



# Ask VA Business Dashboard

## Guide

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### Table of Contents

Overview	2
User Access	2
Navigation	2
Application Functionality	4
Describing your Inquiry/Selecting Topics	4
Creating a New Inquiry	7
Attaching Supporting Documents	10
Checking Inquiry Status	11

# Overview

Ask VA (AVA) provides a web interface for Veterans, their families, Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs), and others to request information on the multitude of VA services and facilities. This guide is specifically for AVA users that operate in a business capacity on behalf of other veterans - School Officials, VSOs, Authorized 3rd Parties, etc. - who need to be able to separate their business inquiries from any personal inquiries they may make through AVA.

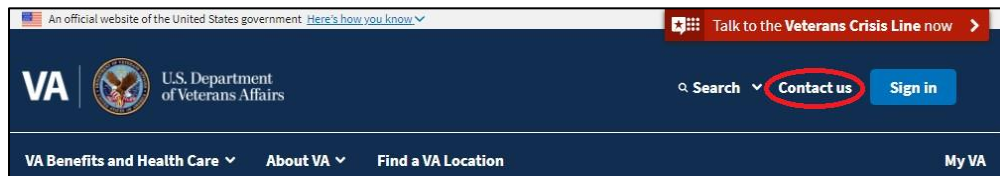
## User Access

Any member of the public can access the AVA portal to submit inquiries or comments to VA. This includes those who have verified their identity through a service such as ID.me, who may access additional features in the portal. To access the business dashboard, you will first have to log into AVA.

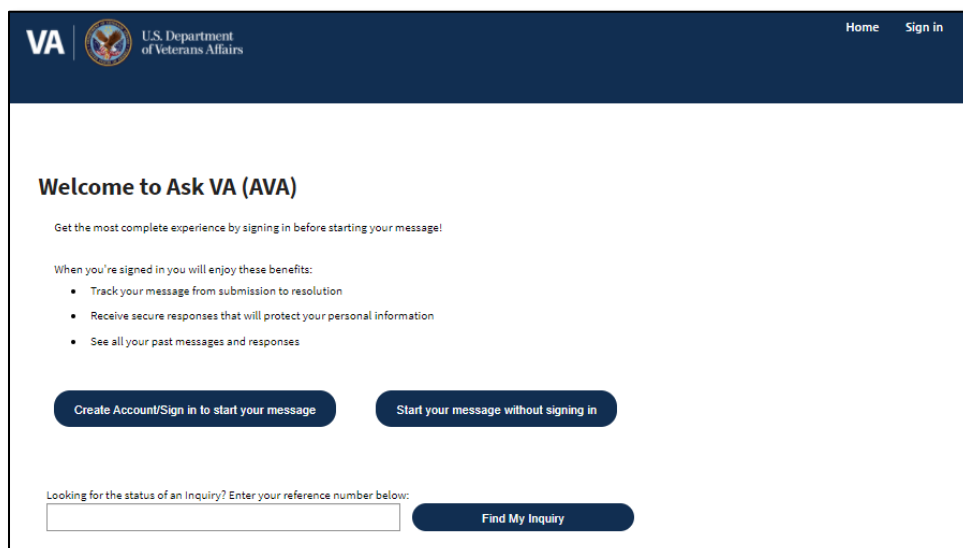
**Website:** <https://Ask.VA.gov>

## Navigation

The AVA website is available through the VA website [va.gov](http://va.gov). At the top of each VA.gov page is a **Contact us** hyperlink. Clicking this link takes you to the *Contact us* page.

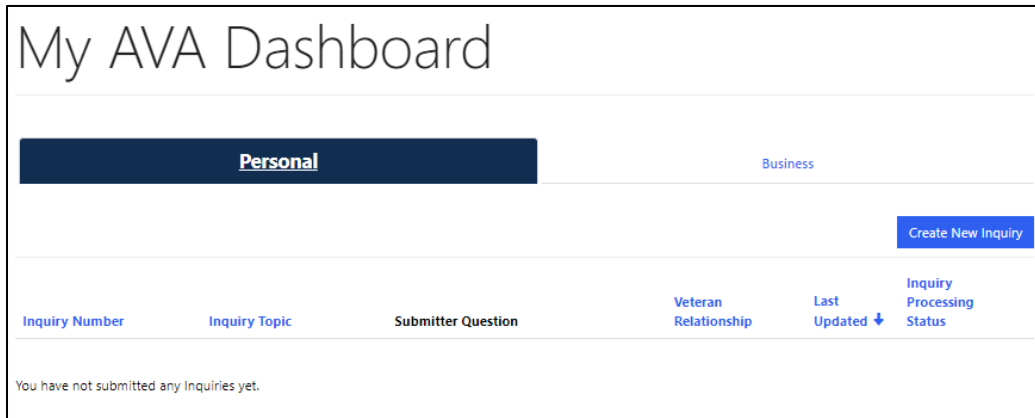


On the *Contact us* page, you can click on the link that states *Contact us online through Ask VA of the page*. The *Welcome to Ask VA (AVA)* page appears. You will be taken to the following page:

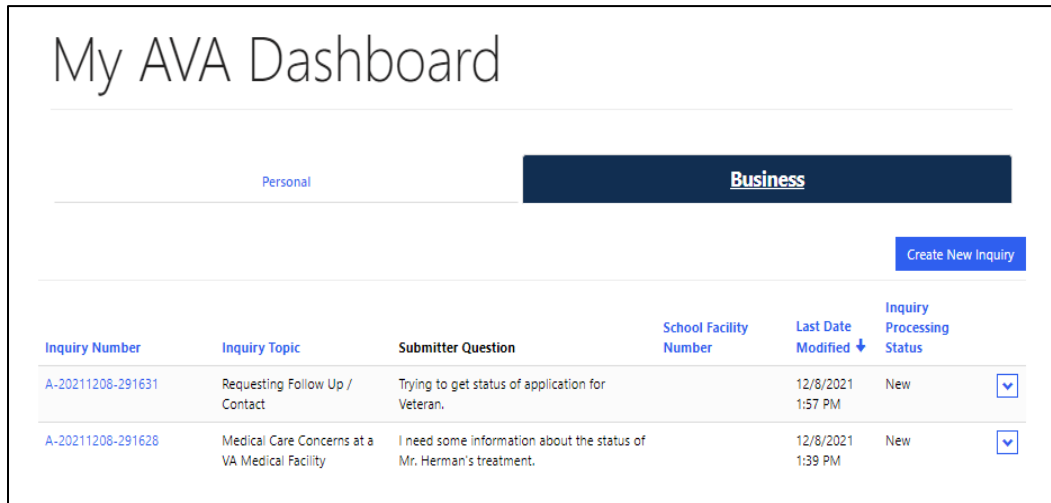


To access your AVA business dashboard, you must sign-in by taking the following steps:

1. Click **Create Account/Sign-in to start your message**. You will be directed to a page where you will choose the credential type you wish (ID.me, DS Logon, or My HealtheVet).
2. Sign-in using your selected credential and follow the prompts to complete signing-in. Once complete, the *My AVA Dashboard* page appears. If you have created an inquiry that has been identified with one of the business relationships, then your *My AVA Dashboard* will have two separated tabs: one for Business inquiries, and one for Personal inquiries. If this is the case, your *My AVA Dashboard* will default to the Personal Tab: It will look like this:

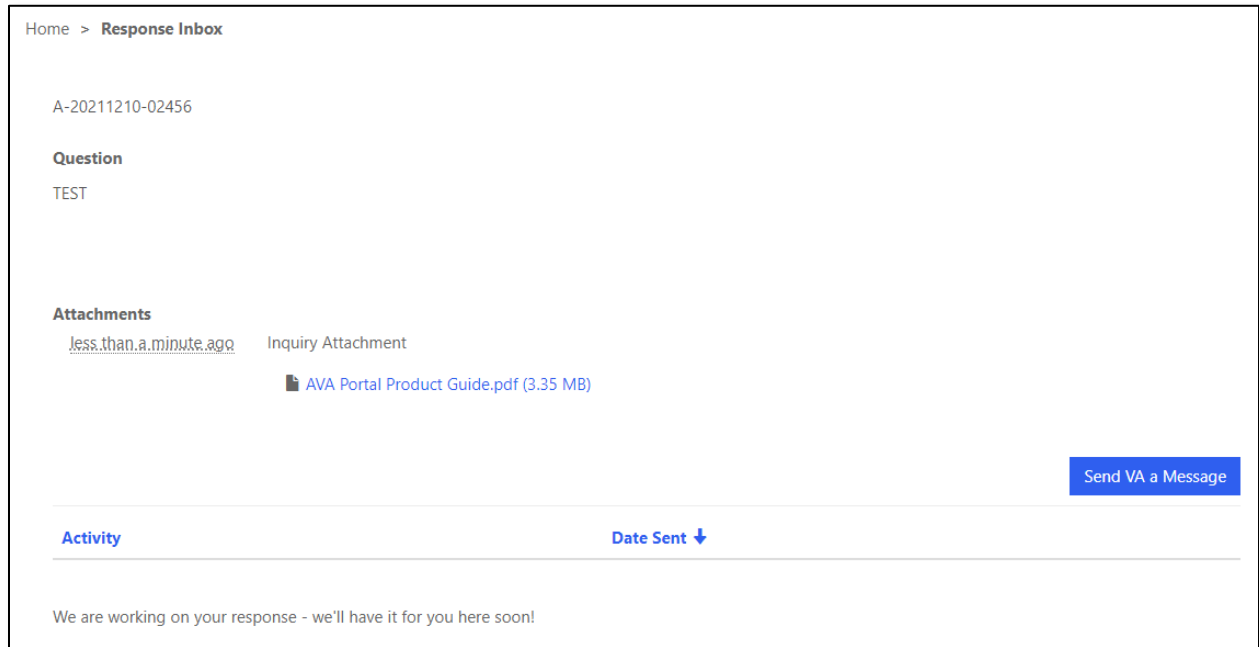


The **Business** tab will be displayed **only if** you have submitted at least one inquiry on behalf of someone else. Click on the **Business** tab to view those inquiries.



You can sort the data by clicking on each column name except for the *Submitter Question* column. If you click on the hyperlink of the number in the *Inquiry Number* field, the details of that inquiry appear. This page will show any response from VA staff to the inquiry.

If you'd like to send a message related to the inquiry, you can click **Send VA a Message**.



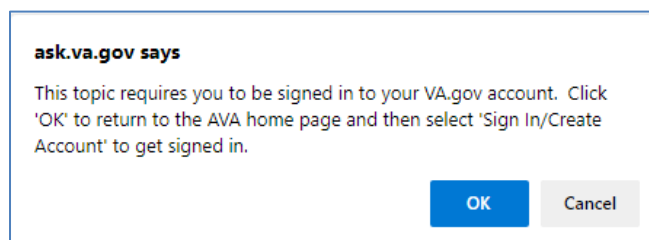
# Application Functionality

## Describing your Inquiry/Selecting Topics


The current functionality for submitting an inquiry is unchanged for any user that is NOT submitting under the GI Bill Category. When creating an inquiry, you will select a category and topic to describe the general subject matter of your inquiry. In some cases, you can further refine it by selecting a subtopic. Selecting certain categories, topics, or subtopics will cause additional fields to appear on the inquiry submittal screen.

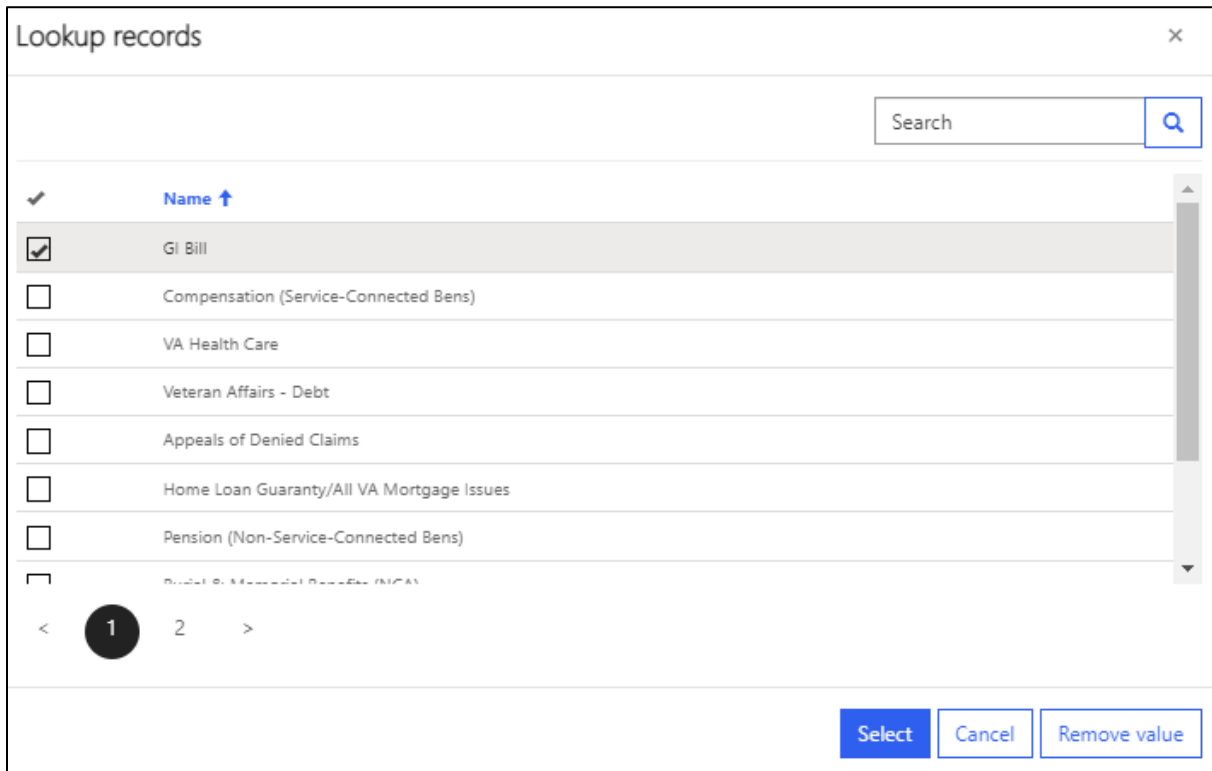
Selection of the category, topic, and subtopic allows the system to route your inquiry to the appropriate group within VA. Additionally, a well-crafted description helps to increase the likelihood that your inquiry will be routed correctly and the sooner you will get a response.

**Note:** Some selectable categories, such as **GI Bill**, require you to be signed-in with a verified account to submit your inquiry. If you select such a category while not signed-in, the *Sign-in Required* message appears. If this occurs, click **OK**. Then, either select a different category or sign into your verified account prior to completing your inquiry.



Once you are at the *New Inquiry* page, you can use the lookup windows to select the inquiry category, topic, and subtopic by taking the following steps:


1. Click the **magnifying glass**  icon at the right of the Category field. The *Lookup records* window for Category appears.
2. Select the checkbox for the category that best describes your inquiry, then click the **Select** button. The window closes and the selected category appears in the field.




<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Name ↑
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	GI Bill
<input type="checkbox"/>	Compensation (Service-Connected Bens)
<input type="checkbox"/>	VA Health Care
<input type="checkbox"/>	Veteran Affairs - Debt
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appeals of Denied Claims
<input type="checkbox"/>	Home Loan Guaranty/All VA Mortgage Issues
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pension (Non-Service-Connected Bens)
<input type="checkbox"/>	...


### Lookup Window Notes:

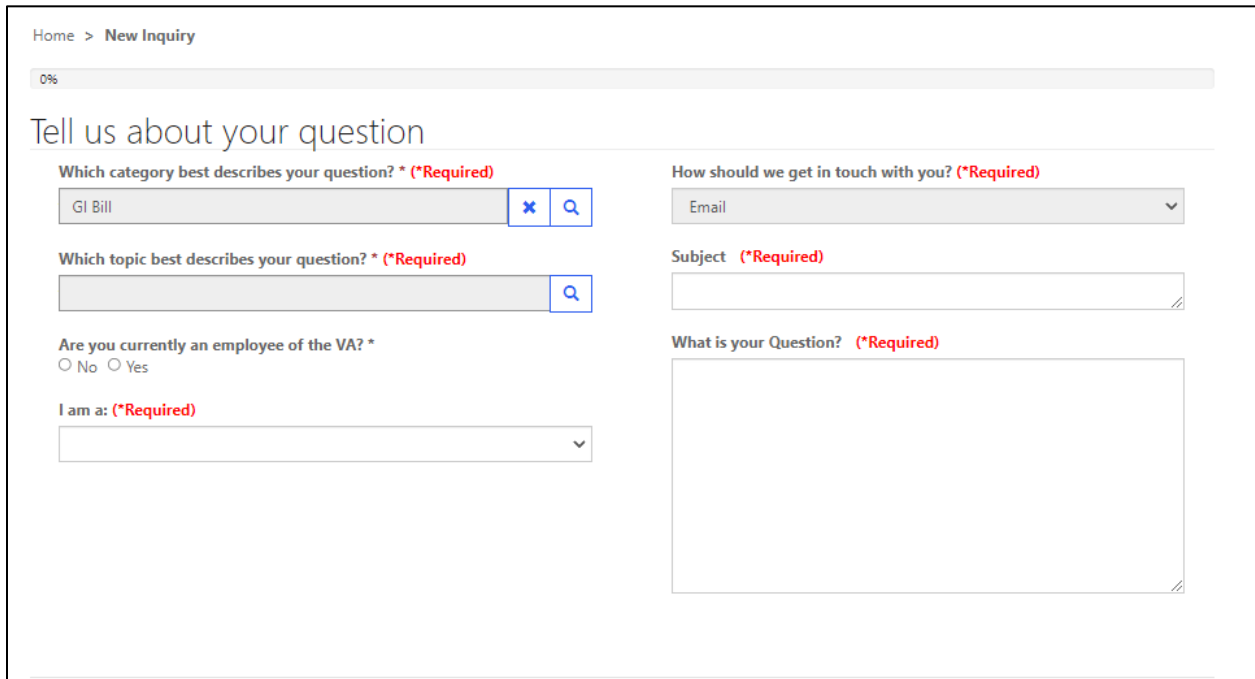
Clicking on a column header reverses the sort order of the items in the list.


Use the scrollbar on the right to see entries at the bottom of that page of the list. You will have to select the next page to see additional entries (using the page indicator or arrow ).

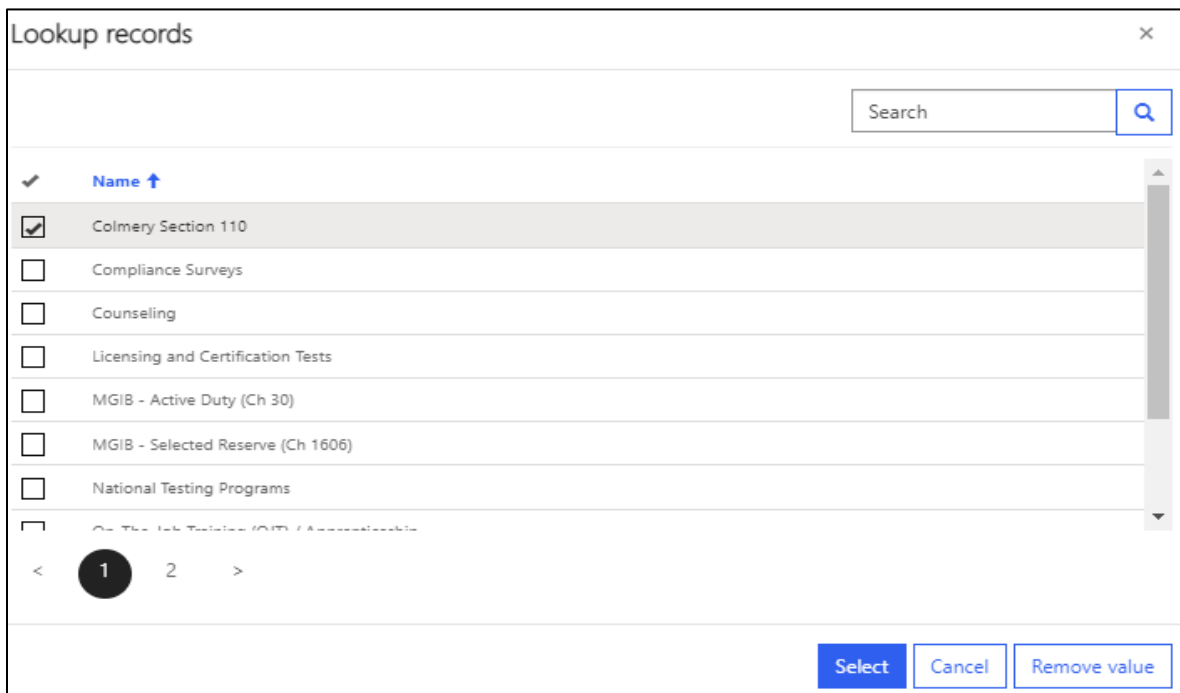
The page indicator  shows the number of pages of available selections. Click on the numbers or the arrows to navigate between pages.

You can also search for an entry using the *Search* field at the top. This field accepts asterisks (\*) as a wild card at any location in the text (i.e., if you type **\*ben\*** in the field, the search results show all entries that contain the letters **ben** in any part of the label. After typing your search text, click the magnifying glass and the results will appear in the list.

Note that when the category appears, the field also shows the **delete**  icon. Clicking this clears the field – you will have to use the *Lookup records* window to select a different category.

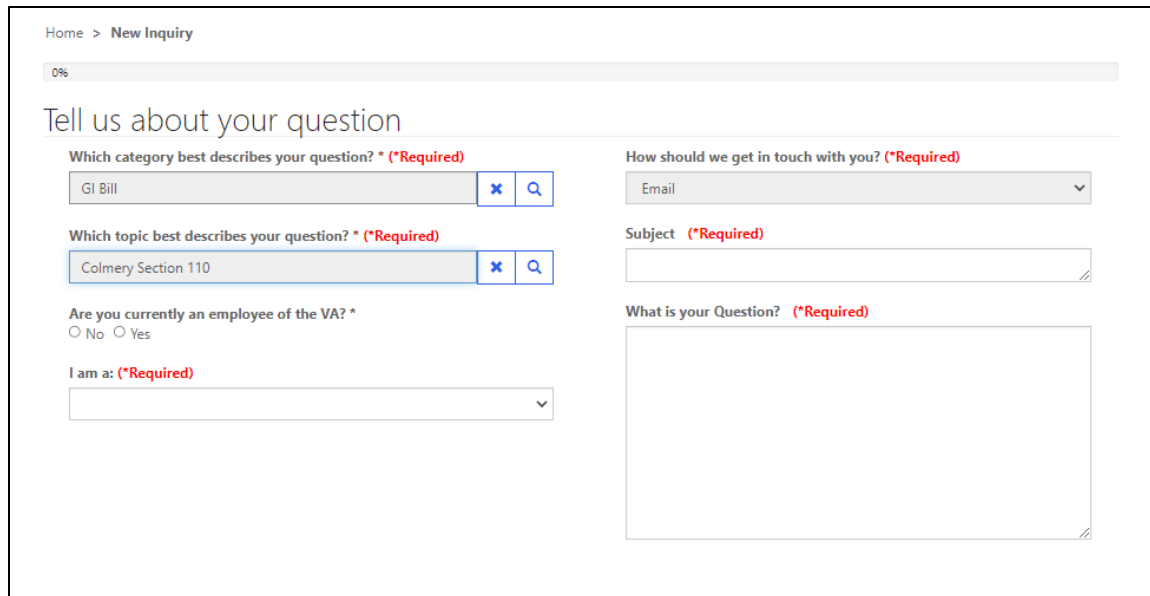


- Next, select a topic for your inquiry by clicking the **magnifying glass**  icon. The *Lookup records* window pops up displaying the available topics. The contents of this lookup window depend on which category you selected. If you change or delete the category, the list of topics will change.




4. Select the checkmark for the topic that best describes your inquiry, then click the **Select** button. The window closes and the selected topic appears in the field.

**Note:** If, and only if, a selected topic has subtopics, a *Which subtopic best describes your question?* field appears. This is a required field – continue with Step 5. If the field does not appear, then that topic has no subtopics, and you will not be required to choose a subtopic.





The screenshot shows a web form titled "New Inquiry" with a progress bar at 0%. The form is titled "Tell us about your question" and contains several required fields:

- Which category best describes your question? (\*Required)**: A dropdown menu with "GI Bill" selected. A magnifying glass icon is visible to the right.
- Which topic best describes your question? (\*Required)**: A dropdown menu with "Colmery Section 110" selected. A magnifying glass icon is visible to the right.
- Are you currently an employee of the VA? \***: Radio buttons for "No" and "Yes".
- I am a: (\*Required)**: A dropdown menu.
- How should we get in touch with you? (\*Required)**: A dropdown menu with "Email" selected.
- Subject (\*Required)**: A text input field.
- What is your Question? (\*Required)**: A large text area.


5. The *Which subtopic best describes your question?* field contents depend on the Category/Topic combination. You can click the **magnifying glass**  icon. The selection of some subtopics will result in additional required fields appearing.

## Creating a New Inquiry

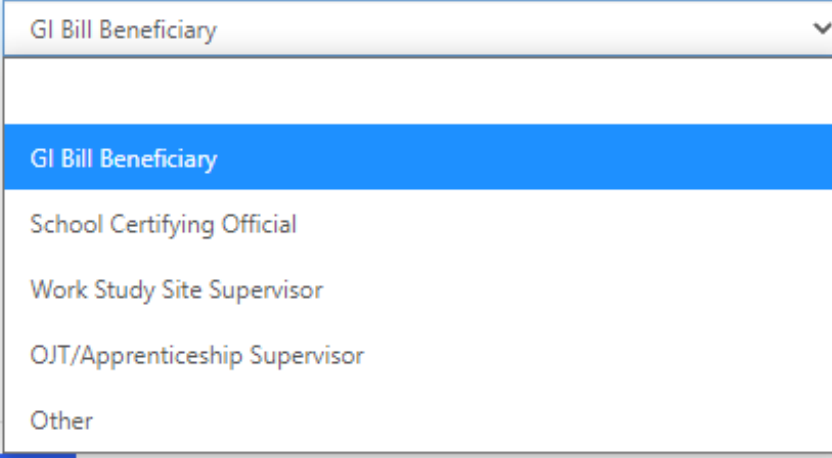
After signing-in and landing on the *New Inquiry* page, take the following steps:

1. Select a category describing your question in the first field by clicking the **magnifying glass**  icon. The *Lookup records* window pops up displaying the available categories.
2. Select the checkbox for the category that best describes your inquiry, then click the **Select** button. The window closes and the selected category appears in the field. In addition, the *Which topic best describes your question?* and *What is your question?* fields appear.
3. Select a topic for your inquiry by clicking the **magnifying glass**  icon. The *Lookup records* window pops up displaying the available topics. The contents of this lookup window depend on what category you selected. If you change the category (or delete it), the list of topics will change.
4. Select the checkmark for the topic that best describes your inquiry, then click the **Select** button. The window closes and the selected topic appears in the field.

**Note:** Depending on the Category/Topic combination selected, additional fields may appear. These additional fields displaying **(\*Required)** must be completed for the successful submission of your inquiry.

5. The *Which subtopic best describes your question?* field contents depend on the Category/Topic combination. If it appears (should not appear if the list is empty), click the **magnifying glass**  icon. The selection of some subtopics will result in additional required fields appearing.
6. Use the drop-down arrow in the *My inquiry is* field to select **I am a:** as the reason for the inquiry. The *I am a:* field (among others) appears.
7. Use the drop-down list in the *I am a* field to enter your relationship to the Veteran.  
**Note:** for GI Bill Inquiries you may select School Certifying Official, Work Study Site Supervisor, and OJT/Apprenticeship Supervisor.

**I am a: (\*Required)**



GI Bill Beneficiary

GI Bill Beneficiary

School Certifying Official

Work Study Site Supervisor

OJT/Apprenticeship Supervisor

Other

8. Type your subject in the *Subject* field. This is a free text field and should be a brief summary of the nature of your question.
9. Type your question in the *What is your Question?* field. This is a free text field. Include as much detail as possible to describe your question.



10. Click **Next**. The *Tell us about yourself* page will appear. This page should already contain information because you signed-in to create the inquiry. Please review and make sure the information is correct and all required fields are completed.

Home > New Inquiry

50%

### Tell us about yourself

First Name <small>(*Required)</small>	Middle Name/Initial	Last Name <small>(*Required)</small>
<input type="text" value="DEANNA"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="LUNA"/>
Preferred Name	Pronouns I Use	Suffix
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value=""/>
Daytime Phone <small>(*Required)</small>	Email Address <small>(*Required)</small>	Re-enter Email Address <small>(*Required)</small>
<input type="text" value="540-341-3413"/>	<input type="text" value="dluna@mail.com"/>	<input type="text" value="dluna@mail.com"/>

11. Click **Next**. The system indicates that it is processing, then the *Review your information* page appears.

### Review your information

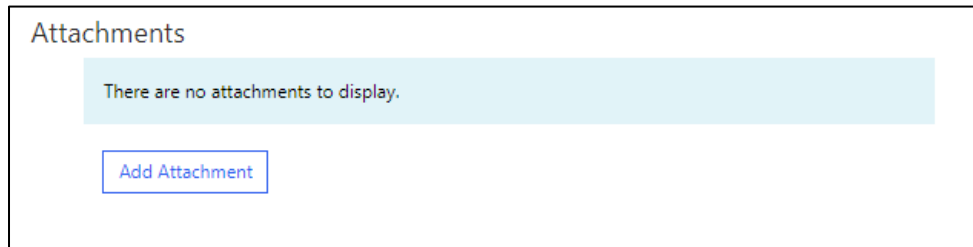
Review your information before submitting. If you need to make any changes please click on the previous button at the bottom of the page

#### Tell us the reason you are contacting us

Which category best describes your question? *	How should we get in touch with you?
<input type="text" value="GI Bill"/>	<input type="text" value="Email"/>
Which topic best describes your question? *	Subject
<input type="text" value="Colmery Section 110"/>	<input type="text" value="Test"/>
Are you currently an employee of VA?	What is your Question?
<input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="text" value="Test"/>
Tell us the reason you're contacting us?	
<input type="text" value="Question"/>	
My inquiry is:	
<input type="text" value="A general question"/>	
State of School	
<input type="text" value="Illinois"/>	

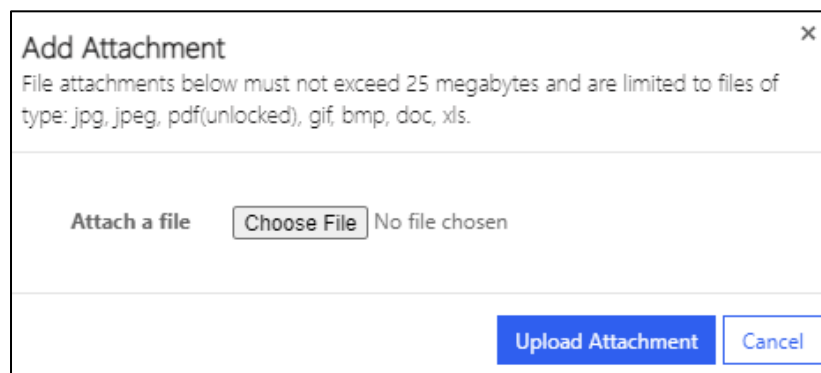
# Attaching Supporting Documents

In some cases, you can upload files that might help explain your inquiry. Not all topics allow attachments. If your inquiry category allows attachments, and you wish to upload a file, the **Add Attachment** button will appear at the bottom of the *Review Your Inquiry* page (the final page prior to submitting your inquiry).

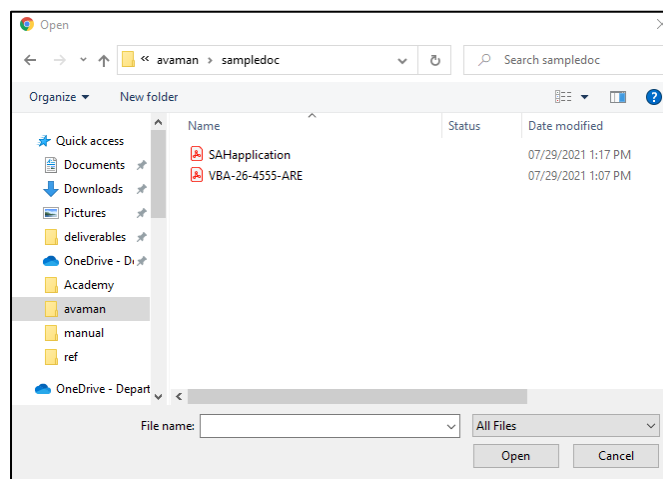


To attach a file:

1. Click **Add Attachment**. The *Add Attachment* window appears.

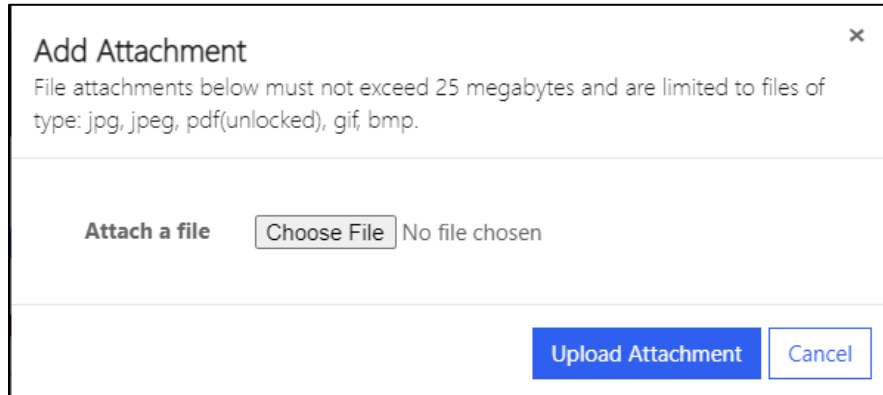


2. Click **Choose File**. A file explorer window appears.



3. Navigate to the file you want to upload, then select the file.

4. Click **Open**. The file window closes, and the selected file name appears in the *Add Note* window.



5. Click **Upload Attachment**. The window closes and the file appears on the inquiry page.

**Note:** The file will be submitted/uploaded when you submit the inquiry. If you do not submit the inquiry, the file will not be uploaded.

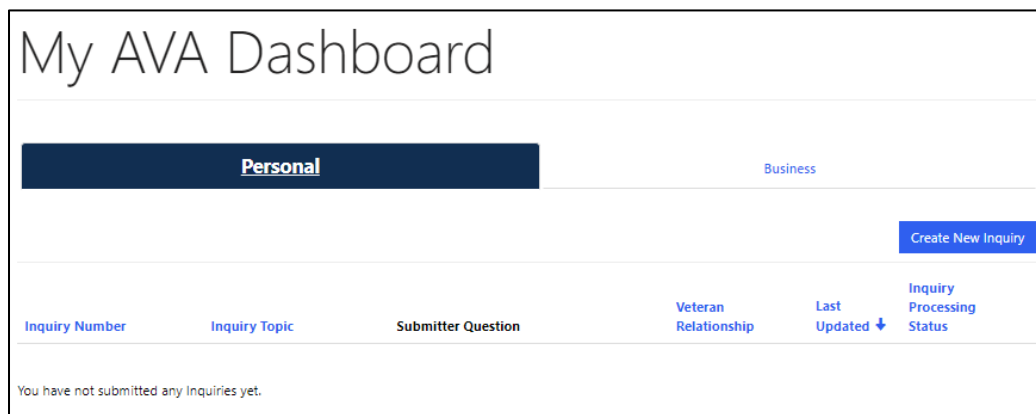
### Important Differences to Note Prior to Submittal

Depending on your category/topic selection, you may have the option to upload an attachment. If the option is available, the *Attachments* section will appear, and you can upload a file. If the section does not appear, you cannot upload an attachment.

## Checking Inquiry Status

To check the status of your inquiry:

1. Navigate to the [Welcome to Ask VA \(AVA\)](#) page and click **Create Account/Sign in to start your message**.
2. Follow the sign-in process. When completed, the *My AVA Dashboard* page appears displaying any inquiries you have submitted. It will look like this:



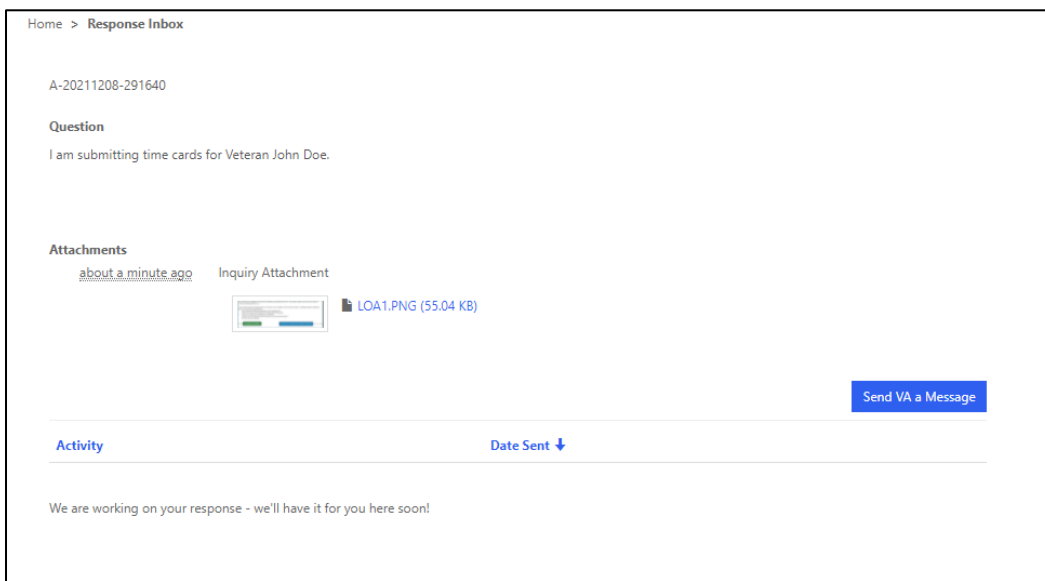
**Note:** If the **Personal** tab displays any inquiry that should be a Business inquiry, send an inquiry under the same category/topic to have the inquiries updated. Include the inquiry number in your description/question.

3. Click on the **Business** tab to display your business inquiries.

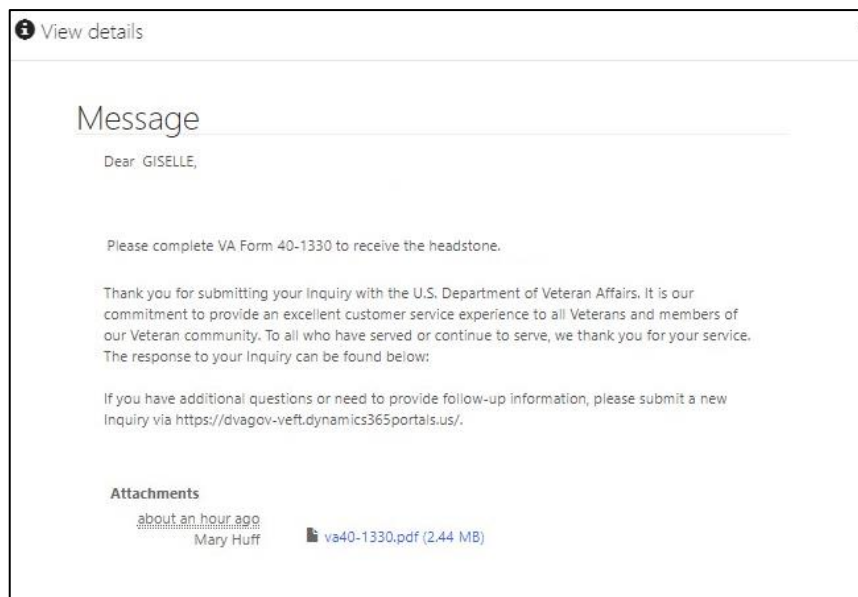
This page lists the identification number, topic, and question for each inquiry submitted. It also indicates the last date on which the inquiry was modified and the status.

4. Click on the hyperlinked number in the *Inquiry Num* column. The *Response Inbox* page appears with details of any messages sent by VA staff.

**Note:** You can also reach this page by clicking the drop-down arrow at the end of the row and selecting **View details**.

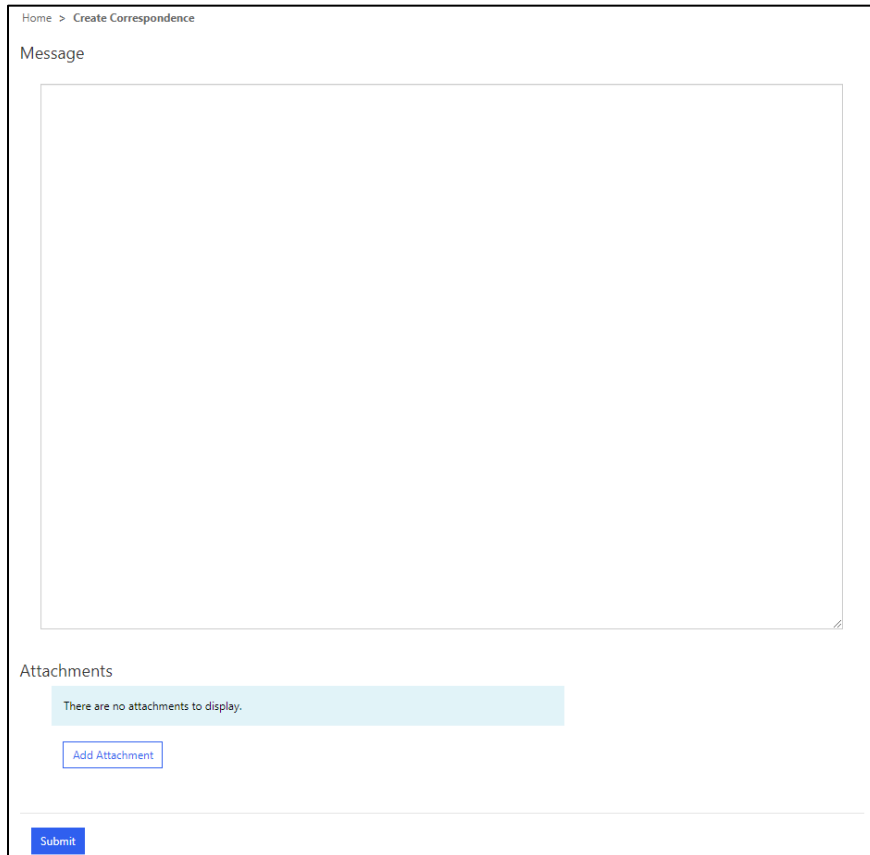


5. Click the **Response from VA** to read the response. The *View Details* message appears.



Note that if the VA included an attachment, it would appear at the bottom of the page.

6. Once you have finished reading the message, click the **X** in the top right corner of the message. The message closes and you return to the *Response Inbox* page.
7. If you want to provide additional details or other response to the message, click **Send VA a Message**. The *Create Reply* window appears.



The screenshot shows a web interface for creating correspondence. At the top, it says "Home > Create Correspondence". Below that is a "Message" section with a large, empty text area. Underneath the message area is an "Attachments" section. A light blue box contains the text "There are no attachments to display." Below this box is a button labeled "Add Attachment". At the bottom of the form is a blue "Submit" button.

8. Type your information in the *Message* box, then click **Submit**. The window closes and your response now appears on the *Response Inbox* page for the inquiry.
9. Once you have finished, you can click **My Dashboard** at the top of the page to return to the *My AVA Dashboard* page. You can also close your browser or navigate to another page.