

Compensation Service (212)
VBA/DoD Collaboration Team
Monthly Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES)
Conference Call Notes
May 8, 2018—2 PM EST

The Compensation Service VBA/DoD Collaboration Team hosts this monthly conference call to announce updates and address issues and questions related to the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) Program. All IDES Military Services Coordinators (MSCs), Disability Rating Activity Sites (DRAS) personnel and other VA personnel supporting IDES are invited to participate.

The following call notes summarize, expand upon, and provide any needed clarification of the topics addressed on the call or on the corresponding read-ahead. This document is not a verbatim recitation of the call or read-ahead. If you have specific questions related to claims, please send them to the [IDES Mailbox](#) (VAVBAWAS/CO/IDES). A Compensation Service team member will contact you to gather the additional information needed to review and respond to your case. If a pattern is established, and we note several intake sites are having issues, a Compensation Service team member will discuss the topic on the following month's call.

TMS #4449921 has been created to provide training credit for the May 2018 IDES Teleconference. In order to receive the credit, you must sign into TMS and self-assign the course. The evaluation must be completed in order to receive credit for today's call.

Please sign-up for the C&P Calendar Subscription Service in order to receive notification that the read-ahead is available and for notification when the TMS number is active.

Topics for Discussion

QTC and Exam Management System (EMS) in VBMS

QTC is now supported by EMS, and MSCs will begin submitting QTC exam requests through EMS on May 14, 2018.

MSCs will continue to submit IDES and Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) exam requests to VHA through CAPRI in accordance with [M21-1 III.i.2.D.6](#). Users will be notified when VHA is ready to accept Pre-Discharge exam scheduling requests through EMS.

The ERRA tool will continue providing guidance to ensure the exam scheduling request is submitted through the correct VBA system. The exam scheduling request will be routed to the appropriate vendor by the exam destination tool embedded in EMS. As a reminder, the ERRA tool is only mandatory for IDES participants who are not located at or near the referring MTF in accordance with [M21-1 III.i.2.D.6.r](#).

For BDD claims, users submitting examinations through VBMS EMS **must** ensure the examination has been accepted prior changing the 336 EP to the proper BDD rating EP. To



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verify that an exam has been accepted by the contractor in VBMS EMS, the end-user will see “Scheduling Request Received” under the “History” of the exam scheduling request in the “Actions” tab. This guidance follows the same requirements previously provided for examinations submitted via CAATS (see [M21-1 III.i.2.B.2.c](#) for additional information).

EXPAND CLAIM DETAILS

Contentions List > Development > Letters > Tracked Items > **Exams** > Claim Notes > Deferrals

Exam History

Request UUID: c0a3617c-5dcc-4732-8e7a-e360b9b94e22

Events to view at a time: 10 | Sort by: Newest | Filter by: []

- + Mar 25, 2018 1:54:45 PM - Exam Results Available Received
- + Mar 12, 2018 8:54:31 AM - Scheduling Request Received ←
- + Mar 12, 2018 7:47:51 AM - Scheduling Request Successfully Delivered
- + Mar 12, 2018 7:47:48 AM - Scheduling Request Submitted

Field users should submit a ticket to the National Service Desk (NSD) if they encounter technical issues under the new Exam Management functionality. For other questions or issues related to Exam Management in VBMS please email ContractExam.VBAVACO@va.gov and cc the [DES Mailbox](#).

Note: See [March 2018](#) IDES Call Notes for TMS training classes.

Are we using EMS instead of CAPRI when requesting VHA exams?

No; EMS is only used for contract exams at this time. Exam requests submitted to VHA must be submitted via CAPRI.

Will CAATS no longer be valid once EMS goes into effect?

When EMS goes into effect on May 14th, users must only submit contract exams via EMS. CAATS will no longer be used.



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What are the TMS numbers for EMS training?

The five online training courses for EMS are:

- **VA 4415934** Introduction to Exam Management in VBMS
- **VA 4415942** Creating Exam Scheduling Request in VBMS
- **VA 4415941** Exam Scheduling Request Submission Status and Exam Activity
- **VA 4415947** Request for Clarification/Modification Request/Rework Request in Exam Management
- **VA 4415952** Exam Scheduling Request in VBMS for Individual Unemployability Claims

We're having issues with IDES finalized ratings that are continued at authorization for examinations. These cases are being routed to Regional Offices and when submitting the exam request via EMS, the MSC and PEBLO contact information is required, yet the case is no longer in IDES. Is there a workaround for that?

At this time there is not a workaround; however, Compensation Service is determining whether these fields should be required and will work with the programmers once a decision is made. Additional information regarding EMS will be provided on the June 2018 IDES Conference Call.

IDES Participant Corporate Flash

MSCs must add the *IDES Participant* corporate flash when establishing EP 689 per [M21-1 III.i.2.D.3.d \(step 9\)](#). The flash is not removed regardless of the outcome of the case. The DRAS must ensure the flash remains attached to the participant's record after the final rating is completed ([M21-1 III.i.2.E.4.e](#)).

Please clarify whether this flash should remain on the corporate record after the IDES rating is finalized. I've seen cases where the DRAS removes the DES claim label and IDES participant flash when the IDES claim is finalized, but continued at authorization for various reasons.

Yes; the IDES Participant corporate flash must remain on the record after the final rating is completed.

Remarks to Include in Examination Requests

MSCs are reminded of the requirement to add the following remarks to requests for examination of IDES participants in accordance with M21-1, III.i.2.D.6.h:

- *Referred Disabilities:* [list all referred disabilities]
- *Claimed Disabilities:* [list all claimed disabilities]
- *Required Specialty Examinations of Referred Disabilities:* [list all specialty examinations that are required to evaluate disabilities the participant's service department referred to VA]
- *As soon as the examinations are scheduled, please notify the MSC and PEBLO of the dates and times.*
- *MSC:* [provide name, title, complete mailing address, phone and fax number, and e-mail address of MSC], and



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- *PEBLO*: [provide name, location, phone and fax number, and e-mail address of the participant's PEBLO].

Obtaining Electronic Signatures on Applications

Electronic signatures are acceptable per [M21-1 III.ii.1.C.2.f](#). Further, MSCs do not need to print electronic documents solely to apply a date stamp per [M21-1 III.i.2.D.3.m](#). In order to obtain electronic signatures, MSCs are authorized to use e-signature pads, which can be purchased by the VARO.

Is the electronic signature the same as an annotation?

No; the electronic signature is used when an IDES participant signs a document electronically (example: IDES participant signs VA Form 21-526EZ using an electronic signature pad). The annotation is used to capture the date of receipt for documents received electronically. If you do not have the annotate feature in VBMS, please work with your supervisor to obtain the appropriate VBMS access, as this is a feature associated with your VBMS user role.

IDES Servicemember Satisfaction Survey Report (October 2017 to March 2018)

Each quarter, the Office of Warrior Care Policy (WCP) reports on the results of telephonic and online satisfaction surveys administered to Servicemembers who are going through the IDES process. Data for each report spans the preceding six-month period. For this report, data was collected between October 2017 and March 2018 from a population of 26,243 IDES Servicemembers who were invited to participate in the survey after completing the MEB or PEB phase. During the six month period, 93% of survey respondents expressed satisfaction with the IDES process. This rate continues to exceed the DoD and VA goal of 80%. Active and Reserve component Servicemember overall satisfaction rates were 95 % and 87% respectively.

- **Satisfaction with VA MSCs**

The report summarized Servicemember feedback on their satisfaction with the MEB and PEB Phases of the IDES process. In the MEB Phase, Servicemembers indicated 91% satisfaction with MSC customer service, which is a two percent increase from the last report. MSCs are commended for their dedicated service. Thank you for your exceptional service to our wounded, ill and injured Servicemembers!

- **Exit Interview Completion**

The survey showed that 70% of PEB respondents received an exit interview. However, nearly one-third (30%) of PEB respondents did not have an exit interview with their VA MSC, and the report included a recommendation that all participants be given the opportunity to meet with their MSC before their date of separation.

MSCs are reminded of the importance of exit interviews and that an exit interview is required in all IDES cases, regardless of whether the participant is returned to duty or found unfit for duty. The exit interview must be completed within 10 business days of the Exit Interview Start Date in VTA or notification that the participant was returned to duty, as indicated in [M21-1 III.i.2.E.5.a](#).

Another recommendation WCP provided was to determine how participants can be clearly and thoroughly informed on their opportunity for appeals, and benefits they



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may be eligible to receive upon exiting IDES. MSCs are reminded the purpose of an exit interview at the end of the PEB phase is to gather any additional information required to expedite payment of VA benefits after separation, explain the appeal process, and describe the Servicemember's appeal rights before the VA decision is finalized. For more information on exit interview, refer to [M21-1 III.i.2.E.5](#).

The complete [IDES Servicemember Satisfaction Survey Report](#) is posted on the [IDES Homepage](#).

MSC Conference

The first of two FY18 MSC Conferences is scheduled for May 21-24, 2018 in Indianapolis (date/location of the second conference is to be determined). The Office of Field Operations (OFO) will coordinate with the District and Regional Offices to arrange MSC attendance. MSCs should receive notification and further information through those channels.

If you haven't been invited to the first conference, will we be invited to attend the second conference?

Yes; OFO will coordinate with the District and Regional Offices.

VTA Training

VTA Training is May 15 (9ET) and 16 (1ET). Information is listed on the VTA Homepage under Calendar of Events.

Next Teleconference

The next IDES Teleconference Call is scheduled for Tuesday, June 12, 2018 at 2PM EST. Please submit questions and proposed topics for discussion to the [IDES Mailbox](#) no later than COB, Thursday, May 31, 2018.

Open Floor



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