

VAU.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Pension and Fiduciary (P&F) Service

Fiduciary Quality Call

Date: January 30, 2020

TMS: # 4551004

AGENDA TOPICS

[ITEM 1: November 2019 Quality Analysis](#)[ITEM 2: Negligence Determinations](#)[ITEM 3: BFFS Quality Review Workflow Defect](#)[ITEM 4: November 2019 National Quality Review status](#)[CLOSING, QUESTIONS, NEXT QUALITY CALL](#)[Post Call Follow up](#)

AGENDA ITEMS

Agenda item: November 2019 Quality Analysis**Presenter:** John Herron, Analyst**Target Audience:**

Quality Review Specialists (QRS) and Quality Review Team (QRT) Coaches/Assistant Coaches

Discussion:

Quality data is based on the 12 months of reviews two months prior to the Director's Dashboard performance period. For example, November 2019's quality is based on the total amount of reviews and errors that occurred between October 2018 through September 2019.

A trend analysis was conducted for errors cited for the month of November 2019. Out of 70 reviews, there were six substantive errors cited. Error E3 on the Field Examination Quality Checklist (Does the field examination report document the beneficiary's current income, expenses, and assets (FPM 2.D.3)) remains a troublesome issue. The Quality and Oversight Team has reached out to Procedures for clarification on what is allowed versus what is not allowed for verification purposes for income, expenses, and assets. We will provide guidance to the field once it is received.

November 2019 Fiduciary Hub Quality Analysis
Tuesday, January 21, 2020

| Hub | Reviews | Question | Errors | Error Reference | Count |
|-------------|---------|----------|--------|------------------|-------|
| HUB 319 | 15 | 15 | 1 | 2.D.3 | 2 |
| HUB 326 | 6 | 6 | | 2.D.9 | 1 |
| HUB 327 | 14 | 14 | 3 | 2.D.9, 2.G.1.e | 1 |
| HUB 330 | 9 | 9 | | 3.B.1.a, 3.E.1.d | 1 |
| HUB 334 | 13 | 13 | 1 | 3.D.5.b, 4.F.3.b | 1 |
| HUB 341 | 13 | 13 | 1 | | |
| Grand Total | 70 | 70 | 6 | Grand Total | 6 |

| Type | Count | Errors |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------|--------|
| 511 - Initial Appointment Adult | 12 | 2 |
| 513 - Successor Initial Appointment Adult | 8 | 1 |
| 521 - Scheduled Fiduciary/Beneficiary Adult | 18 | 1 |
| 522 - Unscheduled Fiduciary/Beneficiary Adult | 3 | |
| 531 - Scheduled Streamline Exam | 9 | |
| 560 - Court Appointed Accounting | 1 | |
| 565 - Federal Fiduciary Accounting | 19 | 2 |
| Grand Total | 70 | 6 |

References/Contacts

- ✓ M21-4 8.3.b. General Guidelines for Quality Reviews

Agenda item: Negligence Determinations

Presenter: David Gunnell,
Analyst

Target Audience:

Quality Review Specialists (QRS) and Quality Review Team (QRT) Coaches/Assistant Coaches

Discussion:

Pension and Fiduciary Service has been receiving numerous misuse cases in which there is no BD number indicating a debt has been established. Also, many are negative for referral to OIG following the misuse determination.

Response:

The Hub must refer all misuse cases requiring the establishment and collection of misuse debts to the RO finance activity within 5 business days of referral to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) (5.F.1.c.) and is responsible for updating BFFS as information is received from the RO finance activity (5.F.1.b.).

For more information on Hub and RO Finance Activity responsibilities, see MP-4, Part IV, Chapter 13.04(a)(4).

References/Contacts

- ✓ FPM 5.F.1.b., Responsibilities of the Hub

References/Contacts

- ✓ FPM 5.F.1.c., Timeliness of Referrals to the RO Finance Activity for Establishment and Collection of Misuse Debt
- ✓ FPM 5.F.3.a., Process for Debt Collection
- ✓ FPM 5.F.5, Debt Reconciliation

Agenda item: BFFS Quality Review Workflow Defect

Presenter: Kelly Wante, Chief

Target Audience:

Quality Review Specialists (QRS) and Quality Review Team (QRT) Coaches/Assistant Coaches

Discussion:

Pension and Fiduciary (P&F) Service has identified a defect in the Beneficiary-Fiduciary Field System (BFFS) quality review workflow. As a result, it has been determined that all reconsiderations submitted by the Fiduciary Hubs have not been routed to P&F Service in BFFS. P&F Service is working to resolve this issue as soon as possible.

Until the defect has been resolved, Fiduciary Hubs should send notice of any new reconsideration requests to the Training, Quality, and Oversight mailbox using the attached template. Responses from P&F Service will be routed via email. This issue will have no impact on Fiduciary Hub national accuracy.

Questions pertaining to BFFS functionality and reporting may be directed to the P&F Service Business Management mailbox, [VAVBAWAS/CO/P&F BUS MGMT](#), at the attention of P&F Service POC [Dameon Cox](#) and [Seamus Welch](#).



Reconsideration
Request Template.docx

References/Contacts

- ✓ Email dated January 22, 2020

Agenda item: November 2019 National Quality Review Status

Presenter: Kelly Wante, Chief

Target Audience:

Quality Review Specialists (QRS) and Quality Review Team (QRT) Coaches/Assistant Coaches

Discussion:

- **Question from Salt Lake City:** Salt Lake City has noticed the December 2019 National STAR quality results have been arriving; however, they are not seeing the results of the 2019 quality arriving to their station. Is P&F able to provide an estimated time for completion and receipt of the results of the November 2019 national quality reviews?
- **Response:** P&F Service has finalized reviews for December 2019. Stations should have been notified of errors cited from October through December 2019; however, we have

received notice from several stations that this has not occurred, primarily for the month of November. Following the quality call on January 23, 2020, P&F Service identified a defect within BFFS that caused this issue and has since resolved it. Stations should now see reviews completed through December 2019 (i.e., FYTD).

References/Contacts

- ✓ M21-4 8.3.b. General Guidelines for Quality Reviews

Closing Comments

P&F Quality Mailbox:

We will solicit for agenda topic(s) for each future Quality Call. If you have a specific topic suggestion, please feel free to email it to the Pension and Fiduciary (P&F) Service Quality, Training, and Oversight mailbox at PFTNGQUALOVRST.VBACO@va.gov

Quality Call Bulletins

Quality Call Bulletins can be found in the following location:

https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/PENSIONANDFIDUCIARY/Quality_Call_Bulletins.asp

The next Quality Call is tentatively scheduled for early March.

TMS Courses:

All Fiduciary Quality Calls and bulletins will be available in TMS. Once the monthly bulletin is finalized, information will be sent to the Fiduciary Hubs which will include the TMS #.

Post-Call Follow Up

Quality Call Recording:

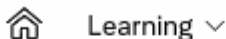
A recording of the January 2020 Fiduciary Quality Call can be found here (open in Chrome):

<https://vbatraining.adobeconnect.com/p605mqut3qio/>

TMS Course:

Available content from the Quality Call (bulletin, recording, etc.) will be available in TMS! The TMS # for the January 2020 Fiduciary Quality Call is **4551004** (Pension and Fiduciary Quality Call – Fiduciary January 2020)

The link to TMS is [HERE](#). It is recommended to use Google Chrome when viewing the TMS information.



My Learning

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Pension & Fiduciary Quality Call - Fiduciary January 2020

Q&A:

Question 1: Indianapolis Fiduciary Hub

What is an E3, isn't that an outdated checklist?

P&F Response:

The E3 error concerns the documentation of the income and expenses. This has been consistent with the error trends in National Quality Last year. The checklist is in the M21-4, Chapter 8, Appendix B. Here's the link to the FE quality checklist.

[https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/55440000001034/content/554400000127439/Chapter%208.%20%20Fiduciary%20Hub%20\(Hub\)%20National%20Quality%20Reviews%20and%20Quality%20Review%20Teams%20\(QRT\)#Appendix%20B](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/55440000001034/content/554400000127439/Chapter%208.%20%20Fiduciary%20Hub%20(Hub)%20National%20Quality%20Reviews%20and%20Quality%20Review%20Teams%20(QRT)#Appendix%20B).

Question 2: Indianapolis Fiduciary Hub

Is there any plan to use an updated checklist to mirror the checklists that we use in the field?

P&F Response:

Currently, the only approved checklist for STAR is the Field Examination Quality Checklist and Accounting Quality Checklist that was effective December 2017. The checklists used in the field are the task-based checklists implemented with the newly adopted national performance standards for Field Examiners, Legal Instruments Examiners, and Fiduciary Service Representatives in November 2019, retroactively to October 1, 2019. The new performance standards were implemented to better support VA's goals and help to align Pension and Fiduciary (P&F) Service goals with the VA's priorities. New standards also allowed for the future state of the VA as we work towards greater integration across systems. The task-based quality checklist allows greater consistency with quality for individuals and Fiduciary Hubs. There is no current plan for STAR to begin using the task-based checklists.

Question 3: Louisville Fiduciary Hub

Do we have to wait until the solicitation to submit questions?

P&F Response:

Not at all. You can submit them as you think of them at any time. Just send all pension and fiduciary related question to our Quality and Oversight mailbox at PFTNGQUALOVRST.VBACO@va.gov and any policy and procedure related question to our policy mailbox at PFPOLPROC.VBACO@va.gov. We will solicit questions each month approximately 2.5 weeks prior to our Quality calls. It will be at times necessary to refer

questions to other teams for an appropriate answer. However, it is our intention to ensure questions are answered in a timely manner and responses provided to all of the Hubs for consistency.

Question 4: Louisville Fiduciary Hub

Will the changes to the amount of STAR reviews conducted each month be retroed back to October?

P&F Response:

Yes, the quality sample size is retroactively effective for October 1, 2019, however, the new sample was first used for the sample pulled in December 2019. The adjusted quality samples took into account those already completed for the FY. The Office of Performance, Analysis, and Integrity (PA&I) has also adjusted their quality metric calculation to account for this sample shift.

Question 5: Columbia Fiduciary Hub

Could we please have a copy of the trends portion?

P&F Response:

Of course. We will be sending all materials out with the final bulletin.

Solicitation Q&A:

Question 1: Columbia Fiduciary Hub

FPM 2.D.3.a., 2.D.3.d., 2.D.3.i.

CFH would like to request more information on the documentation requirements as listed in the above reference. This would be in regard to what is allowed versus what would not be allowed for verification purposes for income, expenses, and assets.

P&F Response:

FPM 2.D.3.a. details acceptable methods of verification of income for the beneficiary and dependents. Acceptable methods of verification must show income source, frequency, and to whom the income was paid. FPM 2.D.3.a provides that acceptable methods of verification are viewing an original, photocopied, or computer-generated financial institution document, which does not show any signs of alteration or viewing the check or check stub.

The field examiner must list one of the acceptable methods listed in the FPM 2.D.3.a, 2.D.3.d, or 2.D.3.i. to verify income, expenses and assets. Additional methods of verification of the income, expenses and assets are improper.

Further, viewing the corporate record will provide verification of certain types of income. Any methods of confirmation of income must include income source, frequency and payee.

FPM 2.D.3.d. states that FE must verify recurring expenses which are expenses the beneficiary can expect to pay on a regular basis. Expense verification method must confirm the expense type and the monthly expense amount. FPM 2.D.3.d provides acceptable methods of verification include:

- viewing in original, photocopied, or computer-generated financial institution document which does not exhibit any signs of alteration

- reviewing billing statements, or
- speaking to the creditor or service provider.

The FE must verify assets. FPM 2.D.3.i states that acceptable means of verification include:

- an original, photocopied, or computer-generated financial institution document which does not exhibit any signs of alteration, not older than 90 days from the date of the field examination
- an online statement viewed from the financial institution's website
- VA Form 21-4718, Certificate of Balance on Deposit and Authorization to Disclose Financial Records, obtained from the financial institutions, or
- deeds, titles, policies, tax or plans that show ownership.

The verification method must provide the documentation requirements as specified in the chart in FPM 2.D.3.i.

| Asset Type | Asset Description | Field Examination Report Documentation Requirements |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Non-liquid Assets A non-liquid asset is an item or possession that may not easily be converted to cash and generally requires a buyer to change the asset to cash.</p> | <p>Luxury items, property (excluding real estate) or other items that may not be easily converted to cash</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asset description • verification date • verification method • approximate value • balance owed • percent owned, and • co-owner name, if any. |
| | <p>Real estate (including buildings and land)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of property type • property address • verification date • verification method • if there is a VA Home Loan associated with the property • if the property is occupied • approximate balance owed • income received from the property, if any • co-owner's name, if any, and • payee for income received, if any. |
| <p>Liquid Assets A liquid asset is an item that may easily be converted into cash</p> | <p>Financial accounts such as checking, savings, money market accounts, cash on hand, short-term investments approved by VA, or other items that may be easily converted to cash. Note: This includes savings and/or checking accounts where VA benefits are deposited.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • account type • account description • verification date • verification method • who account is managed by • name of the financial institution • account number • amount on deposit • date of financial institution • statement ending balance • if the account is properly titled • whether the account houses VA derived funds, and • corrective action taken (if applicable). |

If the verification method confirms the documentation requirements as set forth in FPM 2.D.3.i, it is an acceptable means of verification.

Question 2: Columbia Fiduciary Hub

FPM 2.D.1.e.

CFH would like to request more information on when a face to face interview will not be conducted. FEs are still confused about this process when the proposed fid does not live in their jurisdiction and getting the information over the phone.

P&F Response:

We apologize for the delay. This question is best answered by the Policy and Procedures team. We have submitted the request to them. Once we receive a response, we will distribute to the Fiduciary Hubs.

See you soon!

