Monthly Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) and

Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) Conference Call Read Ahead

Compensation Service

BDD/IDES/Mil Pay Staff (212A)

February 11, 2020—2 PM ET

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

This read-ahead is provided to facilitate discussion during the conference call.

**Change to Call Notes:** The Call Notes from the previous month’s call will be an appendix to the current month’s Read Ahead (there is no longer a separate Call Notes document). Ex: The Call Notes for the January Call will be in the February Read Ahead. The TMS # for the current month’s call should be active with-in a week of the call’s completion. A Calendar Blast will notify the field when the TMS # is active. The TMS number for this month’s call will be provided during the call.

Please sign–up for the [C&P Calendar Subscription Service](http://vbacodmoint1.vba.va.gov/bl/21/calendar/cal_Subscribe.asp) to receive notification that the read-ahead is available and for notification when the TMS number is active.

**Call-in Information and New Guidance**

Call in info:

[Join Skype Meeting](https://meet.RTC.VA.GOV/andrew.reese/JDC6LJZ6)

844-358-7954, 844-210-0201 or 844-894-0415. Code is 496808907#.

The IM/Chat session will be disabled during the call. Ask questions over the phone during the call or send an email to the appropriate staff corporate mailbox.

When the presenter mutes the audience for questions, follow the guidance below to unmute yourself:

1. If you are dialed in through your computer (select Use Skype for Business when signing into Skype), you must find your name in the attendee list and unmute yourself by right clicking the microphone
2. If you are dialed in through a phone (select “Call me at” or “Don’t Join Audio” when signing into Skype), unmute yourself using \*6
3. Do not unmute yourself if you do not need to speak

General Topics for Discussion

**Exam Staff (217) Demo of QTC and VES Appointment Notifications**

**SAVE THE DATE: May 11-15, 2020 Military Services Coordinator (MSC) 2020 Training Conference**

Mark your calendars! The National Training Conference for MSCs will be May 11-15, 2020. Training days are May 12-14, 2020. The location and additional details are being finalized. The Office of Field Operations (OFO) will coordinate with District and Regional Offices to arrange MSC attendance. MSCs should receive notification and further information through those channels. Thank you to those who have submitted suggestions. Our staff will continue to gather your ideas for topics and suggestions. Please send these to michelle.collins@va.gov ***NLT COB*** ***February 12, 2020.***

IDES Specific Topics

**IDES Deferral Special Issue**

The VBMS special issue, *IDES Deferral*, is intended for use only by DRAS, and only in instances in which the DRAS must defer an issue on the final IDES rating and continue the EP. The special issue serves to ensure that these claims are routed away from the DRAS and routed to the appropriate VSC for completion.

The *IDES Deferral* special issue is **not** for MSC use, nor for use in any other situation other than the specific instance described above. Improper use of this special issue causes IDES claims to be misrouted, disrupts the IDES process and delays delivery of Veteran’s benefits

**M21-1 Update: IDES Exit Interviews and Related Requirements**

Updates to [M21-1 III.i.2.E.6](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000046269/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-2%2C-Section-E---Department-of-Veterans-Affairs-%28VA%29-Responsibilities-Based-on-Medical-Evaluation-Board-%28MEB%29-and-Physical-Evaluation-Board-%28PEB%29-Outcomes) (which covers IDES exit interviews and related activity) were published on January 30, 2020. A summary of the changes is provided below; however, MSCs are encouraged to review the [Key Changes Document](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000046269/) for a full and detailed listing of all changes.

The update generally relaxes previous exit interview requirements, allowing increased flexibility for both participants and MSCs. MSCs must continue to offer exit interviews to all IDES participants, but the exit interview is no longer considered compulsory and the manual now acknowledges that participants may decline the exit interview. Further, IDES participants may now elect to complete the exit interview by telephone as a matter of preference or convenience. Finally, the timeframe for MSCs to document exit interview outcomes in VTA has been extended from 10 to 14 calendar days.

[M21-1 III.i.2.E.6](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000046269/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-2%2C-Section-E---Department-of-Veterans-Affairs-%28VA%29-Responsibilities-Based-on-Medical-Evaluation-Board-%28MEB%29-and-Physical-Evaluation-Board-%28PEB%29-Outcomes) was updated to:

* indicate the requirement for the MSC to enter the *Return to Duty Letter Date* in VTA (when applicable)
* clarify responsibility and procedures for processing BDD claims submitted by/from former IDES participants

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) for January 2020.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **January 2020** | **IDES Goal (AD/NAD)** | **IDES (AD/NAD)** |
| **Claim Dev**  | **5/11** | **7/11** |
| **Medical Stage** | **32** | **47/44** |
| **Proposed Ratings** | **20** | **23/33** |
| **Recon Ratings**  | **4** | **24/32** |
| **Exit Interviews** | **14** | **9/10** |
| **Final Ratings** | **20** | **28/na** |

 **Source:** VTA Completed Reports February 3, 2020 (9am ET)

 **Note:** VA is using the goals from the 230-day process.

VTA Reminders

**VTA v.2.4.6**

VTA v.2.4.6 was released January 29th. The release contained Parallel Processing updates. See Folder 6 in the VTA Knowledge Center for specific information regarding the release.

BDD Specific Topics

**Automation of STRs for BDD Claims**

VA and DoD continue to work on the automation of Service Treatment Records (STRs) for BDD claims. Automation would eliminate the need for Servicemembers (SM) to provide a copy of their STRs when filing their BDD claim. A notification of interest (NOI) would be sent to DoD to send the STRs after the claim has been successfully established in VBMS. A proof of concept is forthcoming to ensure the desired results are achieved and identify any issues before full implementation.

Until this new process is fully implemented and communicated throughout VBA, SMs must continue to provide STRs to be eligible for BDD claim processing as stated in [M21-1, III.i.2.A.1.d](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014099/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-A-General-Information-on-Pre-Discharge-Claims).

**BDD Ready for Decision (RFD) Claims Suspense**

There have been reports of RFD BDD claims not being rated and instead the suspense date being updated a few days before the SMs anticipated discharge date, causing National Work Queue (NWQ) to recall the claim. As a reminder, per [M21-1, III.i.2.B.4.d](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#4e), BDD claims are rated while the SM is on active duty in order to provide a decision on their claim as soon as possible after discharge.

**NWQ BDD Claims Routing**

NWQ implemented the following adjustments to the distribution of BDD claims effective January 23, 2020. This information was distributed by NWQ through the District Offices.

* BDD claims Awaiting Decision (RFD BDD claims) will distribute five days prior to the date of discharge (as indicated by the date of claim), rather than the current distribution at 45 days prior to discharge
* BDD claims Awaiting Decision will no longer be recalled by NWQ when Awaiting Award, and will remain on station through completion, or if returned to Open claim status
* BDD Foreign Rating end products (EPs) in all cycles will distribute to all stations currently processing BDD claims, and will no longer be restricted to the Pittsburgh RO

The [BDD Foreign Examinations Tip Sheet](https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/VBADOD/docs/predischarge/BDDForeignExamsTipSheet.pdf) is available on the [Pre-Discharge Intranet site](https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/vbadod/predischarge.asp).

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 February 4, 2020.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **February 4, 2020** | **Goal** | **Data** |
| **Completed FYTD** |  | **12,174** |
| **Receipts FYTD** |  | **9,672** |
| **Pending** |  | **4,194** |
| **# Completed w/in 30 Days of Discharge** |  | **6,898** |
| **% Completed w/in 30 Days of Discharge** | **100%** | **56.7%** |
| **Avg. Days to Complete FYTD** | **30** | **42.8** |

**Source:** Tableau BDD History Report and VBA C&P Daily Snapshot, February 5, 2020

Open Floor

Next Teleconferences

The next BDD/IDES Call is scheduled for Tuesday, March 10, 2020 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 close of business (COB), Wednesday February 26, 2020.

The next BDD/IDES Coaches Call is scheduled for March 5, 2020. These calls will be the 1st Thursday of the last month in the quarter (March, June, Sept, Dec). Invite will be sent ASAP.

**Appendix 1:** **Call Notes from the January 2020 Comp Service BDD/IDES Conference Call**

The following notes provide a summary of questions and discussion from the January BDD/IDES Conference Call. For a complete description of the topics discussed on the call please review the [January Read Ahead](https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/VBADOD/docs/predischarge/Jan2020BDD_IDESCallReadAhead.pdf).

**Requirement for Line of Duty (LOD) with NAD IDES Referrals**

**Question:** What DoD office was this information [requirement] passed too?

**Answer:** Defense Health Agency, Office of Health Services Policy & Oversight.

**Question:** Is an LOD required for all conditions or just the referred condition?

**Answer:** LODs are only required for referred conditions.

**VBMS Compliance**

**Question:** If documents are received in the eFolder upside down, should we print, re-scan and upload?

**Answer:** Only if the MSC is the one who has done the initial scanning should the document be corrected.

**Question:** If documents are received from DoD upside down via HAIMS, can we return cases as incomplete?

**Answer:** No. Get with your PEBLOs/PEBLO Supervisor about this. We will communicate this to DoD.

**Brokering Cases to DRAS**

**Question:** If exams are in the Legacy Tab, should I make a copy and upload to the eFolder?

**Answer:** No; just make note in the eFolder so the DRAS knows where the documents are located.

**Military Services Coordinator (MSC) 2020 Conference**

**Question:** Will all MSCs attend the conference?

**Answer:** Yes. The plan is for all MSCs to attend.

**Question:** Will DoD be informed that all MSCs are out that week and cases will not be worked?

**Answer:** DoD will be informed of the conference, however, a decision on the acceptance/non-acceptance of new cases is TBD.

**BDD-Excluded Claims Establishment**

**Question:** When a claim is BDD-Excluded, we change the EP to a BDD-Excluded rating EP and non-BDD claim label, but we still work the claim. Is that correct or do we only establish the claim, enter contentions, and send documents to scanning or scan locally? Quality Review (QR) is still reviewing these claims and I’ve received QR errors for not developing the claim.

**Answer:** Follow all guidance from QR and your local leadership, unless there is conflict with the BDD M21-1 guidance. If new guidance is needed, we will announce on future monthly BDD/IDES call.