Monthly Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) and

Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) Conference Call Notes

Compensation Service

BDD/IDES/Mil Pay Staff (212A)

October 8, 2019—2 PM ET

**Conference Call Notes**

The Compensation Service BDD/IDES/Mil Pay Staff hosts this monthly conference call to announce updates and address issues and questions related to the BDD and IDES Programs. All Military Services Coordinators (MSCs), Disability Rating Activity Sites (DRAS), Regional Offices and other VA personnel supporting BDD and IDES are invited to participate.

Prior to the conference call, a read-ahead was provided to facilitate discussion during the call. To receive notification when the read-ahead becomes available for upcoming calls, please sign up for the [C&P Calendar Subscription Service](http://vbacodmoint1.vba.va.gov/bl/21/calendar/cal_Subscribe.asp).

The Conference Call Notes below include the information that was provided on the original read-ahead, as well as a summary of the discussion that took place during the call. These notes may also expand upon and/or provide any needed clarification of the topics addressed on the call or in the read-ahead; as such, all call attendees are encouraged to review the call notes, with attention to the information in the shaded blocks, which has added to the original read-ahead.

TMS # VA 4528432 has been created to provide training credit for the October 2019 BDD/IDES Teleconference. To receive training credit, you must sign into TMS and self-assign the course.  The evaluation must be completed to receive credit.

Topics for Discussion

TMS Reminders

The below announcement was sent in a Compensation Service Calendar Blast on October 1, 2019. This announcement can also be found on the [Compensation Service Calendar](http://vbacoweb03.dva.va.gov/bl/21/calendar/cal_Week.asp).

The following items will be assigned as FY20 mandated training for Pre-Discharge MSCs as noted below. These courses will populate on the TMS To Do Lists of target audience members. Completions of these courses prior to October 1, 2019 will not count toward the FY20 requirement.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **TMS ID** | **Title** | **Hours** | **Assignment Date** | **FY20 MandatedDue Date** |
| 4527543 | Deferral Prevention | 1.5 | 10/1/2019 | 10/16/2019 (new date) |
| 4396799 | Pre-Discharge BDD Claim Development | 1.5 | 10/1/2019 | 12/6/2019 |
| 4486731 | Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) Claims Establishment (CEST) | 1 | 10/1/2019 | 12/6/2019 |
| 4245283  | Exams: Who, When, and How | 2.25 | 10/1/2019 | 12/6/2019 |
|   | TOTAL | 6.25 |   |   |

Questions regarding the training content or requirements should be directed to the Compensation Service Training Staff at CPTraining.VBACO@va.gov. Please contact VBATMSHELP.VBAVACO@va.gov for questions regarding the TMS item assignments.

### DoD SAFE

#### Some locations have reported the inability to gain access to DoD SAFE via <https://safe.apps.mil/>.

If you are having issues, follow these 3 steps.

1. Clear History
2. Clear Caches for Internet Explorer
3. Have https://\*.apps.mil in trusted sites (Internet Explorer > Tools > Compatibility View Settings)

Contact the IDES Mailbox if needed.

IDES Specific Topics

**Non-Duty Related Referred Conditions**

The VA/DoD MOA for IDES stipulates that only participants with duty-related impairments are eligible for IDES; members of the reserve component with non-duty related medical impairments are not covered by the IDES MOA. Considering the specifications of the MOA, and the complications and non-productive VA effort associated with evaluating non-duty related conditions, VA will now require a Line of Duty (LOD) yes determination for each referred condition in all IDES cases involving NAD Servicemembers.

MSC Implications

Effective immediately, MSCs must return any incoming NAD IDES referrals that does not include for a LOD yes determination (i.e., a determination showing the condition was incurred in the LOD) for each condition listed on the 21-0819. The referral should be accepted as complete only after the non-LOD condition is removed from the 21-0819, or a LOD yes determination is provided for all conditions shown on the 21-0819. **Exception:** If service-connection has already been established by VA for the referred condition, no LOD form is required.

**Notes:**

* The guidance is effective point forward. MSCs should not return referrals that had been previously deemed complete and accepted.
* This guidance is applicable only to cases involving NAD IDES participants. No LOD is required with AD IDES referrals.
* MSCs should continue to order examinations for all claimed issues indicated on the IDES application; there is no LOD requirement for a participant to claim issues in IDES.

DRAS Implications

Moving forward, DRAS will not determine disability evaluations for referred conditions when there is no basis for service connection in the evidence of record.

When non-duty related conditions have been referred by the Service Department, DRAS will continue to complete the following actions in accordance with standard procedures:

* address all other IDES conditions,
* provide the rating to the PEB, and
* update the *Proposed Rating End Date* in VTA.

Additionally, the DRAS must provide the following notification to the PEB:

*The evidence of record does not establish that the referred condition, [name of condition] is related to the participant’s military service; as such, no disability rating will be provided. If DoD has made a determination that the condition was incurred in the line of duty, please provide a copy of the LOD.*

This notification can be provided to the PEB in the manner deemed most appropriate/effective by DRAS management. This notice must also be added as a note in VTA.

**Note:** All issues formally claimed by the participant must still be decided for VA purposes.

**Requesting PTSD Examinations in IDES Cases**
When ordering examinations for PTSD, MSCs must consider whether the claimant is currently service connected (SC). The *PTSD Initial* DBQ should be requested only when service-connection has not yet been established. If the participant is currently SC for PTSD, the *PTSD Review* DBQ must be ordered.

If a Veteran with service-connected PTSD is referred to IDES on the basis of that condition, the MSC must request the PTSD Review DBQ ordered as indicated above. However, when the examination results are returned to the PEBLO, the MSC must provide a copy of the previously completed *Initial PTSD* exam, along with the current *PTSD Review* DBQ results.

New IDES Timeline/Stage Goals

DoD Directive-Type Memorandum (DTM) 18-004 – “Revised Timeliness Goals for the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES)”, dated September 19, 2019 was released by DoD. The new DTM changes he IDES timeline from 230 to 180 days effective October 1, 2019. However, we are still in discussions with DoD about timeliness goals for VA stages. Until further notice, changes, VA stage goals remain as indicated in the M21-1 for VA purposes.

Holiday Leave and Servicemember Availability during the Claims Development and Examination Phases

As we approach the holidays, MSCs are reminded to inquire about approved leave (non-emergency) during the initial interview that could interfere with the IDES process. If the participant indicates he or she has approved leave that would prevent the timely completion of exams, the MSC should return the referral to the PEBLO as an improper referral and remove the PCS Date. MSCs should confirm with the PEBLO that they are aware of the upcoming leave and see if something can be worked out (ex: SM will attend exams while on leave, etc.). Do not accept a case or submit exam requests if you know the participant will not be available to report for exams.

Please note: DoD policy allows commanders to grant leave to IDES participants for the welfare or morale of the Servicemember (SM), provided that the leave does not prevent timely completion of IDES appointments. Approved holiday leave does not necessarily constitute an improper referral; however, leave occurring within the first days of the referral, and/or periods of leave lasting over two weeks, are likely to prevent the timely completion of IDES appointments, and should be returned to the PEBLO.

Note: Deferment should not be used by PEBLOs as a reason for cases where the SM is going on leave. If you hear of this being done, contact the IDES Mailbox.

Current IDES Program Timeliness

As outreach specialists and VA’s frontline contact with SMs and Veterans, it is vital that we are realistic in our communications regarding claims processing times. Below is the current program timeliness data (ADC) as of September 30, 2019.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **September** **2019** | **IDES (AD/NAD)** |
| **Claim Dev**  | **6/27** |
| **Medical Stage** | **41/37** |
| **Proposed Ratings** | **23/40** |
| **Recon Ratings**  | **15/15** |
| **Exit Interviews** | **8/6** |
| **Final Ratings** | **27/na** |

 **Source:** VTA Completed Reports October 1, 2019 (7am ET)

**Providing IDES Exam Appointment Information to the PEBLOs**

When requested, MSCs will provide exam appointment information to the PEBLOs within 48 hours after the exam requests have been submitted. VHA exam appointment information is available in CAPRI and QTC/VES exam appointment information is available in VBMS/EMS. Providing appointment information to PEBLO, so SM is aware of appointments should reduce missed examinations.

**HAIMS STR Transfer Update**

HAIMS continues to have issues which is impacting Pre-discharge cases. HAIMS tested a hotfix a couple of weeks ago which failed, and another hotfix is being tested, and if testing goes well, should be deployed soon. We will provide an update once we have more information. Continue to use all other approved methods for STR transfer (If HAIMS not working) until the issue is resolved.

VTA Reminders

**Exam End Date and Medical Evaluation End Date**

MSCs are reminded they should not change these data fields once the exams have been provided to the PEBLO and a NARSUM Date has been entered by the PEBLO. If an MSC feels these fields need to be changed/updated after a NARSUM date has been entered, contact the IDES Mailbox with details/circumstances for guidance before changing any dates.

**Note:** When the NARSUM and exam dates are out of sequence, DoD contacts this office and we have to contact the MSC.

BDD Specific Topics

**Intake Site Responsibilities and Scanning of BDD Claims Documents**

Per [M21-1 III.i.2.B.1.i](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014101/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-B-Division-of-Responsibilities-for-Processing-Benefits-Delivery-at-Discharge-BDD-and-BDD-Excluded-Claims#1i), upon receipt of a BDD claim and throughout the time an intake site has custody of it, the intake site is responsible for updating VBMS to show:

* all claimed contentions,
* all claimed dependents, and
* any development actions taken.

Per [M21-1, III.i.2.B.2.b](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014101/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-2%2C-Section-B---Division-of-Responsibilities-for-Processing-Benefits-Delivery-at-Discharge-%28BDD%29-and-BDD-Excluded-Claims), in addition to the responsibilities described in [M21-1, III.i.2.B.1](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014101/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-B-Division-of-Responsibilities-for-Processing-Benefits-Delivery-at-Discharge-BDD-and-BDD-Excluded-Claims#1), intake sites are responsible for following the steps in the table provided in [M21-1, III.i.2.B.2.b](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014101/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-2%2C-Section-B---Division-of-Responsibilities-for-Processing-Benefits-Delivery-at-Discharge-%28BDD%29-and-BDD-Excluded-Claims). This includes establishing the BDD claim in VBMS per [M21-1, III.i.2.B.2.b (Step 3)](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014101/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-2%2C-Section-B---Division-of-Responsibilities-for-Processing-Benefits-Delivery-at-Discharge-%28BDD%29-and-BDD-Excluded-Claims). The intake site is also responsible to ensure that BDD claims documents are forwarded for VCIP scanning or scan the documents locally per [M21-1, III.i.2.B.2.b (Step 5)](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014101/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-2%2C-Section-B---Division-of-Responsibilities-for-Processing-Benefits-Delivery-at-Discharge-%28BDD%29-and-BDD-Excluded-Claims). **BDD claims documents must not be sent to Centralized Mail** as this will severely delay the time sensitive processing of the BDD claim.

**Participant Profile for BDD Claimants**

Follow the below guidance in [M21-1 III.i.2.D.3.d, MSC Actions When Processing an IDES Referral Package](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000033257/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-D-Overview-of-the-Integrated-Disability-Evaluation-System-IDES-and-Initial-Claims-Development#3d) (steps 11 and 12) for BDD claims as well as IDES regarding updating military service in Participant Profile.  We are currently in the process of updating the BDD M21-1 section to include this guidance.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 11 | Ensure that Participant Profile accurately reflects the participant’s* current branch of service, and
* date of entry into active duty, if the participant is currently on active duty.

**Note**:  If the participant is currently on active duty, do not check the SERVICE VERIFIED box.  Service should not be marked as verified until after* the participant has been discharged, and
* VA has received verification of the participant’s separation date and character of discharge.
 |
| 12 | If the participant had a prior period of military service that is not yet verified in the corporate record, the MSC must* obtain verification of service, as discussed in [M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii, 6.B.2.a](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000044297/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-ii%2C-Chapter-6%2C-Section-B---Service-Requirements-and-Verification-of-Eligibility), and
* date of entry into active duty, if the participant is currently on active duty.
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**BDD Eligibility Dates Calculator**

Thank you to Kevin from Buffalo for sharing his BDD Eligibility Dates Calculator that calculates the precise RAD dates that can be accepted for a BDD claim. Begin by entering the date the claim was received in the stamped date cell located in cell E14 as shown below.



This will calculate the RAD dates 180 to 90 days from this stamped date which can be found at the top of the spreadsheet (cells A2 and C2). It also includes these RAD dates in cells E17, E18, and E20. The calculator also includes the date to request a VBA contract exam since this exam can be requested 15 days before the claimant is available. The BDD Eligibility Dates Calculator can be found under Pre-Discharge Links and Tools on the [Pre-Discharge Intranet Page](https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/vbadod/predischarge.asp) and can be found [here](https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/VBADOD/docs/predischarge/1BDDEligibilityDatesCalculator.xls). It is not required to use this tool; however, it is a useful tool when processing BDD and BDD excluded claims.

Current BDD Program Timeliness

As outreach specialists and VA’s frontline contact with SMs and Veterans, it is vital that we are realistic in our communications regarding claims processing times. Below is the current program timeliness data as of October 7, 2019.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **October 7, 2019** | **BDD** |
| **Completed FYTD** | **1,205** |
| **Receipts FYTD** | **497** |
| **Pending** | **5,662** |
| **# Completed w/in 30 Days of Discharge** | **910** |
| **% Completed w/in 30 Days of Discharge** | **75.5%** |
| **Avg. Days to Complete FYTD** | **25.8** |

**Source:** Tableau BDD History Report and PA&I Daily Snapshot, October 7, 2019

Open Floor

**Question:** I have BDD claims that have been sent to VCIP scanning and are taking five to 30 days to upload the documents to VBMS. Is there a known problem with VCIP scanning?

**Answer:** There are no known VCIP scanning issues at this time. If you are experiencing issues with VCIP scanning delays, follow steps 6 and 7 of [M21-1, III.i.2.B.2.b.](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014101/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-B-Division-of-Responsibilities-for-Processing-Benefits-Delivery-at-Discharge-BDD-and-BDD-Excluded-Claims) When contacting the VCIP Mailbox, copy the Pre-Discharge mailbox.

**Question:** Why am I getting conflicting SM exam appointment information in VBMS?

**Answer:** MSCs should use the vendor’s exam portal (QTC or VES) for SM exam appointment information. The appointment information provided in EMS is given in zulu time whichcould lead to confusion. Providing exam appointment information from the vendor’s exam portal will give the SM the most accurate information.

Next Teleconferences

The next BDD/IDES Call is scheduled for Tuesday, November 12, 2019 at 2PM ET. Please submit IDES questions and proposed topics for discussion to the IDES Mailbox, and BDD questions and proposed topics for discussion to the Pre-Discharge BDD Mailbox no later than COB, Thursday, October 31, 2019.

Next month’s BDD/IDES Coaches call is scheduled for Thursday November 14, 2019 at 2PM ET. Please submit IDES questions and proposed topics for discussion to the IDES Mailbox, and BDD questions and proposed topics for discussion to the Pre-Discharge BDD Mailbox no later than COB, Thursday, October 31, 2019.