Codesheet Compliance

Instructor Lesson Plan

Time Required: 45 minutes

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| Lesson Description |
| The information below provides the instructor with an overview of the lesson and the materials that are required to effectively present this instruction. |
| TMS # | 4484208 |
| Prerequisites | Prior to this lesson, the Rating Veteran Service Representatives (RVSRs), Decision Review Officers (DROs), and Rating Quality Review Specialists (RQRSs) should have completed Challenge/Warrior Training Advancement Training Course (WARTAC) training.  |
| target audience | Although the target audience for Rating Codesheet Compliance training is RVSRs, DROs, and RQRSs, all VA employees may complete this training to further educate themselves on the anatomy of a Rating Codesheet.  |
| Time Required | 45 minutes |
| Materials/TRAINING AIDS | Lesson materials:* Codesheet Compliance PowerPoint presentation
* Codesheet Compliance trainee handouts
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| Training Area/Tools  | The following are required to ensure the trainees are able to meet the lesson objectives: * Classroom or private area suitable for participatory discussions
* Seating, writing materials, and writing surfaces for trainee note taking and participation
* Handouts
* Large writing surface (easel pad, chalkboard, dry erase board, overhead projector, etc.) with appropriate writing materials
* Computer with PowerPoint software to present the lesson material

Trainees require access to the following tools: * VA TMS to complete the assessment
* Internet access for[Live Manual Website](https://vaww.compensation.pension.km.va.gov/).
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| Pre-Planning  | * Become familiar with all training materials by reading the Instructor Lesson Plan while simultaneously reviewing the corresponding PowerPoint slides. This will provide you the opportunity to see the connection between the lesson plan and the slides, which will allow for a more structured presentation during the training session.
* Become familiar with the content of the trainee handouts and their association to the lesson plan.
* Practice is the best guarantee of providing a quality presentation. At a minimum, do a complete walkthrough of the presentation to practice coordination between this lesson plan, the trainee handouts, and the PowerPoint slides and ensure your timing is on track with the length of the lesson.
* Ensure that there are copies of all handouts before the training session.
* When required, reserve the training room.
* Arrange for equipment such as easel pads, an overhead projector, and any other equipment (as needed).
* Talk to people in your office who are most familiar with this topic to collect experiences that you can include as examples in the lesson.
* This lesson plan belongs to you. Feel free to highlight headings, key phrases, or other information to help the instruction flow smoothly. Feel free to add any notes or information that you need in the margins.
 |
| Training Day  | * Arrive as early as possible to ensure access to the facility and computers.
* Become familiar with the location of restrooms and other facilities that the trainees will require.
* Test the computer and projector to ensure they are working properly.
* Before class begins, open the PowerPoint presentation to the first slide. This will help to ensure the presentation is functioning properly.
* Make sure that a whiteboard or flip chart and the associated markers are available.
* The instructor completes a roll call attendance sheet or provides a sign-in sheet to the students. The attendance records are forwarded to the Regional Office Training Managers.
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| Introduction to Codesheet Compliance |
| INSTRUCTOR INTRODUCTION | Complete the following:* Introduce yourself
* Orient learners to the facilities
* Ensure that all learners have the required handouts
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| time required | 5 minutes |
| Purpose of LessonExplain the following: | This lesson is intended to educate and/or reinforce the required elements of the rating codesheet. This lesson will contain discussions and/or exercises that will allow the student to gain a better understanding of the required elements of the rating codesheet.  |
| Lesson ObjectivesSlide 2Handout 2 | In order to accomplish the purpose of this lesson, the RVSR, DRO, and RQRS will be required to accomplish the following lesson objectives. * Understand the anatomy of a rating codesheet.
* Identify the required elements of a rating codesheet.
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| Explain the following: | Each learning objective is covered in the associated topic. At the conclusion of the lesson, the learning objectives will be reviewed.  |
| Motivation | In an effort to reduce the VA claims backlog, every deferral created is tracked and reviewed in order to identify any trends that result in claim delays and/or rework. One particular trend that has been identified is oversights on the rating codesheet. As stated in the “Purpose of Lesson,” this training is intended to educate and reinforce the required elements of the rating codesheet in order to eliminate the rework and reduce the backlog.  |
| STAR Error code(s) | The Systematic Technical Accuracy Review (STAR) is the Veterans Benefits Administration’s (VBA) national method for measuring compensation claims processing accuracy in the National Quality Review program. An issue-based review and a claim-based review are conducted on every compensation rating claim submitted for national quality review.  Questions posed during rating review include the following: * Were appropriate signatures (internal controls) correct?
* Were Rating comments correct?
* Was decision documentation correct?
* Were all systems updates completed when needed?
 |
| ReferencesSlide 3Handout 3 | Explain where these references are located in the workplace.All M21-1 references are found in the [Live Manual Website](https://vaww.compensation.pension.km.va.gov/).* [38 CFR Part 4, Schedule for Rating Disabilities](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=ad275643432556b9dda942343fb89296&mc=true&node=pt38.1.4&rgn=div5)
* [M21-1, Part III, Subpart iv, Chapter 6, D – Codesheet Section](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014207/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-iv-Chapter-6-Section-D-Codesheet-Section#4)

* [M21-1, Part III, Subpart iv, Chapter 6, E – Coded Conclusion](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014208/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-iv-Chapter-6-Section-E-Coded-Conclusion)
* [M21-1, Part III, Subpart iv, Chapter 6, Section A - Partial Rating Decisions and Deferred Issues](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014204/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-iv-Chapter-6-Section-A-Partial-Rating-Decisions-and-Deferred-Issues)
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| Topic 1: Codesheet Compliance |
| Introduction | This topic will educate and reinforce the requirements of a Rating codesheet. |
| Time Required | 30 minutes |
| OBJECTIVES/Teaching Points | Topic objectives:* Understand the anatomy of a rating codesheet.
* Identify the required elements of a rating codesheet.

The following topic teaching points support the topic objectives: * Anatomy of a rating codesheet
* Data table
* Power of attorney (POA)
* Period of service (POS)
* Jurisdiction
* Associated claim(s)
* Coded conclusion
* Special notations and template fields
* Signature
* Single or multiple signature(s)
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| Anatomy of a Rating CodesheetSlide 4Handout 4 | The Rating codesheet includes the following sections:* Data table
* Jurisdiction
* Associated claim(s)
* Coded conclusions
* Special notations and template fields
* Signature(s)
 |
| Data Table*Slide 5**Handout 4*  | The *Data Table* includes the following information:* Veteran’s name
* Veteran’s file number
* Veteran’s Social Security number
* Period(s) of service information
* Power of attorney information
* Date of rating
* Any future exam date(s)
* Special Monthly Compensation (SMC) code(s)
* Combat status code
* Additional service code

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| Power of Attorney*Slide 6**Handout 4* | It is extremely important that the POA in VA systems indicate the most recent POA election. Although the POA information should be entered into VA systems before the claim is made ready for decision, the decision maker also has the ability to update VA systems using Share. Inform the audience that the steps on how to update POA are provided in [M21-1 III.ii.3.C.5.b](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014125/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-ii-Chapter-3-Section-C-System-Updates#5). |
| Period of Service*Slide 7**Handout 4* | It is also extremely important that the POS(s) is correct and updated in VA systems. Explain that although all verified and pertinent periods of service should be in the system before a claim is made ready for decision, the individual drafting the rating needs to verify this information prior to drafting the rating. Demonstrate the process for updating military service using Share and Participant Profile. Exception: RVSR may determine an injury incurred during ADT so that period of service will not be updated in SHARE prior to the rating being completed - this action is completed after the rating is finalized per [M21-1 III.ii.6.A.2.k](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014143/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-ii-Chapter-6-Section-A-Establishing-Veteran-Status#2k). |
| JurisdictionSlide 8Handout 5 | The *jurisdiction* of the *codesheet** appears below the *data table*
* explains why the case is before the rating activity
* refers to the claim at issue, and
* cites the pertinent jurisdictional date.
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| Associated Claim(s)Slide 9Handout 5 | The *associated claim(s)* section * appears below the *jurisdiction*
* includes all end product(s) (EP) associated with the contentions/claims be processed along with the date of claim (s) (DOC) of the claim(s)
* cites the type of claim(s)
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| Coded ConclusionsSlides 10-14Handout 5-6 | The *coded conclusions* section provides the list of conditions that are service connected or not service connected for pension purposes only. This section must include all rated conditions **both past and present**.38 CFR Part 4, Rating Schedule for Disabilities, is used to determine disability codes and percentages of evaluation. If a condition is service connected, it must include * the current percentage evaluation,
* the effective date of the grant (for each assigned evaluation for that condition),
* the era in which the disability was incurred,
* whether the condition is a disability severance condition **(extremely important)**,
* whether the disability is static or not,
* basis for a decision (i.e. aggravated, presumptive, direct)
* special issue (Agent Orange, Asbestos)
* any future exam(s) that may be warranted for that particular condition, and
* Future percentage evaluation and future effective date, if applicable

At the end of the service connected conditions must be the * combined evaluation
* historical combined evaluation, and
* the effective date(s) for each combined evaluation.

All denials for service connection must include the date of the original denial along with the reason and era. If the Veteran has ever claimed pension, each non-service connected condition must include a disability percentage for pension purposes. Furthermore, the *Codesheet* must include the combined evaluation of all service connected and non-service connected conditions for pension purposes. ***Please note*** that in order to identify a condition that received disability severance pay, one must select “Disability Severance” from the “Withholding Information” drop down under the “Diagnosis Information” chevron under the “Disability Decisions” tab in VBMS-R. Conditions that need further development before a proper decision can be made will be listed under the heading “Deferred Issues.” It is extremely important that when a final decision for a deferred issue is made that the condition is removed from the “Deferred Issues” subsection. (There may be an instance in which the condition is deferred for an evaluation only. If that is the case, then the condition will be listed under the “service connected” and the deferral sections.)One more thing to remind the audience about is that a condition cannot be listed simultaneously under the Service Connected subsection and the Not Service Connected subsection. This is duplicate and non-compliant with properly updated VA systems.  |
| **Special Notations and Template Fields** Slides 15-17Handout 6-7 | The primary purposes of notations made in the *special notation* and the notification *template* fields on the *codesheet* are to* record special remarks or approvals applicable to the rating decision, and
* communicate an instruction or administrative message to the authorization activity.

For instance, for rating narratives that propose to reduce and/or sever a service connected condition, the proposed combined evaluation will be included in this section. ***Note***:  All *special notations* and *templates* are generated through input in the ISSUE MANAGEMENT tab of VBMS-R. Use the SPECIAL NOTATION field, accessible from VBMS-R's PROFILE tab, to communicate an instruction or administrative message to the VSR. Clarify if the message is solely administrative (for example, *Cancel the erroneously established EP 930*) or to be shared with the Veteran (for example, *Tell the Veteran that the evaluation of his nephrolithiasis is currently under appeal and will be addressed in a future decision*).***Note***:  The special notation text appears at the bottom of the *codesheet* above the signature(s) (unless the Rating is for a clear and unmistakable error (CUE). In that case, the special notation text appears at the top of the codesheet).***Reference***:  For further information on the ISSUE MANAGEMENT tab or SPECIAL NOTATION field, see the [VBMS-R User Guide](http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/VBMS/Resources_Technical_Information.asp). |
| **Signature**Slides 18-20Handout 7 | Rating decisions must contain the decision maker’s standard digital signature on the bottom of the last page of the *codesheet*. “wet signatures” are no longer required.A rating decision ***signature*** is defined as* an electronic signature certification statement, and
* the user’s
	+ Local Area Network identification (LAN ID), and
	+ job title.

To establish the standardized digital signature, users should navigate to the SIGNATURE/DOCUMENT TITLE tab, and populate the AUTHOR SIGNATURE LINE field as follows:*eSign: certified by [decision maker’s LAN ID, job title]****Example****:  eSign: certified by VSCJSMIT, RVSR****Exception***:  If a rating decision requires more than one signature, the rating decision *codesheet* must display the required additional signature fields, but the digital signatures of the additional reviewers must be documented on [VA Form 21-0961, Electronic Signatures](http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/20/cio/20s5/forms/VBA-21-0961-ARE.pdf).***Important***:  The signature of the decision maker(s) certifies that the claims folder was reviewed and all phases of the claims process leading to the decision were correctly handled. |
| **Single or Multiple Signatures**Slides 21Handout 8 | Single-signature authority is restricted to RVSRs whose ability to produce quality work independently without additional oversight has been demonstrated by review.All rating decisions require the signatures of two decision makers, unless approved as single-signature ratings by the Veterans Service Center Manager (VSCM) or Pension Maintenance Center Manager (PMCM).***Exception***:  The VSCM/PMCM does not have authority to grant single-signature authority in all cases. Please refer the students to the table in [M21-1, Part III, Subpart iv, 6.D.7.d](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014207/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-iv-Chapter-6-Section-D-Codesheet-Section#7) for information on when second signatures are warranted.  |

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| Lesson Review, Assessment, and Wrap-up |
| IntroductionDiscuss the following: | The Codesheet Compliance lesson is complete. Review each lesson objective and ask the trainees for any questions or comments. |
| Time Required | 10 minutes  |
| Lesson Objectives | You have completed the Codesheet Compliance lesson. The trainee should be able to: * Understand the anatomy of a rating codesheet.
* Identify the required elements of a rating codesheet.
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| Assessment  | Remind the trainees to complete the on-line assessment in TMS to receive credit for completion of the course.The assessment will allow the participants to demonstrate their understanding of the information presented in this lesson. |