**Ready for Decision VSR Refresher**

**Instructor Lesson Plan**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this lesson is to provide a refresher training to Veteran Service Representatives (VSRs) in the Pension Management Center (PMC) for how to ensure a claim is properly advanced to the claim status of “Ready for Decision” and to assist in decreasing the overall number of deferrals created by Rating Veterans Service Representative (RVSRs).

TIME REQUIRED: 1.5 hours

INSTRUCTIONAL Online classroom environment (via Skype).

METHOD:

PREREQUISITES: PMC VSRs should have completed basic introductory training.

TARGET AUDIENCE: PMC VSRs

OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this lesson the VSR should be able to:

* Correctly identify a valid claim.
* Correctly identify that you have verified military service.
* Stress the significance of opening all documents received with a claim in order to determine relevance to the claim.
* Ensure all development is complete before advancing the claim to a status of “Ready for Decision.”
* For claims of service connection for the cause of death, understand the need to review the following:
  + The file to determine if the Veteran was service connected for any conditions
  + The Veteran’s death certificate to include a cause and manner of death
  + The service treatment records (STRs) and official military personal file (OMPF) are of record
* If DIC is claimed on a 534EZ and there is a co-pending burial from the same claimant where service connection for the cause of death is contended, note that service-connected (SC) burial development is needed if we cannot grant SC death.
* The requirement to obtain and associate relevant VA medical records before advancing the claim to a status of “Ready for Decision.”
* The requirement to follow proper procedures for obtaining private treatment reports.
* Understand the procedures for reviewing the file, annotating the file, and developing (if applicable) for when herbicide exposure is contended.
* Understand the procedures for reviewing the file, annotating the file, and developing (if applicable) for when asbestos exposure is contended.
* Understand the procedures for reviewing the file, annotating the file, and developing (if applicable) for when radiation exposure is contended.
* Understand the procedures for reviewing the file, annotating the file, and developing (if applicable) for when exposure to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune is contended.

MATERIALS: Course handout/outline; 38 CFR regulations; M21-1; Locally made

job aids, to include “Conducting the Enterprise Search in CAPRI,” and “VAMC\_CAPRI References.”

TRAINING AREA/TOOLS: Online Classroom Accessibility (Skype)

REFERENCES: 38 CFR 3.312; 38 CFR 3.309; M21-1