

## DRC PMC Quick Reference Guide

### Decision Ready Claims (DRC) Summary

The DRC Initiative will expand to include Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) claims effective December 11, 2017. This expansion will only address original DIC claims submitted by a surviving spouse where the Veteran's death certificate lists at least one of his or her service-connected conditions; or, he or she was rated 100% disabled due to service-connected conditions (including entitlement to Individual Unemployability) for at least 10 years prior to death.

### General Requirements for claimant participation in the DRC Initiative

- Claimants must be represented by an accredited Veterans Service Organization (VSO)
  - A completed and signed POA form must be of record in VBMS
  - DIC DRCs must be submitted by an accredited VSO representative on behalf of the surviving spouse. Accredited VSOs must use the DRC Direct Upload portal to submit the DRC electronically
- Claimants must submit the claim using the most current version of VA Form 21P-534EZ, *Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits*
- Claimants must simultaneously submit all evidence and/or documentation
  - All other required documents (i.e. death certificates) are still applicable regarding DIC claims processing and must also be submitted if not of record

### DRC Exclusions

The types of claims and submissions that are excluded from DRC Processing under the DRC Initiative, specific to the PMCs, are as follows:

<b>If the DRC type is....DIC</b>	<b>Then exclude any of the following from DRC processing:</b>
For the most up-to-date information on the DRC Exclusions, refer to M21-1, Part III, subpart I, Chapter 3, Section C.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• in-service death</li><li>• Parents DIC</li><li>• accrued benefits</li><li>• burial benefits*, and/or spousal aid and attendance and/or housebound benefits</li></ul>

**\*Note:** PMCs are only able to accept burial claims that come in with a DRC eligible DIC Claim.  
**Important:** All claims for pension benefits (including both Veterans Pension and Survivors Pension) must be excluded from DRC processing.

### Excluding Claims from DRC Processing

Follow the steps below to exclude a claim from DRC processing:

<b>Step</b>	<b>Action</b>
1	Use the <a href="#">Letter Creator tool</a> to send the claimant an appropriate

## DRC PMC Quick Reference Guide

	version of the <i>DRC Exclusion Letter</i> , specifying the reason(s) for exclusion.
2	Remove the <i>Decision Ready Claim</i> special issue indicator from any contention(s) with which it may be associated.
3	Continue processing the claim in accordance with standard procedures.

**Note:** Claims Assistants (CAs) and Veterans Service Representatives (VSRs) should utilize Letter creator to send notification to the claimants. All final DRC Exclusion letters should be uploaded into VBMS after review activity in accordance with CPKM.

### *How to Use Letter Creator*

- Ensure VBMS is active/open before launching Letter Creator
- Proceed to [Compensation Intranet Site](#), then go to [Rating Job Aids](#)
- Double-click [Letter Creator](#) (under VA References)
  - Input Claimant Information

The screenshot shows the 'Letter Creator' interface. At the top, there are two dropdown menus: 'Choose the Area:' which is set to 'VSC', and 'Choose Type of:' which is set to 'DRC Exclusion Letter'. Below these is a section titled 'DRC Exclusion Letter' with the instruction 'Select reasons for exclusion:'. There are seven checkboxes with corresponding text:
 

- Insufficient exam
- Missing exam
- New issue/evidence received after DRC submission
- Additional records needed to decide
- There was already a pending rating End Product
- Claimed condition(s) on the DRC exclusion list
- Other

- ← Select VSC as the Area
- ← Select DRC Exclusion Letter as the Type
- ← Select Appropriate Exclusion Reason

- Spell check generated letter to ensure accuracy
- Follow your local PMC Procedures for saving the generated letter in the proper location
- Upload the final notification letter into VBMS

**Reference:** For more information on the Letter Creator tool, see the [Letter Creator User Guide](#)

### *Important Reminders for RVSRs*

- Adjudicate DIC as normal if DRC DIC claim is received in your daily workload
- If review of the claim reveals that it should have been excluded from DRC processing, then follow the instructions in the table below:

## DRC PMC Quick Reference Guide

<b>If the DRC submission ...</b>	<b>Then ...</b>
contains sufficient evidence to grant decisions on DIC claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prepare a rating decision addressing all contended issues, and</li> <li>• route the claim to the promulgation and authorization activity.</li> </ul>
does not contain sufficient evidence to grant decisions on DIC claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prepare a deferral in accordance with standard procedures</li> <li>• append the <i>Decision Ready Claim – Deferred</i> special issue indicator to contention, and</li> <li>• route the claim to the development activity for additional processing and exclusion in accordance with M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 3.D.3.b.</li> </ul>

### *Important Reminders for VSRs and Authorization Activity*

- Never send 5103 letters
- Ensure all letters are uploaded into VBMS
- Follow DRC exclusion procedures if claim is not DRC eligible
- Complete development if directed from an RVSR or local PMC Management
- Send general DIC notification letters if DIC is granted
- Review systems compliance

### Timeline for DRC Processing

<i>If the Activity is...</i>	<i>Then the timeliness target will be...</i>
Intake Processing	Within one day of receipt
Rating	Within two days of RFD Status
Award promulgation/authorization	Within three days of generation of the Rating Decision

### Decision Ready Claims DIC References:

[CPKM, M21-1, Part III, Subpart I, Chapter 3, Section D-Processing Decision Ready Claims \(DRCs\)](#)

[CPKM, M21-1, Part III, Subpart I, Chapter 3, Section C- General Information About the Decision Ready Claim \(DRC\) Initiative](#)