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| Slide 1 – Title Slide  | Hello, my name is Tessa Koob and I am a Training Consultant at the Denver Training Facility.Today, I’m going to talk about Appeals Moderation Act – Appeals Moderation Mail Routing. |
| Slide 2 - Lesson Objectives | Our lesson objectives for today are to become familiarized with the Appeal Moderation Act Decision Review process, recognize VA Forms 20-0995 and 20-0996, understand routing requirements for Decision Review requests and to demonstrate mail routing procedures for Decision Review documentation. |
| Slide 3 - References | We have our list of references, but the main one I want to point out, Part 1, Chapter 7.2 *Mail Intake Procedures*, which discusses placing review elections under control. |
| Slide 4 - VBA Workload Distribution | With AMA, VBA established Decision Review Operations Centers or DROCs to process AMA higher-level reviews or HLRs and Board decisions. VBA will also distribute AMA claims and legacy appeals to Regional Offices for processing based on policy guidance outlined in VBA Letter 20-18-05.Regional Offices’ Veteran Service Centers will process new process Supplemental Claims. Regional Appeals Teams will continue to process Legacy Appeals and Full Grants and RAMP HLR and Supplemental Claims.DROC St. Petersburg and DROC Seattle are responsible for new process higher-level reviews (HLRs), new process Remands, new process Full Grants, new process higher-level review (HLR) returns. The DROC in Washington DC will continue to work Legacy Remands. The graphic found on this slide helps outline which division is responsible for each type of requests. |
| Slide 5 - Decision Review Operations Center (DROC) | All appeals-related mail will be routed to a Decision Review Operations Center (DROC) for intake processing.Appeals mail packets will be automatically routed by the Appeals Management office, the AMO and evenly distributed between the SeaTac, Washington and St. Petersburg, Florida DROCs using Centralize Mail Portal (CMP) routing rules. The Centralized Mail Portal (CMP) has automated routing rules for mail packets that contain any of the decision review request forms. These mail packets will be evenly between the two DROCs. Again, DROC jurisdiction is based on workflow not geographical location of the claimant.However, some mail may inevitably “slip through the cracks” and be routed to the Veterans Service Center’s (VSC) CM portal queue, instead. |
| Slide 6 - End Product Controls | Legacy Appeals have been using the End Product 170 series to control appeals that are in Notice of Disagreement or Form 9 status.However, the Appeals Moderation Act (AMA) has created a new End Product (EP) system to control these new types of decision review requests.Intake personnel, at the DROCs use a system called *Caseflow*, to established AMAsupplemental claims and higher-level reviews (HLRs) within VBMS.EP 030 will be used to track or grant higher-level review (HLR) decisions and EP 040 will be used the track supplemental claim requests based on new and relevant evidence, as well as Duty to Assist or DTA errors.There are separate claim labels to reflect whether the issues being reviewed are rating activity or non-rating activity jurisdiction. Or, if they are under the jurisdiction of the Pension Management Centers (the PMCs). Please note, Compensation Service is aware of the removal of EP Label Reconsideration with the update on February 19, 2019. This issue is being addressed by the appropriate staffs for a solution. |
| Slide 7 - Decision Review Forms | The AMA Decision Review process retires VA Form 4107, Your Rights to Appeal our Decision and VA Form 21-0958, Notice of Disagreement. Now each Decision Review process has its own prescribed form, the only exception being a CUE – a Clear and Unmistakable Error. Supplemental Claims, which may be submitted at any time after a decision has been made on a given issue, must be submitted using VA Form 20-0995, Decision Review Request: Supplemental Claim. Supplemental claims will be processed at the DROC of jurisdiction but will be created at the DROCs.A request for a Higher-Level Review must be submitted using VA Form 20-0996, Decision Review Request: Higher-Level Review and received within one year of the notice of the decision being reviewed. Higher-Level Reviews may be processed at the DROC of jurisdiction. If a claimant believes there was an error made on a prior decision and does not wish to submit any additional evidence, they may submit a Decision Review Request for a Higher-Level Review, the 0996 form. A request for a Board Appeal must also be received within one year of the notice of the decision being reviewed and must be submitted using VA Form 10182, Decision Review Request: Board Appeal. Board Appeals will be processed by the BVA only.VA will not process the VA Form 10182, as these forms, again, should be routed directly to the BVA.Please note, CUE’s do not require a prescribed form. A request based on a CUE do not fall under AMA and will continue to process as normal by the VSCs. Do not route CUE’s allegations to DROC for intake processing.  |
| Slide 8 - VA Form 20-0995, Decision Review Request: Supplemental Claim | We will now take a look a both of the new AMA forms.20-0995, Decision Review Request for Supplemental Claim, one important part of this form is Part II, where the claimant must list the issue(s) they want to be part of their supplemental claim.Please make note of any issue that is being withdrawn from the legacy appeals process. |
| Slide 9 - VA Form 20-0996, Decision Review Request: Higher-Level Review | The next form, 20-0996, Decision Review Request for Higher-Level Review, again Part II has the Higher-Level Review Options, including how a claimant can request a Higher-Level Review conducted at the same office within the agency of original jurisdiction.Again, this form should be reviewed for any issue that is being withdrawn from the legacy appeals process.It is important to familiarize yourself with these two forms, so you can properly identify and route them accordingly.We have VSC job aid that we will take a look at later in this training for instructions on routing these forms. |
| Slide 10 - AMA Mail Packets | All Decision Review related mail should be automatically routed to the DROC of jurisdiction – however some forms or documents may be overlooked and incorrectly assigned to a VSC’s claims assistant for intake processing. CMP users must transfer all mail packets containing AMA Decision Review documents (i.e. the VA Forms 20-0995 or 20-0996) to a DROC mail portal for intake processing. When manually transferring AMA related mail packets, choose either DROC (either the Seattle or St. Petersburg DROC).If a request for a Supplemental Claim or Higher-Level Review is not received on the prescribed form (such as on a 21-526EZ), transfer the mail packet to a DROC for intake processing. DROC claims processors will send the Veteran a Request for Application AMA Review letter (which is now available in Letter Creator) and process any VSC claims identified on the form. If a CMP user sees a mail packet containing only VA Form 10182, Decision Review Request: Board Appeal, forward to the Board of Veterans’ Appeals mail portal.We will now take a look at our VSC job aid – routing materials.Once again, this job aid tells if a CA receives, in the mail portal, a VA Form 20-0995 or 20-0996, to route them to a DROC.If a VA Form 10182 is received that should be routed directly to BVA.If a form is received or allegation of a CUE is received that should stay with the VSC of jurisdiction. |
| Slide 11 - Transferring CM Mail Packets | Now continuing with our presentation…Transferring CM Mail Packets.Once you have determined which office has jurisdiction, it is time to send the mail packet. The CM portal user must send a mail packet to the Reassign Queue, where the Super User may route the mail packet to a DROC mail queue for intake processing. In the Central Mail Work Queue Results Grid, the user must select the mail packet they wish to route to a DROC in the Results Grid display and the Packet Actions Task Bar will appear above the grid. The user must then click the “Re-Assign” button in the actions task bar to move the mail packet to the Reassign queue. A CM portal Super User will then navigate to the Reassign queue, select the mail packet, then click the “Re-Assign” action button in the task bar and select either the SeaTac or St. Petersburg DROC mail queue from the drop-down list. |
| Slide 12 - Questions? | Do we have any questions on Mail Routing?Question 1: Local CAs stated they are confused about Appeals’ labels on Reconsideration, Reopens and Legacy claims, is there a general rule to help assign the right EP?Answer 1: On February 19, 2019, VBMS update did remove the EP label for Reconsiderations and Reopens that were received prior February 19, 2019. Again, the appropriate staffs have been notified and Comp Services is working towards a solution.Question 2: What should we do when there is a mixture of AMA and legacy issues, the last decision letter date is labeled was dated 12/1/2018. The Veteran 0958 for one issue on the prior decision on 02/25/2019 (legacy), as well as supplemental claim on another issue on the same date. Should both EPs go to DROC, or just the supplemental?Answer 2: For decisions issued prior to February 19, 2019, the legacy appeal process still applies. A claimant seeking review of the compensation decision issue prior to February 19, 2019, must submit a timely VA Form 21-0958, Notice of Disagreement, they may also opt in upon receipt of SOC or SSOC, as described above.For reviews of decision issues on or after February 19, 2019, the claimant or his or her representative must seek review in writing, by submitting either the 0995 or 0996. VBA will not accept review requests in any format other than the prescribed forms. IPC will continue to review and process the 0958s and VA Form 9s and if one of these forms is used to seek a review of a decision issued on or after February 19, 2019, the VSC IPCs should forward to the DROC, for the DROC IPCs to send that Request for Application letter. |