Pension and Fiduciary Service

PMC VSR Advanced Core Course Phase 6: Processing Claims

Lesson 9: Process New or Reconsidered Claims

Trainee Guide

May 4, 2017

Version 1.0

Process New or Reconsidered Claims

Lesson Overview

| Topic | Description |
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| Time Estimate: | 6 hours |
| Purpose of the Lesson: | This lesson is part of the entry-level course for PMC VSRs. The purpose of this lesson is to train PMC VSRs to process new or reconsidered claims through demonstration, practice, and feedback. |
| Prerequisite Training Requirements: | Prior to taking the Process New or Reconsidered Claims lesson, you must complete the entry-level course Phases 1–5, and Phase 6, lessons 1–8. (Refer to the **Master Course Map** learning aid for a list of lessons.) |
| Target Audience: | This lesson is for entry-level PMC VSRs. |
| Lesson References: | * **Master Course Map** learning aid * **M21-1 I.1.A.3.b (Refraining From or Discontinuing Assistance)** * M21-1 I.i.B.2.a (Section 5103 Notice for Requests to Reopen a Previously Denied Claim) * M21-1 III.ii.2.B.1.b (Requirements for a Complete Claim Received on or After March 24, 2015) * M21-1 III.ii.2.F.1.a (Definition: Request for Reconsideration) * M21-1 III.iv.2.B.3.c (Section 5103 Requirements) * M21-1 V.iii.1.J.4.d (Submitting a New Claim After Denial for Excessive Net Worth) * M21-4 Appendix B (End Product Codes and Work-Rate Standards for Quantitative Measurements) * **Processing New or Reconsidered Claims Checklist** job aid * See *Lesson 9: Appendix A* for references introduced in earlier lessons |
| Technical Competencies: | * Program Benefits and Eligibility (PMC VSR) * Processing Claims (PMC VSR) * VBA Applications (PMC VSR) * Income Counting and Net Worth |
| Knowledge Check: | Phase 6, Lesson 9 Knowledge Check: Process New or Reconsidered Claims |
| Lesson Objectives: | Process a new or reconsidered claim.   * Recognize indicators of new or reconsidered claims. * Confirm claim characteristics assigned by claims assistant. * Determine if claim may be denied without development. * Determine if evidence is sufficient to process new or reconsidered claims. * Apply correct development actions for the evidence/information missing from the claim. * Determine entitlement to new or reconsidered claims. * Determine if claim should be submitted to rating activity. * Decide the award action for new or reconsidered claims. * Create decision notice. * Submit the claim to the Authorizer. |
| What You Need: | * Trainee guide * **Master Course Map** learning aid * Access to VBA intranet * Access to CPKM * Pen and paper * Whiteboard/flip chart with different colored markers * Access to the following systems:   + SHARE   + VBMS   + MAP-D   + VETSNET * Access to the **Processing New or Reconsidered Claims Checklist** job aid from VSR Assistant * *Lesson 9: Appendix A* for other job aids and references |

| PowerPoint Slides | Notes |
| --- | --- |
| **Lesson 9: Process New or Reconsidered Claims** |  |
| You Are Here  Vertical flowchart showing the six phases of the PMC VSR course and highlighting Phase 6. From the top, the phases are: Phase 1, Mandatory Training; Phase 2, PMC VSR Foundation; Phase 3, PMC VSR Resources; Phase 4, Introduction to Pension Management; Phase 5, Stages; and Phase 6, Processing Claims. |  |
| **Technical Competencies**   * Program Benefits and Eligibility (PMC VSR) * Processing Claims (PMC VSR) * VBA Applications (PMC VSR) * Income Counting and Net Worth |  |
| Scenario—New or Reconsidered Claim  Mr. Jacob Danforth first applied for benefits on 06/14/2014 but is denied for excessive income in a decision notice dated 08/03/2014. On 02/21/2015, Mr. Danforth submits additional income and expense information to the VA. |  |
| Why It Matters!  Accurately determining whether a claim is new or a claim for reconsideration affects appeal dates as well as entitlement dates. |  |
| Lesson Objectives (1 of 2)   * Process new or reconsidered claims.   + Recognize indicators of new or reconsidered claims.   + Confirm claim characteristics assigned by claims assistant.   + Determine if claim may be denied without development.   + Determine if evidence is sufficient to process new or reconsidered claims.   + Apply the correct development actions for the information/evidence missing from the claim. |  |
| Lesson Objectives (2 of 2)   * + Determine entitlement to new or reconsidered claims.   + Determine if claim should be submitted to rating activity.   + Decide the award action for new or reconsidered claims.   + Prepare a decision notice for new or reconsidered claims.   + Submit the claim to the Authorizer. |  |
| Knowledge Check  Vertical flowchart showing the six phases of the PMC VSR course with the corresponding posttests. Phase 6 Knowledge Check is highlighted. From the top, the phases are: Phase 1, Mandatory Training; Phase 2, PMC VSR Foundation; Phase 3, PMC VSR Resources; Phase 4, Introduction to Pension Management; Phase 5, Stages; and Phase 6, Processing Claims. |  |
| Distinguishing New or Reconsidered Claims (1 of 2)   * **Reconsidered**—submitted **within** 1 year of decision of denied claim (the appeal period) * **New**—submitted 1 year or more **after** decision is final for prior claim * EP Codes: 127, 137, 165, 167, 150/157, 297 |  |
| Distinguishing New or Reconsidered Claims (2 of 2)  PMC VSRs should do the following to distinguish between **new** claims or **reconsidered** claims:   * Confirm the EP is not for an original claim * Check the date of decision notice, date of claim, or date of development letter of previously denied claim to determine time limits * Look in eFolder at evidence and letters for previously denied claim |  |
| Activity—Distinguishing New or Reconsidered Claims   * Instructions:   + Access CPKM to use M21-1 to complete the activity.   + Work in assigned group.   + Read the scenarios from the worksheet.   + Determine for each scenario whether it is a new or reconsidered claim.   + Record your answers on the worksheet provided.   + Select one person to present your group’s findings. * Time allowed: 10 min. |  |

**Activity—Distinguishing New or Reconsidered Claims**

In your groups, read the scenarios. Determine for each scenario whether it is a new or reconsidered claim. Write your answers in the space provided.

Scenario 1

A claimant who applied on 5/12/2013 was denied Veterans pension. The decision notice dated 8/9/2013 explained that the claimant was not entitled because medical evidence submitted was not sufficient to warrant a P&T rating decision. The claimant submitted additional medical evidence to the VA on 1/19/2014.

Scenario 2

The VA received a claim on 4/23/2015 for which a development letter was sent on 6/03/15. The claim was later denied for failure to prosecute (FTP) on 7/15/2015. The decision notice included a 5103 notice time limit. The claimant later submitted the requested evidence on 8/01/2016.

Scenario 3

On 1/21/2015 a claimant was denied for benefits for bar to net worth. The claimant resubmitted new net worth information on 1/10/16.

Scenario 4

A surviving spouse was denied survivors pension on 10/11/2013 because she had remarried. The claimant submits additional marital history on 1/08/14 as evidence for her marriage to Veteran.

Scenario 5

On 1/15/2016 a claimant was denied for pension with SMP for bar to net worth. The claimant resubmitted another application for pension with SMP benefits with new net worth information on 2/04/17.

| PowerPoint Slides | Notes |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity—Distinguishing New or Reconsidered Claims Answers (1 of 2)**   * Scenario 1 * Scenario 2 |  |
| Activity—Distinguishing New or Reconsidered Claims Answers (2 of 2)   * Scenario 3 * Scenario 4 * Scenario 5 |  |
| **Overview of Processing New or Reconsidered Claims**   * Many of the steps required to process new or reconsidered claims are done simultaneously by PMC VSRs in the field. * For the purpose of instruction, the steps are broken out individually. |  |
| **Lesson Overview**   * **Demonstration—Instructor processes a claim from start to finish with opportunities for questions.** * **Guided Practice—Trainees process a claim with questions and feedback/remediation.** |  |
| **Demonstration Claim 1—Process New or Reconsidered Claims**  Indicates a demonstration should be performed   * **Demonstration Claim 1—**   + **{Name}**   + **{Other information}** |  |
| **Claim 1—Recognize Indicators of a New or Reconsidered Claim**  Indicates a demonstration should be performed   * Prescribed VA forms, as needed * EP 127, 137, 165, 167, 150/157, 297 |  |
| **Claim 1—Confirm Claim Characteristics Assigned by Claims Assistant**  Indicates a demonstration should be performed |  |
| **Refraining From or Discontinuing Assistance**  M21-1 I.1.A.3.b (Refraining From or Discontinuing Assistance)   * Lack of qualifying service, Veteran status, or legal eligibility * Claims that are inherently incredible or clearly lack merit * Request for a benefit to which the claimant is not entitled as a matter of law |  |
| **Claim 1—Screen Claim for Lack of Eligibility (to Determine if Claim may be Denied without Development)**  Indicates a demonstration should be performed |  |
| **Claim 1—Identify Missing Information/Evidence**  Indicates a demonstration should be performed |  |
| **Claim 1—Develop for Missing Information/Evidence**  Indicates a demonstration should be performed |  |
| **Claim 1—Determine Entitlement for New or Reconsidered Claims**  Indicates a demonstration should be performed |  |
| **Claim 1—Determine if Claim Should Be Submitted to Rating Activity**  Indicates a demonstration should be performed |  |
| **Claim 1—Decide the Award Action for New or Reconsidered Claims**  Indicates a demonstration should be performed |  |
| **Claim 1—Prepare a Decision Notice for New or Reconsidered Claims**  Indicates a demonstration should be performed |  |
| **Claim 1—Submit the Claim to the Authorizer**  Indicates a demonstration should be performed |  |
| **Take Credit in ASPEN**  Indicates a demonstration should be performed |  |
| **Guided Practice Exercise Overview (1 of 3)**   * Instructions:   + Process Claim 2 from beginning to end.   + Use the job aids, references, and systems available.   + Select a partner before beginning the exercise to confer with after completing each step individually.   + Consult with instructors for assistance.   + Be prepared to discuss your results with the class.   + Take credit in ASPEN at the completion of the exercise. |  |
| **Guided Practice Exercise Overview (2 of 3)**   * This exercise includes the following parts of the claim process:   + Recognize indicators of a new or reconsidered claim   + Confirm claim characteristics assigned by claims assistant   + Screen for lack of eligibility   + Identify missing information/evidence   + Develop for missing information/evidence |  |
| **Guided Practice Exercise Overview (3 of 3)**   * + Determine entitlement to new or reconsidered claims   + Determine if claim should be submitted to rating activity   + Decide the award action   + Prepare a decision notice   + Submit the claim to the Authorizer |  |
| **Guided Practice Exercise Claim 2—Process New or Reconsidered Claims**   * Guided Practice Exercise Claim 2:   + {Name}   + {Other information} |  |
| **Claim 2—Recognize Indicators for a New or Reconsidered Claim**   * Instructions:   + Perform the steps to recognize indicators of the claim for Claim 2.   + Use the job aids, references, and systems available.   + Confer with your partner.   + Be prepared to discuss your results with the class. * Time allowed: 5 minutes |  |
| **Claim 2—Confirm Claim Characteristics Assigned by Claims Assistant**   * Instructions:   + Perform the steps to confirm claim characteristics assigned by claims assistant for Claim 2.   + Use the job aids, references, and systems available.   + Confer with your partner.   + Be prepared to discuss your results with the class. * Time allowed: 15 minutes |  |
| **Claim 2—Screen Claim for Lack of Eligibility (to Determine if Claim may be Denied without Development)**   * Instructions:   + Perform the steps to screen claim for lack of eligibility for Claim 2.   + Use the job aids, references, and systems available.   + Confer with your partner.   + Be prepared to discuss your results with the class. * Time allowed: 15 minutes |  |
| **Claim 2—Identify Missing Information/Evidence (1 of 2)**   * Instructions:   + Perform the steps to identify missing information/evidence for Claim 2.   + Use the job aids, references, and systems available.   + Confer with your partner.   + Be prepared to discuss your results with the class. * Time allowed: 15 minutes |  |
| **Claim 2—Identify Missing Information/Evidence (2 of 2)**  **What information/evidence may require development for Claim 2** |  |
| ****Claim 2—Develop for Missing Information/Evidence****   * Instructions:   + Perform the steps to develop for missing information/evidence for Claim 2.   + Use the job aids, references, and systems available.   + Trade development letters with your partner.   + Discuss differences in the letters. * Time allowed: 45 minutes |  |
| ****Claim 2—Determine Entitlement (1 of 2)****   * Instructions:   + Perform the steps to determine entitlement to benefits for Claim 2.   + Use the job aids, references, and systems available.   + Confer with your partner.   + Be prepared to discuss your results with the class.   + Time allowed: 25 minutes |  |
| ****Claim 2—Determine Entitlement (2 of 2)****   * Is Claim 2 claimant entitled in the following areas? What evidence supports your conclusions?   + Veteran status   + Dependency   + Income and net worth, if applicable |  |
| **Claim 2—Determine If Claim Should Be Submitted to Rating Activity**   * Instructions:   + Perform the steps to **determine if the claim should be submitted for rating** for Claim 2.   + If so, perform the steps to submit the claim.   + Use the job aids, references, and systems available.   + Confer with your partner.   + Be prepared to discuss your results with the class. * Time allowed: 15 minutes |  |
| **Claim 2—Decide the Award Action for New or Reconsidered Claims**   * Instructions:   + Perform the steps to decide the award action for Claim 2.   + Use the job aids, references, and systems available.   + Confer with your partner.   + Be prepared to discuss your results with the class. * Time allowed: 45 minutes |  |
| **Claim 2—Prepare a Decision Notice for New or Reconsidered Claims**   * Instructions:   + Perform the steps to prepare the decision notice for Claim 2.   + Use the job aids, references, and systems available.   + Confer with your partner to assess each other’s decision notice.   + Ask for guidance from the instructor if you identify discrepancies. * Time allowed: 20 minutes |  |
| **Claim 2—Submit the Claim to the Authorizer**   * Instructions:   + Finalize notes for Claim 2 and save completed work in appropriate locations for review by Authorizer.   + Use the job aids, references, and systems available. * Time allowed: 15 minutes |  |
| **Questions?**  This icon prompts you to ask trainees a discussion question or to ask trainees if they have any questions before proceeding with instruction. |  |
| **Lesson Summary (1 of 3)**  What are the main tasks a PMC VSR must accomplish to process new or reconsidered claims? |  |
| **Lesson Summary (2 of 3)** |  |
| Lesson Summary (3 of 3) |  |
| **What’s Next?**  Knowledge Check: Process New or Reconsidered Claims |  |