Centralized Printing Frequently Asked Questions

1 System/Process Questions

1.1 Q: The presentation/training mentioned that Centralized Benefits Communication Management (CBCM) will provide the ability to give electronic notice to Veterans. When and how is this happening?

CBCM is being worked in two, or more, phases. Phase one is Centralized Printing (currently in the pilot stages for eventual national rollout). Phase Two, in development, will implement the delivery of digital outbound correspondence.

1.2 Q: Which systems are affected by the changes with Centralized Printing?

VBMS Core and VBMS Awards have added functionality that allows correspondences to be sent to Centralized Printing.

1.3 Q: The training materials showed I could create a package in VBMS Core or Awards through the normal letter creation in each system or by pulling documents from the eFolder, however I use letter creator or PCGL to create some of my letters. How do I send these to centralized printing?

To send PC generated letters (letters created using applications like Letter Creator, PCGL, etc.), create your letter as normal in the application and save the letter in a format that can be added to the VBMS eFolder. Once the correspondence has been successfully added to the eFolder, users can send these documents to Centralized Printing by creating a package from the eFolder. Please see the Core Job aid and PowerPoint Training presentation for step-by-step instructions.

1.4 Q: How do I know my letters are getting to Veterans on time if I don't put them in the mail myself?

CBCM is committed to ensuring letters are mailed to Veterans/Claimants/Representatives consistently with current, expected timeframes. During the on-going pilot, the CBCM team is monitoring data including the date the letter was transmitted to the print vendor, postmarked dates, dates of receipt, etc. The CBCM team will analyze this information to identify impacts to the mail process and implement any necessary adjustments.

VBMS also includes Job Status indicators to let users know the status of their packages. Please see the job aids and PowerPoint Training presentation for more information.

1.5 Q: Are there other ways a package will be automatically generated in VBMS Core besides through use of the Letter cheveron?

Yes, a package will be automatically created when a *Request for Application* or *Standard 5103* is generated through claims establishment. During either of these processes, the green banner will not be

displayed to notify the user of the package creation. Instead, the user will have to navigate to the Package Manager after completion of claims establishment to view and send the package.

1.6   Q: When I am creating a new package and I have to name it, what is the naming convention I am to follow?

When creating a package, name the package based on the request being made (i.e. Due Process Notification) and the correspondence date (i.e. Due Process Notification – 12/31/17).

1.7   Q: I am processing return mail. Can I resend a package to a claimant?

When processing return mail, please continue to follow the guidance in the M21-1 III.ii.1.B.6. A new package will have to be created and sent to claimants to allow the cover letter can be included in the resend.

1.8   For those documents in the legacy tab in VBMS-Core, how do we include them in a letter package?

To include documents in a letter package that are currently stored in VBMS legacy tab, please save them as a PDF and upload them to the VBMS eFolder tab. However, VBMS is not an approved system for storing Federal Tax Information (FTI). Therefore, please **do not add any documents to the VBMS eFolder that contains FTI** or create a package for Centralized Printing using a document containing FTI.

1.9   Can I send mail to foreign destinations through Centralized Printing?

At this time correspondences that has overseas addresses need to be printed and sent locally.

2   Power of Attorney

2.1   Q: In VBMS Core – how do I ensure I am sending correspondence to POAs?

Prior to letter finalization, a user must ensure that the necessary POA address information is added/correct (if auto populated) based on the information listed on the OGC website.

For VSOs, users must manually enter the claimant/veteran's Station of Jurisdiction address to ensure that the VSO will get a copy of the correspondence.

2.2   Q: How do I know which SOJ address to send VSO correspondence to? How do I know which address to use for which VSO?

All VSOs, regardless of the organization, will be sent to the claimant's SOJ for dissemination by the RO. For example, a letter for the American Legion and DAV would both be sent to the Hartford RO for Veterans living in Connecticut. The VSO name will automatically generate based on the POA code. Users only need enter the address provided.

A list of SOJ addresses was provided with the Centralized Printing resources.

Please refer to this list when searching for SOJ addresses. For Veterans/Claimants whose station is 372-Washington, determine the nearest SOJ based on their zip code.

2.3   Q: Why are we sending VSO letter copies when they have access to VBMS? Isn't this a waste of time and money? This also contradicts the manual reference M21-1, I.3.B.1.c, which states that if a VSO has access to the eFolder they do not need paper copies. What guidance are we supposed to follow?

The current resurgence of VSOs receiving paper copies of correspondence is tied to the Centralized Printing Initiative. The goal of CBCM is to eventually allow recipients to elect how they would like to receive VA correspondence (in print or digital means). VBA will create an opt-in option for recipients who agree to receive notifications in other means, i.e. e-mail. Until that opt-in process is established, Office of General Council advised that VBA is legally obligated to provide paper copies to claimants and their representatives.

VSO Leadership has been notified of this change in process due to Centralized Printing (which is currently in its pilot phase). They have been asked to share this information with their field offices.

At this time, Compensation Service and P&F Service are aware of the inconsistency between the manual citation referenced above and the procedures currently provided to Centralized Printing pilot stations. The Manual will be updated accordingly upon completion of the Centralized Printing Pilot. This will allow for time to ensure all procedures are clear and are based on the results of the pilot before making national changes. In the meantime, please continue to follow the guidance provided during training by sending VSOs copies of correspondence to the claimant SOJ.

2.4   Q: When entering an address from for a VSO from the SOJ reference, VBMS gives me an error message and suggests an alternative address format. Which address should I use?

The addresses provided for SOJs are correct. Please use address provided instead of VBMS suggestion.

3   Enclosures

3.1   Q: Do I need to add all enclosures/forms to all of my packages?

Package manager sends the documents you indicate. Only add documents that are not already in the Letter Preview. (For example, VA Form 4107 is included with a Redesigned Automated Decision Letter so you will not need to add it again.)

3.2   Q: What do I do if a form I need isn't available as a standard enclosure?

If a form isn't included in the standard enclosures, or is not listed below, please e-mail the VCIP mailbox: VAVBAWAS/CO/VCIP as Central Office is tracking missing forms for later inclusion into VBMS. After notifying VCIP, users can upload a non-fillable PDF version of the form for inclusion in a package.

Current forms unavailable for addition, as of January 31, 2018:

- VA Form 21-651
- VA Form 21-0788
- VA Form 21-4140-1
- VA Form 9