



PENSION AND FIDUCIARY SERVICE

PMC VSR Advanced Core Course
Phase 5: Stages of a Claim
Part 4: Prepare Decision Notice

Prepare the Decision Notice Knowledge Check

Appendix B: Decision Notice
Evaluation and Remediation Checklist

May 18, 2017

Version 1.0

Prepare the Decision Notice Knowledge Check

Appendix B

Decision Notice Evaluation and Remediation Checklist

Decision Notice Letter Criteria for Catherine Abel Claim	Enter "X" if Criterion Met	Remediation for Unmet Criterion
<p>Avoided using VA jargon to include abbreviations with no accompanying definitions.</p> <p>Note: Determine whether this criterion is met as you review the trainee's PCGL decision notice.</p>		<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.e. (Guidelines for Preparing a Decision Notice) and then Reader Focused Writing (RFW) Manual, avoid using jargon. All acronyms and abbreviations must be defined.</p> <p>Undefined jargon may confuse the reader of the message conveyed.</p>
<p>Avoided use of headings that are all in caps.</p> <p>Note: Determine whether this criterion is met as you review the trainee's PCGL decision notice.</p>		<p>In accordance with the RFW Manual, heading should be in upper and lower case (i.e., Title Case).</p>
<p>Created one decision Notice letter for the grant of Veterans Pension and denial of child dependency.</p>		<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.d. (Requirement to Use a Single Decision Notice), a single decision notice is used to notify a claimant of a VA decision, even if the decision involves both an award and a denial of benefits.</p>
<p>Communicated the decision VA made for Veterans Pension.</p>		<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.b. (Decision Notice Requirements), prepare the decision notice that informs the claimant of the decision that VA made.</p> <p>The decision notifies the claimant whether claimant will receive the benefit.</p>

Prepare the Decision Notice Knowledge Check

Appendix B

Decision Notice Letter Criteria for Catherine Abel Claim	Enter "X" if Criterion Met	Remediation for Unmet Criterion
Communicated the decision VA made for denying dependency of a child.		In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.b. (Decision Notice Requirements), prepare the decision notice that informs the claimant of the decision that VA made.
Indicated the monthly rate of payment for Veterans Pension		<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.b. (Decision Notice Requirements), when VA grants entitlement to a benefit, the decision notice must also notify the claimant of the monthly rate of payment.</p> <p>This information notifies the claimant of the monthly amount he/she should receive. If claimant does not receive the amount provided in the decision notice letter, this may indicate a discrepancy.</p>
Indicated the effective date of entitlement for Veterans Pension		<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.b. (Decision Notice Requirements), when VA grants entitlement to a benefit, the decision notice must also notify the claimant of effective date of entitlement.</p> <p>The effective date notifies the claimant when he/she is entitled to benefits. This especially important with retroactive benefits due.</p>
Indicated the effective date of payment for Veterans Pension		<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.b. (Decision Notice Requirements), when VA grants entitlement to a benefit, the decision notice must also notify the claimant of the effective date of payment.</p> <p>The payment date notifies the claimant when he/she will receive payment from</p>

Prepare the Decision Notice Knowledge Check

Appendix B

Decision Notice Letter Criteria for Catherine Abel Claim	Enter "X" if Criterion Met	Remediation for Unmet Criterion
		the Government.
Indicated the amount of any benefits VA is withholding, if applicable	NA	<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.b. (Decision Notice Requirements), when VA grants entitlement to a benefit, the decision notice must also notify the claimant of the amount of any benefits VA is withholding.</p> <p>There was no amount withheld for Catherine Abel.</p>
Indicated the reason for the withholding, if applicable	NA	<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.b. (Decision Notice Requirements), when VA grants entitlement to a benefit, the decision notice must also notify the claimant of the reason of withholding.</p> <p>There was no amount withheld for Catherine Abel.</p>
Documented the reason(s) for the decision: Explained why the Veteran was granted Veterans Pension.		<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.b. (Decision Notice Requirements), prepare the decision notice that informs the claimant of the reasons for the decision.</p> <p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.h. (Guidelines for Providing the Reason(s) for a Decision in a Decision Notice), the decision notice must provide sufficient detail regarding the rationale used in reaching the decision to ensure the claimant will understand its basis. (This might require restating applicable regulation(s) in laymen's terms.)</p> <p>The reason(s) for the decision must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An explanation of the income and

Prepare the Decision Notice Knowledge Check

Appendix B

Decision Notice Letter Criteria for Catherine Abel Claim	Enter "X" if Criterion Met	Remediation for Unmet Criterion
		<p>expenses considered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported discrepancies in income and/or expenses
<p>Documented the reason(s) for the decision of denying dependency of a child: Explained why child is denied as a dependent.</p>		<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.b. (Decision Notice Requirements), prepare the decision notice that informs the claimant of the reasons for the decision.</p> <p>The decision notice must provide sufficient detail regarding the rationale used in reaching the decision to ensure the claimant will understand its basis. (This might require restating applicable regulation(s) in laymen's terms.)</p>
<p>Summarized the evidence VA considered to grant Veterans Pension.</p> <p>The evidence listed should include descriptive identifiers, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full name of form (e.g., form number and title); Document types (e.g., divorce decree or birth certificate); and/or Date of receipt 		<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.b. (Decision Notice Requirements), the decision notice must summarize the evidence considered.</p> <p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.g. (Guidelines for Summarizing Evidence in a Decision Notice), the evidence listed should include descriptive identifiers, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full name of form (e.g., form number and title); Document types (e.g., divorce decree or birth certificate); and/or Date of receipt
<p>Summarized the evidence VA considered to deny child as a dependent.</p> <p>The evidence listed should include descriptive identifiers,</p>		<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.b. (Decision Notice Requirements), the decision notice must summarize the evidence considered.</p> <p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.g.</p>

Prepare the Decision Notice Knowledge Check

Appendix B

Decision Notice Letter Criteria for Catherine Abel Claim	Enter "X" if Criterion Met	Remediation for Unmet Criterion
<p>such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full name of form (e.g., form number and title); • Document types (e.g., divorce decree or birth certificate); and/or • Date of receipt 		<p>(Guidelines for Summarizing Evidence in a Decision Notice), the evidence listed should include descriptive identifiers, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full name of form (e.g., form number and title); • Document types (e.g., divorce decree or birth certificate); and/or • Date of receipt
<p>Informed claimant of their responsibilities to report changes in their income, net worth, expenses or dependency</p>		<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.5.c. (Paragraphs Explaining the Veteran's Responsibilities and Information Regarding Direct Deposit), it's the Veteran's responsibility to notify the VA if he/she loses or gains a dependent, or there is a change in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His/her income or the income of his/her dependents, • Net worth, • Medical expenses, and/or • His/her address or telephone number.
<p>Provided information about any additional benefits to which the claimant may be entitled.</p>		<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.k. (Notifying Claimants of Potential Entitlement to Additional Benefits), notify the claimant of any additional benefit(s) to which potential entitlement exists and, if applicable, the form or web site available for applying for the benefit(s).</p> <p>Suggested additional benefits may include:</p>

Prepare the Decision Notice Knowledge Check

Appendix B

Decision Notice Letter Criteria for Catherine Abel Claim	Enter "X" if Criterion Met	Remediation for Unmet Criterion
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aid and Attendance and enclose VA Form 21-2680 (Examination for Housebound Status or Permanent Need for Regular Aid and Attendance) or if Veteran goes into a nursing home, enclose VA Form 21-0779, Request for Nursing Home Information in Connection With Claim for Aid and Attendance. • Increased Pension based on unreimbursed medical expenses and enclose VA Form 21P-8416, Medical Expense Report
<p>Notified the claimant of his/her appellate rights.</p>		<p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v.2.B.1.b. (Decision Notice Requirements), prepare a decision notice that notifies the claimant of his/her appellate rights and right to procedural due process, a hearing, and representation.</p> <p>In accordance with M21-1 III.v2.B.1.j. (Providing Appellate Rights in a Decision Notice), to meet the requirement to provide appellate rights in a decision notice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include instructions in the decision notice regarding the actions the claimant or beneficiary may take if he/she disagrees with the decision, and • Attach VA Form 4107, Your Rights to Appeal Our Decision, to the decision notice, and ensure the following language appears in the decision notice under the heading

Prepare the Decision Notice Knowledge Check

Appendix B

Decision Notice Letter Criteria for Catherine Abel Claim	Enter "X" if Criterion Met	Remediation for Unmet Criterion
		<p>What You Should Do If You Disagree with Our Decision:</p> <p><i>You have one year from the date of this letter to appeal the decision. The enclosed VA Form 4107, "Your Rights to Appeal Our Decision," explains your right to appeal.</i></p>
<p>Informed the claimant about eBenefits.</p>		<p>To extend VA courtesy to the claimant, describe the various self-service features associated with an eBenefits account.</p>
<p>Informed the claimant how to contact the VA.</p>		<p>To extend VA courtesy to the claimant, provide how to contact the VA if the claimant needs any assistance.</p>