [GAO-25-107743](#) (Washington, D.C. Feb. 25, 2025).

⁷GAO, *VA Disability Benefits: Agency Has Taken Steps, but Challenges Remain with Managing and Modernizing Its Program*, [GAO-26-108789](#) (Washington, D.C.: Oct. 29, 2025).

⁸For example, VA is exploring the possibility of a relationship between exposure to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and kidney cancer. See 90 Fed. Reg. 59,325 (Dec. 18, 2025).

Adding to VA's challenges, making decisions about disability compensation is difficult given the complexity of VA's statutory and policy requirements, according to VA's 2026 corrective action plan to address GAO's High Risk List designation. For example, the PACT Act further complicated decisions that claims processors make about when disability compensation payments to veterans should take effect. Claims processors must understand numerous sections of the United States Code and Code of Federal Regulations and consider many factors, such as locations, dates, and conditions presumed to be associated with certain types of toxic exposures during military service, according to VA's OIG.⁹ Moreover, VA must frequently update its policies, business rules, and training to keep pace with changing law, regulations, and eligibility criteria, according to VA.

VA has taken various steps to improve and address challenges related to its disability compensation program over the past two decades. These steps include implementing a new appeals process,¹⁰ enhancing training for staff who adjudicate claims, and establishing programs to manage and oversee medical exams conducted by contractors.

While these are positive steps, our prior work has shown that VA has continued to face challenges in managing the program. Underpinning many of the challenges, VA leaders and managers were not fully using leading management practices, such as establishing goals, involving key stakeholders, and monitoring performance. Our prior work found that these practices could help VA improve disability compensation claims processing. For example:

- In 2024 and 2025, we identified opportunities to strengthen VA's oversight of the quality of exams provided by contracted medical providers (called examiners).¹¹ In particular we found (1) breakdowns in procedures for regularly reviewing contracted exams for complex claims, (2) incorrect financial incentive payments to contractors, and (3) a gap in feedback from examiners—a key stakeholder group. To

⁹Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Inspector General, *The PACT Act Has Complicated Determining When Veterans' Benefits Payments Should Take Effect*, VA OIG- 24-01153-52 (Apr. 15, 2025).

¹⁰See Pub. L. No. 115-55, 131 Stat. 1105 (2017).

¹¹GAO, *VA Disability Exams: Improvements Needed to Strengthen Oversight of Contractors' Corrective Actions*, [GAO-24-107730](#) (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 18, 2024); and *VA Disability Benefits: Additional Oversight and Information Could Improve Quality of Contracted Exams for Veterans*, [GAO-25-107483](#) (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 18, 2025).

address these issues, we made five recommendations to VA, including that the department address its incorrect financial incentive payments. VA agreed with those recommendations and as of July 2026, VA took action to implement three of them. To address the remaining two recommendations, VA should conduct regular reviews with contracted exams for complex claims and recalculate all financial incentives since 2022 and document and correct any inaccurate penalties and payments.

- In 2021, we highlighted gaps in VA's management of training for claims processors, in areas such as establishing goals, monitoring whether claims processors completed required training, and assessing training results.¹² To address these issues, we made 10 recommendations. VA generally agreed with these recommendations and implemented eight of them as of July 2026. To address the remaining two recommendations, VBA should explain how it will prioritize its efforts to meet its training program's goals and demonstrates that its plans for evaluating training of disability claims processors are being implemented.

Since 2021, we have made 43 recommendations to improve VA's disability compensation program. Of these, 28 have been implemented. VA has taken some steps to address the remaining 15 recommendations, but has not fully implemented them as of July 2026. Fully implementing our recommendations could help VA improve management of its program so veterans receive more accurate and timely benefits decisions.

VA Has an Inconsistent Record in Managing Technology Innovation

VA also has an inconsistent record in managing technological enhancements, including those intended to improve the processing of veterans' claims for disability compensation. VA has several major modernization initiatives underway, including initiatives in financial management and electronic health records. However, VA has faced long-standing challenges in its IT systems modernization efforts. For example, after three unsuccessful attempts over two decades, VA undertook a fourth effort in 2017 to modernize its legacy health information system (the Electronic Health Record Modernization program). We previously made 18 recommendations to VA to improve cost estimating, schedule,

¹²GAO, *VA Disability Benefits: Veterans Benefits Administration Could Enhance Management of Claims Processor Training*, [GAO-21-348](#) (Washington, D.C.: June 7, 2021).

program management, user adoption and satisfaction, and operational testing related to its electronic health record system.¹³

In the specific area of disability compensation claims, in 2009 VA began developing an electronic, paperless system called the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS). However, our prior work found that VA's efforts on VBMS were not driven by robust planning and did not include goals for system response times and user satisfaction.¹⁴ We made five recommendations to address these and other shortfalls. As of July 2026, VA has taken action to implement three of the recommendations, including developing a plan for completing VBMS.¹⁵

In addition, VA's OIG has made a number of recommendations to improve VA's use of automation.¹⁶ For example, the VA OIG found that almost all automated decisions and notification letters had legal or procedural problems, especially with required notifications for service-connected death benefits. The VA OIG recommended that VA strengthen and monitor the automation process to ensure that automated Dependency and Indemnity Compensation rating decisions and notifications fully comply with all legal requirements and procedural guidance.

VA's record on managing the complexities and risks of its disability compensation program and technology innovation is particularly important

¹³For more information about these recommendations, see GAO, *VA Electronic Health Record Modernization: Critical Actions Needed to Support Accelerated System Deployments*, [GAO-26-108812](#) (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 15, 2025). Additionally, VA uses dozens of systems to schedule appointments, manage referrals, and monitor veteran wait times and is in the process of replacing its primary health information system. This rollout has been delayed due to technical and performance issues. For more information see GAO, *Veterans Health Care: Scheduling Systems and Related Challenges*, [GAO-26-109213](#) (Washington, D.C.: June 12, 2026).

¹⁴GAO, *Veterans Benefits Management System: Ongoing Development and Implementation Can Be Improved; Goals Are Needed to Promote Increased User Satisfaction*, [GAO-15-582](#) (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 1, 2015).

¹⁵We also recommended that VA survey VBMS users and develop customer satisfaction goals. In January 2017, VA conducted a survey of VBMS users but did not take actions to ensure the statistical validity of the survey or develop goals. We subsequently closed these recommendations.

¹⁶See for example, Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Inspector General, *Review of Automated Decisions for Veterans' Service-Connected Death Claims*, VA OIG- 25-00153-47 (Apr. 30, 2026).

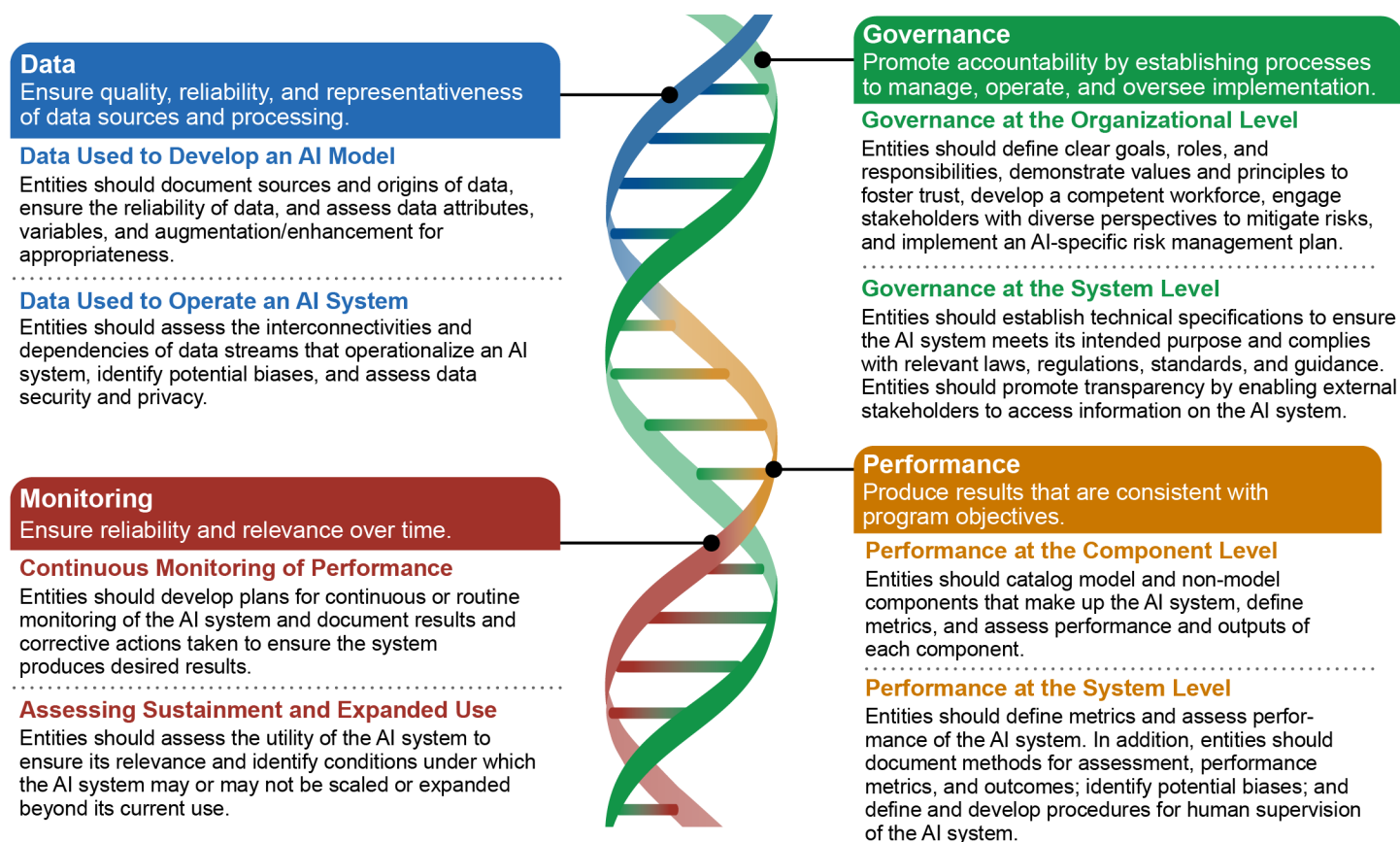
as VA embarks on using AI to improve the processing of veterans' claims for disability compensation.

VA Has Opportunities and Challenges in Using AI for Its Disability Compensation Program

AI holds substantial promise for improving the operations of government agencies. To realize this promise in the area of disability compensation, this rapidly changing technology must be responsibly used and remain accountable within the context of the often opaque functioning of AI systems. We have developed a framework of key practices to help ensure accountability and responsible AI use by federal agencies.¹⁷ VA and other agencies can use this framework as they consider, select, and implement systems. See figure 2.

¹⁷GAO, *Artificial Intelligence: An Accountability Framework for Federal Agencies and Other Entities*, [GAO-21-519SP](#) (Washington, D.C.: June 30, 2021). We developed the AI framework based on the following sources: (1) literature on accountability, governance frameworks, and principles on the use of AI; (2) presentations by and comments made by forum experts during a Comptroller General's forum; (3) interviews with subject matter experts, including federal auditors and program managers, a state auditor, civil liberties advocates, industry representatives and legal counsel, developers, privacy experts, and data scientists; (4) GAO auditing standards and federal internal controls; (5) technical review of the framework and an outline of the forum findings by forum participants, including officials from three federal agencies and two Offices of Inspectors General; and (6) internal review by GAO subject matter experts.

Figure 2: GAO’s Artificial Intelligence (AI) Accountability Framework



Source: GAO (analysis and illustration). | GAO-26-109137

Opportunities and Challenges with Using Generative AI for Veterans’ Disability Compensation Claims

In July 2025, we reported that selected federal agencies had generally increased their use of AI between 2023 and 2024.¹⁸ VA reported 40 AI use cases in 2023 and 229 in 2024. In December 2025, VA reported having 367 AI use cases. In December 2023, we recommended that VA update its AI use case inventory to include required information and take steps to ensure that the data in the inventory aligns with provided

¹⁸GAO, *Artificial Intelligence: Generative AI Use and Management at Federal Agencies*, GAO-25-107653 (Washington, D.C.: July 29, 2025).

instructions.¹⁹ VA implemented our recommendation, by including all the required information in its 2025 AI use case inventory.

VA is exploring multiple uses of AI in veterans' disability compensation. For example, VA has reported that generative AI will be capable of further automating tasks in the processing of disability compensation claims, such as document intake, classification, and preliminary adjudication.²⁰ In addition, VA has pointed to the potential for AI to help identify fraudulent direct deposit changes to veterans benefits. Specifically, VA states that most direct deposit changes at VA are safe, but one to two out of 1,000 are fraudulent changes made by someone other than the beneficiary to steal their payments. VA reports that its Payment Redirect Fraud model is using AI to identify which changes are likely to be fraudulent and refer those incidents to team investigators for review and remediation.²¹

However, as we reported in September 2025, generative AI can increase risk for agencies.²² In particular, these systems largely remain "black boxes," meaning even the designers may not fully understand how they generate outputs. This lack of transparency could limit the ability of users, and even VA, to detect error or misuse. Further, we have reported that with generative AI there is sometimes a challenge in identifying the party accountable for the decisions. Those issues could add complexity to the disability compensation program for both the VA claims processors and the veteran should they need to appeal. Given the fast pace at which AI is evolving, the government must be proactive in understanding its complexities, risks, and societal consequences.

As we reported in September 2025, VA has faced challenges in using and managing generative AI.²³ These include:

¹⁹GAO, *Artificial Intelligence: Agencies Have Begun Implementation but Need to Complete Key Requirements*, [GAO-24-105980](#) (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 12, 2023).

²⁰Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), "Building the Future: VA's Strategy for Adopting High-Impact Artificial Intelligence to Improve Services for Veterans" (Washington, D.C.: September 2025).

²¹Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), "AI Use Case Inventory" (Washington, D.C.: Oct. 2025).

²²GAO, *Veterans Affairs: Key AI Practices Could Help Address Challenges*, [GAO-25-108739](#) (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 15, 2025).

²³[GAO-25-108739](#).

Federal policies and guidance. VA officials told us that existing federal policy may not account for or could present obstacles to the adoption of generative AI. For example, they said agencies must follow a substantial amount of federal law, policy, and guidance in the areas of cybersecurity, data privacy, and IT acquisitions. Adhering to these requirements could prove difficult given the risks associated with generative AI, according to officials. VA officials also noted that existing privacy policy—which protects veterans’ personally identifiable information—can prohibit information sharing with other agencies, which can prevent effective collaboration on generative AI risks and advancements.

Technical resources and budget. Generative AI can require significant computational and technical resources. VA reported challenges in obtaining or accessing the needed resources and funding to establish the resources and support needed for generative AI initiatives.

Data. Agencies are required to ensure that sensitive data used in the training and deployment of generative AI models are kept secure and compliant with federal requirements. However, officials at agencies—including VA—told us that strict data security requirements may prevent them from performing generative AI research in certain agency mission areas.

Specific to the goal of combating fraud and improper payments, new innovations like AI-enabled tools can perform some of the required tasks. However, they require sufficient high-quality data, an understanding of risks, and staff with knowledge of how to use AI. Introducing insufficient, unrelated, or bad data will make an AI model less reliable: AI developers use the saying “garbage in, garbage out,” meaning that poor data will give poor results. Furthermore, maintaining a “human in the loop” is vital to ensuring oversight of the data and processes.²⁴ A system that produces errors will also erode trust in AI’s—and therefore, the government’s—

²⁴Human in the loop refers to an approach to human oversight of the AI system “with the human retaining full control and the AI only providing recommendations or input.” A human reviews the output of the AI system and makes the final decision. Info-communications Media Development Authority and Personal Data Protection Commission, “Model Artificial Intelligence Governance Framework,” *Second Edition* (Singapore, Jan. 2020).

ability to detect fraud and make accurate decisions on veterans' claims for disability compensation.²⁵

VA is establishing policies and practices to help address generative AI challenges. Specifically, in September 2025 we reported that officials at VA told us they are working toward implementing the AI requirements in OMB's April 2025 memorandum, OMB M-25-21.²⁶ Doing so will provide opportunities to develop and publicly release AI strategies for identifying and removing barriers and addressing challenges previously cited. These strategies are to include addressing infrastructure and workforce needs, processes to facilitate AI investment or procurement, and plans to ensure access to quality data for AI and data traceability. In addition, the memorandum (1) encourages agencies to promote trust in AI systems and (2) directs agencies to develop a generative AI policy that establishes safeguards and oversight mechanisms.

Our prior recommendations are critical as VA continues to transform its oversight of IT. Implementations of these recommendations would place VA in a better position to overcome its long-standing challenges in managing its IT resources, subsequently improving its ability to address the rapidly changing AI landscape. Federal guidance has focused on ensuring that AI is responsible, equitable, traceable, reliable, and governable. The key practices in our AI Accountability Framework could be helpful in informing VA's implementation and use of AI.

An AI-Ready VA Workforce Is Essential for Innovation

An AI-ready workforce is another essential requirement if VBA is to use AI in its disability compensation program. However, for decades we have identified mission-critical gaps in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics skills and expertise within the federal workforce. More specifically, there is a severe shortage of federal staff with AI expertise.

For example, at the Department of Defense, we found in 2023 that despite billions of dollars invested to integrate AI into its operations, the department could not fully identify who was part of its AI workforce or

²⁵GAO, *Fraud and Improper Payments: Data Quality and a Skilled Workforce Are Essential for Realizing Artificial Intelligence's Benefits*, [GAO-26-108850](#) (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 13, 2026).

²⁶OMB, "Accelerating Federal Use of AI through Innovation, Governance, and Public Trust," M-25-21 (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 3, 2025). See [GAO-25-108739](#).

which positions required personnel with AI skills.²⁷ As a result, it could not effectively assess the state of its AI workforce or forecast future AI workforce needs.

In 2025, we found that VA and other agencies face challenges with attracting and developing individuals in expertise with generative AI.²⁸ One challenge is that these agencies are competing with the private sector for similarly skilled professionals. Furthermore, these agencies reported difficulties in developing the technical skills of their current workforces.²⁹ For example, National Aeronautics and Space Administration officials cited the need for resources to establish training programs and maintain training content as the technology rapidly evolves.

One option Congress has considered is to establish a new digital services academy—like the military academies—to train future workers.³⁰ In 2021, we convened technology leaders from government, academia, and nonprofits to discuss such an academy and related issues. Among their comments:

- Current compensation for federal digital staff is not competitive.
- Many digital staff may not be willing to endure the lengthy federal hiring process.
- An academy might best focus on master’s degrees because agencies need staff with advanced skills.

Chairman Barrett, Ranking Member Budzinski, and Members of the Subcommittee, this completes my prepared statement. I would be pleased to respond to any questions that you may have at this time.

²⁷GAO, *Artificial Intelligence: Actions Needed to Improve DOD’s Workforce Management*, [GAO-24-105645](#) (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 14, 2023).

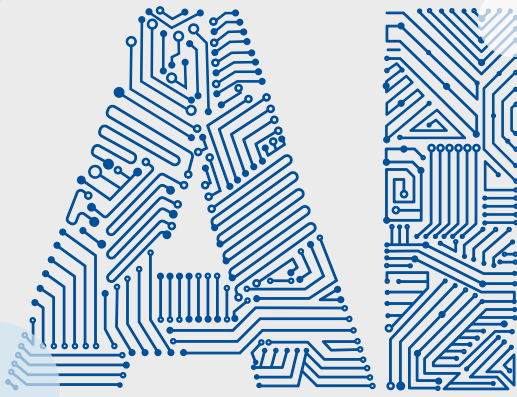
²⁸[GAO-25-107653](#).

²⁹In March 2026, the White House released the National Policy Framework for AI, which encourages AI workforce training.

³⁰See GAO, *Digital Services: Considerations for a Federal Academy to Develop a Pipeline of Digital Staff*, [GAO-22-105388](#) (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 19, 2021).

GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

If you or your staff have any questions about this testimony, please contact Sterling Thomas, Chief Scientist at ThomasS2@gao.gov. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Media Relations may be found on the last page of this statement. GAO staff who made key contributions to this testimony are Lisa Gardner and James Whitcomb (Assistant Directors), Charlotte E. Hinkle (Analyst-in-Charge), Ben Shouse, and Anika McMillon. Other staff who contributed to this testimony include Elizabeth Curda, Carol Harris, Josh Liu, Natalia Skrodzki, and Jennifer Stavros-Turner.



A SELECTION OF AI WORK FROM GAO

GAO provides fact-based, nonpartisan answers to your questions about artificial intelligence.

These two pages include a selection of our recently published and ongoing work on AI and related topics.



Cybersecurity & Privacy

- **Privacy Enhancing Technologies** (Science & Tech Spotlight)
[GAO-26-109063](#) (2026)
- **AI:** OMB Action Needed to Address Privacy-Related Gaps in Federal Guidance
[GAO-26-107681](#) (2026)
- **AI:** DHS Needs to Improve Risk Assessment Guidance for Critical Infrastructure Sectors
[GAO-25-107435](#) (2024)

ONGOING

- AI Cybersecurity Technology Assessment
- K-12 School Surveillance Technology



AI Opportunities & Challenges

- **Modernizing VA Disability Claims Testimony**
[GAO-26-109137](#) (2026)
- **Data Centers in Space** (Science & Tech Spotlight)
[GAO-26-109012](#) (2026)
- **On the Horizon:** Three Science and Technology Trends That Could Affect Society
[GAO-26-108079](#) (2026)
- **Malicious Use Of Generative AI** (Science & Tech Spotlight)
[GAO-26-108695](#) (2025)
- **Veterans Affairs:** Key AI Practices Could Help Address Challenges
[GAO-25-108739](#) (2025)
- **AI Agents** (Science & Tech Spotlight)
[GAO-25-108519](#) (2025)
- **AI:** Federal Efforts Guided by Requirements and Advisory Groups
[GAO-25-107933](#) (2025)
- **Wildfire Management:** Technologies for Forecasting, Detection, Mitigation, and Response
[GAO-25-108589](#) (2025)

ONGOING

- Malicious Use of AI
- Measure Effectiveness of Ecosystem Restoration Projects
- FOIA Technology



Federal Research & Management

- **AI:** A Framework to Assess U.S. Competitiveness and Inform Policy Options
[GAO-26-107624](#) (2026)
- **AI:** Uses and Risks for Small Business Contracting and Innovation Research
[GAO-26-107828](#) (2026)
- **AI:** Generative AI Use and Management at Federal Agencies
[GAO-25-107653](#) (2025)
- **AI:** Agencies Are Implementing Management and Personnel Requirements
[GAO-24-107332](#) (2024)
- **Immersive Technologies:** Most Civilian Agencies Are Using or Plan to Use Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, and More
[GAO-24-106665](#) (2024)
- **AI:** GAO's Work to Leverage Technology and Ensure Responsible Use
[GAO-24-107237](#) (2024)

ONGOING

- Assessing National AI Competitiveness
- AI Accountability Framework Update
- Federally Funded State-Administered Programs
- AI State and Federal Regulations



Finance

- **Disaster Assistance Scams:** Education and Awareness Are Key to Consumer Protection
[GAO-26-108280](#) (2026)
- **AI:** IRS Actions Needed to Address Skills Gaps, Information Quality, and Strategic Management
[GAO-26-107522](#) (2026)
- **Fraud and Improper Payments:** Data Quality and a Skilled Workforce Are Essential for Realizing Artificial Intelligence's Benefits
[GAO-26-108850](#) (2026)
- **Rental Housing:** Use and Federal Oversight of Property Technology
[GAO-25-107196](#) (2025)
- **AI:** Use and Oversight in Financial Services
[GAO-25-107197](#) (2025)

ONGOING

- AI Role in DOD Financial Management
- AI in Insurance



Federal Workforce

- **AI Acquisitions:** Agencies Should Collect and Apply Lessons Learned to Improve Future Procurements
[GAO-26-107859](#) (2026)
- **Digital Surveillance:** Potential Effects on Workers and Roles of Federal Agencies
[GAO-25-107126](#) (2025)
- **Workplace Safety and Health:** OSHA Should Take Steps to Better Identify and Address Ergonomic Hazards at Warehouses and Delivery Companies
[GAO-24-106413](#) (2024)
- **AI:** Actions Needed to Improve DOD's Workforce Management
[GAO-24-105645](#) (2023)
- **FAA Workforce:** Better Assessing Employees' Skill Gaps Could Help FAA Prepare for Changes in Technology
[GAO-21-310](#) (2021)
- **Automated Technologies:** DOT Should Take Steps to Ensure Its Workforce Has Skills Needed to Oversee Safety
[GAO-21-197](#) (2020)
- **Federal Workforce:** Key Talent Management Strategies for Agencies to Better Meet Their Missions
[GAO-19-181](#) (2019)
- **Workforce Automation:** Better Data Needed to Assess and Plan for Effects of Advanced Technologies on Jobs
[GAO-19-257](#) (2019)



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ONGOING

- DOD AI-Enabled Procurement



Health Care

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- **National Institute on Aging:** Leading Project Management Practices Are Important for Large-Scale Health Data Efforts
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- **AI in Health Care:** Benefits and Challenges of Machine Learning Technologies for Medical Diagnostics
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- **Vaccine Development:** Capabilities and Challenges for Addressing Infectious Diseases
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ONGOING

- Medical Wearables in Clinical Decision-making
- AI for Medical Notes and Coding
- Mental Health Chatbots

GAO's **framework for AI accountability** allows it to examine whether federal agencies are using models appropriately.

Governance

Promote accountability by establishing processes to manage, operate, and oversee implementation

Data

Ensure quality, reliability, and representativeness of data sources and processing

Performance

Produce results that are consistent with program objectives

Monitoring

Ensure reliability and relevance over time

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