Review of COVERS, Claims Folder Creation, and File Requests

Trainee Handout

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Objectives

After completing this training you should be able to:

1. Establish a new electronic claims folder
2. Determine when to convert paper files to electronic folders
3. Demonstrate proper procedure to request folders through COVERS
4. Discuss basic overview of the report functionality in COVERS

References

* [M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii, 3.B, Paper and Electronic Claims Folders](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014123/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-ii-Chapter-3-Section-B-Paper-and-Electronic-Claims-Folders)
* [M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii, 4.A, Paper Claims Folders Storage and Control](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014126/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-ii-Chapter-4-Section-A-Paper-Claims-Folders-Storage-and-Control)
* [M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii, 5.E](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014140/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-ii-Chapter-5-Section-E-Permanent-Transfer-Out-or-Transfer-In-of-Paper-Claims-Folders), General Policies for Permanent Transfer-In of Paper Claims Folders
* [COVERS online users guide](http://css.vba.va.gov/COVERS/)

How to Establish a Claims Folder

**Actions in Share That Establish a Claims Folder in VA Systems**

A claims folder is established in VA systems automatically via PROADM when a(n)

* original claim is established using the CLAIMS ESTABLISHMENT C+P command in Share
* the BIRLS ADD command is executed, or
* the FIRST NOTICE OF DEATH command is executed

**Manually Establishing a Claims Folder in VA Systems**

Follow the steps below to manually establish a claims folder in VA systems when

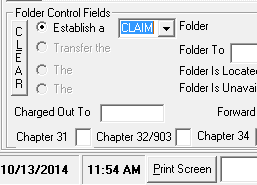
* a BIRLS record exists
* no claims folder exists, and
* processing of mail does not require executing the CLAIMS ESTABLISHMENT C+P command in SHARE.
  1. Execute a SINGLE INQUIRY command in COVERS using the anticipated claims folder number. Manually establish a claims folder, if the results in the MESSAGE FIELD of the SINGLE INQUIRY screen indicate
* a folder was not found, and
* a BIRLS claims folder number exists.
  1. In Share select the BIRLS UPDATE command and enter the following information then select SUBMIT:
* claims folder number or Social Security number (SSN)
* payee code 00 for Veteran
* Veteran’s first name, and
* Veteran’s last name.
  1. Update any additional information received on the VETERANS IDENTIFICATION DATA (VID) screen.
  2. The CLAIM FOLDER LOCATION field on the VID screen will indicate that no folder exists (NFE). Select the FOLDER LOCATION tab.

***Example***:



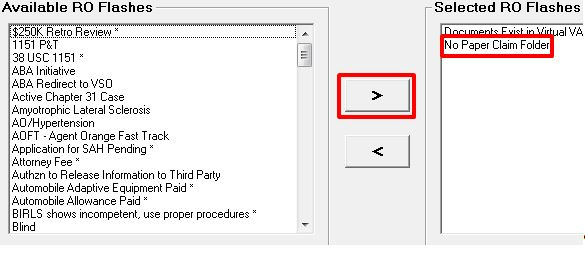
* 1. In the FOLDER CONTROL FIELDS of the FOLDER LOCATION tab, select the radial button next to ESTABLISH and a drop down box will appear.
     + Select CLAIM in the drop down box, and
     + Select UPDATE.

***Example***:



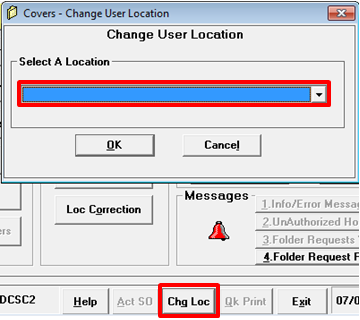
* 1. In Share select the COPORATE FLASHES command. In the AVAILABLE RO FLASHES field
* select the *No Paper Claim Folder* flash
* use the arrows to move the flash into the SELECTED RO FLASHES field, and
* select submit.

***Example***:



* 1. In COVERS, select the RECEIVE command.
* On the ENTER FOLDER IDENTIFICATION screen, select the CHG LOC function, and
* select the stations’ VBMS scanning location from the dropdown menu.

***Example***:

* 
  1. On the ENTER FOLDER IDENTIFICATION screen, enter the claims folder number in the FILE NUMBER field and select OK. A series of pop ups appear, answer them as follows
* *No*
* *OK*, and
* *Yes*.

Then select OK at the bottom of the ENTER FOLDER IDENTIFICATION screen to update the location.

Paper vs Electronic Files

Types of Claims Folders:

Although the majority of claims folders are currently stored in electronic systems, including VBMS and LCM, there are still many claims folders in paper format. Most paper claims folders will be converted into electronic format; however there are a few exceptions. The following claims files will be established and/or retained in paper format:

* all sensitive level 8 claims including
  + witness protection, and
  + classified claims, and
* Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) claims requiring Military Services Coordinators (MSC) to build a physical claims folder for original disability compensation claims. Original IDES claims require creation of a paper claims folder only when service treatment records (STRs) provided to the MSC are
  + hard copies, or
  + a combination of hard copies and electronic.

***Important:*** *Do not* convert documents to an electronic format for claims with a sensitive level 8 or above. If scanned into centralized mail (CM), print the documents for the paper claims folder and remove from the portal

Use the table below to determine if/when to request conversion of a paper claims folder to electronic format.

| **If the newly established EP …** | **And the station number listed in the CURRENT FOLDER LOCATION field is …** | **Then …** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| requires conversion of the claims folder | the same as the regional office (RO) processing the documents | * obtain the volumes remaining in paper through local procedures, and * route to scanning for conversion. |
| requires conversion of the claims folder | * a facility related to another jurisdiction, and * ***not*** the Records Management Center (RMC) (station 376) | submit a request for permanent transfer of the claims folder through COVERS.    ***Important***:  If the corresponding claim or appeal is subject to National Work Queue routing, add the *Requested Claims Folder* tracked item. |
| requires conversion of the claims folder | RMC | follow the guidance in [M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii, 3.B](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014123/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-ii-Chapter-3-Section-B-Paper-and-Electronic-Claims-Folders?query=proadm#1g). |
| *does not* require conversion of the claims folder | either the same or different from the RO processing the documents | * manage evidence, and * upload the documents to the eFolder. |

COVERS Folder Inquiries and Requests

COVERS (Control of Veterans Records System) is a Microsoft Windows-based Client/Server application using barcode technology to support RO (Regional Office) and RMC (Record Management Center) folder activities, including requests, mail, search, and external transfers.

**Folder inquiries:** To conduct an inquiry to determine the current location of a claims folder use the “Single Inquiry” button, enter the file number and folder type and press “OK.” If a folder type is not selected – the single inquiry function defaults to “claims” folder type.

Claims processors use the COVERS locations listed in the table below when a paper claims folder is sent for scanning conversion or when establishing a claims folder where no paper claims folder previously existed.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **COVERS Location** | **Description** |
| DCSC1 | Converted and stored at CACI Newnan, GA |
| DCSC2 | Converted and stored at CACI Mt Vernon, KY |
| DCSS1 | Converted and stored at SMS Janesville, WI |
| DCSS2 | Converted by Records Management Center (RMC) and stored at SMS Janesville, WI |
| PALL01- PALL22 | Converted and stored at RMC |
| VBMSRT | Location for claim folders that exist only in VBMS |
| INVBMS | Location for claim folders that exist only in VBMS |
| EFILE | Location for claim folders that exist only in VBMS |
| INVVA | Location for claim folders that exists in LCM |
| NEWXFF | Location for claim folders that exists in LCM |
| ICMHS | Converted as part of the File Bank Extraction program. |

**Folder requests**

If an inquiry reveals that a paper file exists for a claims folder you can request the folder by utilizing the “Perm Request” function from the COVERS “Single Inquiry” screen. Each RO will have its own procedures for responding to folder and mail searches.

Due to recent File Bank Extraction the file banks of all regional office have been sent to the vendor for eventual upload. If a claim is received for a veteran who has a claims folder pending upload from file bank extraction a ticket must be submitted for expedite using the [OBPI-VCIP Issue Tracker](https://vaww.infoshare.va.gov/sites/OBPI/VCIP/SD/OBPI%20Issue%20Tracker/default.aspx).

Do not use the “Request” function from the main menu to request a folder in COVERS. Instead use one of the processes mentioned above.

***Note: Do not “Receive” a claims folder until it is in your possession.***

***Important: Never use the “Request” or “Receive” functions in COVERS for eFolders; receiving an eFolder in COVERS will update the system to indicate the file is in your possession and can cause confusion for anyone searching for the file at a later time.***

# Introduction to COVERS Reports

COVERS provides reports to help authorized users track various aspects of system usage. Reports are available from the Utilities menu.

The following COVERS reports are available from the Reports selection screen:

Search List by Search Location

Search List by Priority Code

Search List by Folder Location

Search List by Terminal Digit

Folder Statistics Report

Temporary Transfers Report

Permanent Transfer Report

Folder Aging for a Location Report

Special Codes Statistics Report

Multi-Volume Folders - Terminal Digit Sequence

Multi-Volume Folders - Folder Number Sequence

Unauthorized SO Holdings Report

Folder Search Review

Validation Tables Report

**To generate a COVERS Report**

1. Select the Reports button or the Utilities button from the COVERS Main Menu.
2. If utilizing the Utilities Menu, select the Reports button. The *Reports Selection* menu will appear.
3. Request a report by clicking on the name of the report and selecting the OK button, or by double-clicking on the name of the report.

***Note: For some reports, COVERS immediately issue the report request. For others, the user will be asked to enter more information before the request for the report is issued. The Folder Search Review report is a screen display rather than a printed report; it displays as soon as the data is available.***

For all printed reports, except the Validation Tables Reports, once the report is requested, a message will be received stating the report has been requested and will be emailed after 6:00PM Central Time, or that no searched satisfied the screen criteria.

The Validation Tables Report will print as soon as it is requested.

Practical Exercise

1. Identify whether the locations below are used for paper or electronic claims files. If electronic, identify VBMS or LCM.
   1. EFILE
   2. FILES
   3. NEWXFF
   4. DCSC2
2. When requesting to have a physical folder sent scanning from another location, what is the proper request procedure?
   1. Use “Permanent Request” radio button in COVERS
   2. Use “Request” function to perform a folder search
   3. Review for upload and submit an OBPI-VCIP Issue Tracker ticket as needed
   4. No Action is needed
3. Which system indicator identifies that a paper folder did not previously exist?
   1. PRODADM location in COVERS, with no folder history, not located at 376
   2. Claim Folder Location on VID screen is 376
   3. “PAPERLESS” Corporate Flash
   4. DCSC1 location in COVERS
4. What is proper procedure for requesting a file with location “ICMHS”?
   1. Use “Permanent Request” radio button in COVERS
   2. Use “Request” function to perform a folder search
   3. Review for upload and submit an OBPI-VCIP Issue Tracker ticket as needed
   4. No Action is needed
5. When creating an electronic folder which of the following need to be completed per III.ii.3.B.2?
   1. Claims establishment, BIRLS Add, FNOD or manual establishment of efolder.
   2. Add “No Paper Claim Folder” corporate flash
   3. Receive folder in COVERS to the stations’ VBMS scanning location or “INVBMS”
   4. Establish Claim Folder in BIRLS if no folder exists (NFE)
   5. All of the above