

## VI. Public Participation and Request for Comments

We view public participation as essential to effective rulemaking and will consider all comments and material received during the comment period. If we determine that changes to the temporary interim rule are necessary, the Coast Guard will publish a temporary final rule or other appropriate document. If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this rulemaking, indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation.

**Submitting comments.** We encourage you to submit comments through the Federal Decision-Making Portal at <https://www.regulations.gov>. To do so, go to <https://www.regulations.gov>, type USCG–2024–0303 in the search box and click “Search.” Next, look for this document in the Search Results column, and click on it. Then click on the Comment option. If you cannot submit your material by using <https://www.regulations.gov>, call or email the person in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this proposed rule for alternate instructions.

**Viewing material in docket.** To view documents mentioned in this temporary interim rule as being available in the docket, find the docket as described in the previous paragraph, and then select “Supporting & Related Material” in the Document Type column. Public comments will also be placed in our online docket and can be viewed by following instructions on the <https://www.regulations.gov> Frequently Asked Questions web page. Also, if you click on the Dockets tab and then the temporary interim rule, you should see a “Subscribe” option for email alerts. The option will notify you when comments are posted, or a subsequent document is published.

We review all comments received, but we will only post comments that address the topic of the proposed rule. We may choose not to post off-topic, inappropriate, or duplicate comments that we receive.

**Personal information.** We accept anonymous comments. Comments we post to <https://www.regulations.gov> will include any personal information you have provided. For more about privacy and submissions to the docket in response to this document, see DHS’s eRulemaking System of Records notice (85 FR 14226, March 11, 2020).

### List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 165

Harbors, Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping

requirements, Security measures, Waterways.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard amends 33 CFR part 165 as follows:

### PART 165—REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS AREAS

■ 1. The authority citation for part 165 continues to read as follows:

**Authority:** 46 U.S.C. 70034, 70051, 70124; 33 CFR 1.05–1, 6.04–1, 6.04–6, and 160.5; Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 00170.1, Revision No. 01.3.

■ 2. Add § 165.T01–0303 to read as follows:

#### § 165.T01–0303 Safety Zone; Thames River, New London, CT.

(a) *Location.* The following area is a safety zone: All waters within a 200-yard radius of the construction barge located at 41°20′14″ N, 72°05′06″ W.

(b) *Regulations.* (1) Under the general safety zone regulations in subpart C of this part, you may not enter the safety zone described in paragraph (a) of this section unless authorized by the Captain of the Port Long Island Sound (COTP) or the COTP’s designated representative.

(2) To seek permission to enter, contact the COTP or the COTP’s representative by (866) 299–8031. Those in the safety zone must comply with all lawful orders or directions given to them by the COTP or the COTP’s designated representative.

(c) *Enforcement period.* This section is effective from May 17, 2024, through 11:59 p.m. on July 31, 2024. The rule will only be subject to enforcement within 4–6-hour window increments beginning on Wednesday, May 17, 2024, unless the project is delayed because of construction delays or weather conditions. If the project is delayed, a Broadcast Notice to Mariners will indicate the date to which this safety zone will be enforced at those same hours.

Dated: May 17, 2024.

#### E. Garrity,

Captain, U.S. Coast Guard, Captain of the Port Long Island Sound.

[FR Doc. 2024–11336 Filed 5–22–24; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 9110–04–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### Coast Guard

#### 33 CFR Part 165

[Docket No. USCG–2024–0375]

### Safety Zones; Annual Events in the Captain of the Port Eastern Great Lakes Zone Marine Events Within the Ninth District Coast Guard District

**AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DHS.

**ACTION:** Notification of enforcement of regulation.

**SUMMARY:** The Coast Guard will enforce a Safety Zone for the Clayton Chamber of Commerce 4th of July Fireworks on July 3, 2024, to provide for the safety of life on navigable waterways during this event. Fireworks will be fired from a barge at 44°14′54″ N by 76°05′26″ W the Saint Lawrence River. Our regulation for marine events within the Ninth Coast Guard District identifies the regulated area for this event in Clayton, NY. During the enforcement periods, the operator of any vessel in the regulated area must comply with directions from the Patrol Commander or any Official Patrol displaying a Coast Guard ensign.

**DATES:** The regulation in 33 CFR 165.939, item (b)(14) in table 165.939 will be enforced from 9:15 p.m. through 10:45 p.m. on July 3, 2024.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** If you have questions about this notification of enforcement, call or email Marine Safety Unit Thousand Islands Marine Event Permit Coordinator, U.S. Coast Guard MSU Thousand Islands; telephone 315–774–8724, email [SMB-MSDMassena-WaterwaysManagement@uscg.mil](mailto:SMB-MSDMassena-WaterwaysManagement@uscg.mil).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Coast Guard will enforce a safety zone in 33 CFR 165.939, item (b)(14) in table 165.939, for the Clayton Chamber of Commerce 4th of July Fireworks regulated area from 9:15 p.m. through 10:45 p.m. on July 3, 2024. This action is being taken to provide for the safety of life on navigable waterways during this event. Our regulation for marine events within the Ninth Coast Guard District, § 165.939, specifies the location of the regulated area for the Clayton Chamber of Commerce 4th of July Fireworks which encompasses portions of the St. Lawrence River. During the enforcement period as reflected in § 165.939, if you are the operator of a vessel in the regulated area you must comply with directions from the Patrol Commander or any Official Patrol displaying a Coast Guard ensign.

In addition to this notification of enforcement in the **Federal Register**, the Coast Guard plans to provide notification of this enforcement period via the Broadcast Notice to Mariners. This notification is being issued by the Coast Guard Sector Eastern Great Lakes Prevention Department Head at the direction of the Captain of the Port.

Dated: 15 May 2024.

**J.B. Bybee,**

*Commander, U.S. Coast Guard, Sector Eastern Great Lakes Prevention Department Head.*

[FR Doc. 2024–11329 Filed 5–22–24; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 9110–04–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### 38 CFR Parts 17 and 51

RIN 2900–AS01

#### Changes to the Provision of Health Care for World War II Veterans

**AGENCY:** Department of Veterans Affairs.

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** This final rule amends the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical regulations and its regulations on per diem for nursing home care of veterans in State homes to conform with section 101 of the Joseph Maxwell Cleland and Robert Joseph Dole Memorial Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement (Cleland-Dole) Act of 2022, which expanded the provision of hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care to World War II (WWII) veterans. VA is also amending its medical regulations to remove existing references to Mexican border and World War I (WWI) veterans.

**DATES:** This rule is effective May 23, 2024.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ralph Weishaar, Director, VHA Member Services (15MEM) Business Support Office, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20420, (254) 755–0407. (This is not a toll-free telephone number.)

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Background

VA has authority to furnish hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care pursuant to section 1710 of title 38, United States Code (U.S.C.). In general, section 1710(a)(1) lists the categories of veterans to whom the Secretary shall furnish hospital care and medical services that the Secretary determines to be needed; section 1710(a)(2) lists the categories of veterans

to whom the Secretary shall furnish hospital care and medical services and may furnish nursing home care, which the Secretary determines to be needed; and section 1710(a)(3) states that in the case of a veteran who is not described in section 1710(a)(1) and (2), the Secretary may, to the extent resources and facilities are available, furnish hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care, which the Secretary determines to be needed.

Whether a veteran is eligible for VA care under section 1710(a)(1), (2), or (3) determines, among other benefits, priority for enrollment in VA health care. Section 1705(a) establishes eight priority categories for purposes of enrollment in VA health care. For example, priority category six includes veterans eligible for hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care under section 1710(a)(2) who are not otherwise eligible for priority category one through five. See 38 U.S.C. 1705(a)(6).

In addition to determining placement in a priority category, section 1710(a)(1) and (2) help determine whether a veteran is exempt from copayments for hospital care and medical services. Sections 1710(f)(1) and (g)(1) only require VA to charge a veteran a copayment for hospital care and medical services, if that veteran is eligible for such care under section 1710(a)(3). That is, veterans eligible to receive hospital care and medical services under section 1710(a)(1) and (2) do not have to pay a copayment for such care and services. Furthermore, VA shall pay per diem for eligible veterans receiving nursing home care in a State home pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 1741. See 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 51.50.

VA has regulated priority categories at § 17.36 and copayment exemption for inpatient hospital care and outpatient medical care at § 17.108. VA also has regulated eligibility for purposes of payment of per diem for nursing home care at State homes in § 51.50.

Historically, veterans of WWII were not listed as a category of veterans in 38 U.S.C. 1710(a)(1) or (2). Therefore, they were only eligible for hospital care, medical services, or nursing home care if they were otherwise eligible under other criteria in section 1710(a)(1), (2), or (3), or 38 U.S.C. 1710A. As such, some WWII veterans had to pay copayments for inpatient hospital care and outpatient medical care because they were eligible for VA health care under section 1710(a)(3) and others were not eligible to enroll in VA health care at all because they were in subcategories (v) and (vi) of priority

category eight (which are not currently eligible to enroll in VA health care). See 38 CFR 17.36(c)(2).

##### II. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023

On December 29, 2022, the Cleland-Dole Act was signed into law. Effective March 31, 2023, section 101 of the Cleland-Dole Act amended 38 U.S.C. 1710(a)(2)(E) to expressly include veterans of WWII. WWII is defined in 38 U.S.C. 101(8) to mean the period beginning on December 7, 1941, and ending on December 31, 1946.

As the plain language of section 101 of the Cleland-Dole Act is clear and requires no interpretation, VA began implementing section 101 on March 31, 2023. In this regard, VA placed any WWII veteran who was in priority category seven or eight into priority category six. This made WWII veterans who were in subcategories (v) and (vi) of priority category eight both eligible for enrollment in VA health care as well as exempt from copayment for inpatient hospital care and outpatient medical care. VA's placement of WWII veterans in priority category six also exempted from copayment for inpatient hospital care and outpatient medical care those WWII veterans who were already enrolled in VA health care and in priority category seven and subcategories (i) through (iv) of priority category eight. Additionally, effective March 31, 2023, WWII veterans are eligible veterans for purposes of payment of per diem for nursing home care in State homes. We note that WWII veterans may have been previously eligible for purposes of payment of per diem for nursing home care in State homes prior to March 31, 2023, if they met other eligibility criteria for such payment. See 38 CFR 51.50.

In this rulemaking, VA amends its regulations governing VA health care enrollment and priority categories (38 CFR 17.36) and copayments for inpatient hospital care and outpatient medical care (38 CFR 17.108) to conform to section 101 of the Cleland-Dole Act. Similarly, VA also amends its eligibility for purposes of payment of per diem for nursing home care in State homes (38 CFR 51.50) to explicitly include WWII veterans. We note that section 1710(a)(2)(E) expressly recognizes veterans of the Mexican border period and WWI as eligible for hospital care, medical services, or nursing home care under that paragraph. However, there are no longer