

VFW Service Officer's Corner October 9, 2026

VA.gov Sign-In and Electronic Health Record Updates for Veterans Overseas

Veterans living overseas may have heard about the CLEAR identity-verification application, changes to the VA.gov sign-in process, and the Department of Veterans Affairs' ongoing implementation of a new Electronic Health Record (EHR) system. These developments may affect how overseas veterans access VA.gov and receive healthcare information and medical records supporting a VA claim.

Bottom Line Up Front

For veterans living overseas, ID.me currently appears to be the only consistently practical method for completing identity verification and accessing VA.gov. Other verification methods may require extraordinary workarounds when the veteran uses a foreign telephone number or address.

The "CLEAR" app/log-in appears to be created primarily in connection with the VA's new EHR system. Those Veterans who have in the past and are currently enrolled in VA healthcare may also notice that treatment records from U.S. military clinics in Europe are being shared with their VA electronic health records.

After receiving treatment at a military health clinic, a veteran may receive two email notifications that new medical information is available: one from the Department of Defense or the TRICARE system and another from the Veterans Health Administration. Receiving these notifications depends on your communication preferences and whether your email is up to date with the VA/Tricare.

Background on the VA's Electronic Health Record Program

The VA's EHR modernization program is intended to make medical records more accessible, reduce administrative burdens for service members transitioning from military service, and improve coordination among Department of Defense and Veterans Health Administration clinics and healthcare providers.

Service Treatment Records are also expected to be transferred electronically to the VA. The precise point at which this transfer occurs may depend on the applicable process. Currently, records *may* be transmitted when the VA receives a disability claim. The long-term objective is for the Department of Defense to transfer these records automatically, but that process has not yet been fully implemented.

Until the automated transfer process is fully operational, service members preparing Benefits Delivery at Discharge/Pre-Discharge claims must continue to officially request copies of their Service Treatment Records (including Dental and Behavioral Health) from their local military clinic's PAD office (Patient Administration Department) and submit them with their claims. Relying solely on an anticipated electronic transfer could delay claim development if the records are not available when the VA begins processing the claim.

VA.gov Login Challenges for Veterans Living Overseas

Veterans using overseas telephone numbers or residential addresses will have difficulty creating or verifying accounts through Login.gov or CLEAR. VPN use may also interfere with the verification process as well. VA.gov does not impose a blanket block on users in the EU. Access-denied errors in the EU are generally IP/network-specific—often involving VPNs, proxies, shared networks, or automated security controls—not a countrywide VA restriction. VA technical support is **866-279-3677**.

CLEAR account creation:

When identity verification fails during CLEAR account creation, VA.gov may display only a generic error message without identifying the specific cause. As a result, veterans living overseas may be unable to determine whether the problem involves their telephone number, residential address, internet connection, VPN use, or geographic location, such as being in a “restricted area” [outside the USA] for Login.gov or CLEAR verification.

I tried to create a CLEAR verified login, but it wasn’t completed due to an “error” (see above). I also contacted the CLEAR help desk directly regarding this issue. A representative confirmed that overseas locations are treated as restricted areas for purposes of the CLEAR user verification process for logging into VA.gov- just like with Login.gov.

Veterans living overseas should therefore retain access to their existing ID.me accounts whenever possible and ensure that their contact and recovery information remains current.

Additional Information

Information about the VA’s Electronic Health Record Modernization program is available at: <https://digital.va.gov/ehr-modernization/>

The current implementation schedule identifies November 2031 as the anticipated date for completing the VA’s EHR modernization program.

The official VA news article for the CLEAR program can be found:

<https://news.va.gov/press-room/va-launches-pilot-program-to-speed-veterans-access-to-services-care-benefits/>

Veterans experiencing access problems should document any error messages they receive and contact the appropriate VA.gov, ID.me, Login.gov, or CLEAR support service. They may also contact a VFW-accredited representative for assistance with VA benefits and claims-related concerns.

Prepared by Robert Dorris, the VFW Department of Europe Service Officer