

Office of Administrative Review

DRO Onboarding Program– Instructor Guide (Full)



Purpose

This resource provides guidance for decision review operations center (DROC) instructors administering the full two-week Decision Review Officer (DRO) Onboarding Program



Audience

DROC DRO Onboarding Program instructors.



Resources

- Schedule
 - [DRO Onboarding Program Schedule](#)
- Learning Management Systems
 - [Talent Management System \(TMS\)](#)
 - [VBA Learning Catalog](#)
- Compensation and Pension Knowledge Management (CPKM) Portal
 - [M21-1, Adjudication Procedures Manual](#)
 - [M21-5, Appeals and Reviews Manual](#)

Instructions

This guide provides helpful information about [Instructor Preparation](#) and additional information about each type of instruction contained in the DRO Onboarding Program, as follows – as noted/color-coded in the [OAR – DROC VIP Training Curriculum \(schedule\)](#):



- [Homeroom](#) ■
- [Instructor-Led Lesson](#) ■
- [Online/Self-Study Lessons](#) ■
- [Practical Application](#) ■
- [Demonstration](#) ■
- [Live Case Work](#) ■
- [Final Examination](#) ■
- [Participant Surveys](#) ■

Office of Administrative Review

DRO Onboarding Program– Instructor Guide (Full)

Instructor Preparation

Be familiar with all training materials by reading the Instructor Slide Notes for each lesson, while simultaneously reviewing the corresponding slides. This provides you an opportunity to see the connection between the Instructor Notes and the slides, which allows for a more structured presentation during the training session.

Practice is the best guarantee of providing a quality presentation. At a minimum, do a complete walkthrough of the presentation to practice coordination between the Instructor Slide Notes, the student handouts, and the PowerPoint slides, and ensure your timing is on track with the length of the lesson.



Remember the Instructor Slide Notes belong to you. Feel free to highlight headings, key phrases, or other information to help the instruction flow smoothly. Add any notes or information you need in the margins. To enhance your lesson, discuss your experiences working claims related to the lesson and the steps you took to resolve situations you encountered while developing a claim.

[Back to Top](#)

Homeroom

The daily homeroom segment is time to document classroom attendance and allow instructors to recap prior instruction material. The recap is an opportunity to assess learning gaps, provide clarification of lesson material, and allow the students to ask questions about various topic in an informal setting.



This time can also be used to address any error trends you may have noted during your review of live cases. Recaps of lesson material should be provided **daily** at the beginning and end of each day prior to the daily assessment.

At the beginning of Day 1, use this first Homeroom to

- take attendance
- introduce yourselves as instructors, provide some information about yourself, such as how long you have been in the position and perhaps a fun fact about yourself

Office of Administrative Review

DRO Onboarding Program– Instructor Guide (Full)

- allow learners to introduce themselves and participate in an icebreaker activity
- review the DRO onboarding schedule, and provide information on:
 - start and end times for training
 - break times (including timely returns from breaks)
 - lunch time
 - end-of-day surveys
 - designated persons to contact in emergencies and/or for leave requests, and
- set any classroom ground rules and expectations such as:
 - cellphone usage
 - talking during instruction
 - Microsoft Teams usage
 - email usage
 - showing courtesy and respect towards others
 - classroom participation
- introduce DROC structure
 - provide any necessary introductions of DROC staff
 - discuss an overview of the DROC structure and teams

At the beginning of all other days, use Homeroom as an opportunity to:

- do a fun icebreaker activity
- check-in with students to see if they have any lingering questions from the day before.

At the end of each day, check-in with students to:

- do a recap of the lessons and topics from that day
- ask if they have any additional questions
- answer any questions that were put in a parking lot, and
- review the next day's schedule.

[Back to Top](#)

Office of Administrative Review

DRO Onboarding Program– Instructor Guide (Full)

Instructor-Led Lesson ■

For instructor-led lessons, instructors will access all materials (PowerPoint, handouts, instructor notes, Checkpoint Discussions, etc.) in the [VBA Learning Catalog \(LC\)](#).



To access the materials, instructors need to search for the item or course in the VBA LC homepage. The instructor version of a course will have additional instructor-specific handouts.

Ensure learners complete the Level 1 survey and Level 2 assessment for each course.

[Back to Top](#)

Online/Self-Study Lessons ■

For online/self-study lessons, instruct students to access courses through the links found within [Talent Management System \(TMS\)](#).



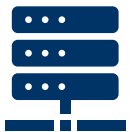
Ensure learners complete the Level 1 survey and Level 2 assessment for each course.

[Back to Top](#)

Practical Application ■

This section provides more information of practical application expectations. Please follow these directions for:

- [Checkpoint Discussions](#)
- [Case Scenario](#)



Checkpoint Discussions

Checkpoint Discussions are guided discussions that provide an opportunity for instructors to

- engage with students in a format other than formal instruction (i.e., PowerPoint use)
- use a guided, structured discussion to check-in with students and ensure learning is occurring before moving on to a new topic, and
- bridge any gaps between instructor-led content and Case Scenario application.

Office of Administrative Review

DRO Onboarding Program– Instructor Guide (Full)

Access the Checkpoint Discussions from the [VBA LC](#) as instructed in the [Instructor-Led Lesson](#) section above. For each Checkpoint, follow the instructions in the Instructor Handout. Ensure that students have an opportunity to ask any questions on the topic outside the ones provided.

Case Scenarios

Case Scenarios provide students opportunities to practice reviewing a fake, sample case file and claim submission without utilizing an actual case with personally identifiable information (PII).

Student View

Instruct students to access Case Scenario materials under each specific Case Scenario in the [VBA LC](#). Students should

- 1) Review the Case Scenario eFolder documents. *Note:* Students should assume all signatures are good on Case Scenario documents.
- 2) Complete and submit the Case Scenario checklist.
- 3) Complete the Case Scenario assessment.

Instructor View

As an instructor, your role is to review student Case Scenario submissions, provide feedback on the submitted Case Scenario Checklist (if needed), and approve or reject the Checklist.

Students will email their Checklist to their instructors for review. Instructors will review and provide specific feedback with an “Approve” or “Reject” response through email back to the student.

[Back to Top](#)

Demonstration

This section provides more information of instructor expectations for the scheduled instructor-led demonstration sessions. Please follow these directions for the following sessions:



- [Legacy Appeals \(NOD, Form 9, SOC\)](#)
- [VACOLS](#)
- [Board Remand](#)
- [Higher-Level Review \(HLR\)](#)

Office of Administrative Review

DRO Onboarding Program– Instructor Guide (Full)

Important: Since these demonstrations are likely of live claims/appeals, ensure there is no recording of the training sessions as there is personally identifiable information (PII).

Legacy Appeals (NOD, Form 9, SOC)

- Prepare:
 - Select a legacy appeal (or two) prior to this demonstration that contains a notice of disagreement (NOD), Form 9/substantive appeal, statement of the case (SOC), supplemental statement of the case (SSOC), and an opt-in to a higher-level review (HLR).
 - Bookmark the documents you will demonstrate to students ahead of time.
- Demonstrate:
 - Open VBMS and pull up the legacy appeal(s) you selected for demonstration.
 - Open the bookmarked documents and lead the classroom in discussion as you
 - explain the elements of the documents you demonstrate and
 - allow students to ask questions as needed.

VACOLS

Demonstrate how to open VACOLS and pull up a legacy appeal.

Explain the buttons on the main screen:

- View Appeal
- Update Appeal
- Broker Appeal
- Dispatch Appeal
- Transfer Appeal
- Travel Board

Explain and/or demonstrate the following tabs and their purpose:

- Docket
- Dispatch
- Issues
- Broker

Office of Administrative Review

DRO Onboarding Program– Instructor Guide (Full)

- Address
- Prior Locs
- Attach
- Diary
- Hearings
- Rem Reasons
- Mail
- Atty Fee
- Oth Docs
- CAVC
- Motion
- CC

Lead the classroom in discussion. Allow students to ask questions as needed.

Board Remand

- Prepare:
 - Select a minimum of two Board remands (one legacy, one AMA) prior to this demonstration that contains different remand instructions (exam/medical opinion, records, etc.)
 - Bookmark the documents you will demonstrate to students ahead of time.
- Demonstrate:
 - Open VBMS and pull up the Board remand(s) you selected for demonstration.
 - Open the bookmarked documents and lead the classroom in discussion as you
 - explain the elements of the documents you demonstrate and
 - allow students to ask questions as needed.
 - Checking systems compliance for end products (EP), date of claim, and tracked items
- During the discussion, ensure that you discuss the parts of a remand, how to read and understand a remand, and how to ensure the actions required in the remand were implemented.

Higher-Level Review (HLR)

- Prepare:

Office of Administrative Review

DRO Onboarding Program– Instructor Guide (Full)

- Select an HLR (or two) prior to this demonstration that contains different return instructions (exam/medical opinion, records, etc.).
- Bookmark the documents you will demonstrate to students ahead of time.
- Demonstrate:
 - Open VBMS and pull up the HLR(s) you selected for demonstration.
 - Open the bookmarked documents and lead the classroom in discussion as you
 - explain the elements of the documents you demonstrate and
 - allow students to ask questions as needed.
 - Checking systems compliance for end products (EP), date of claim, and tracked items
- During the discussion, ensure that you discuss the parts of a return, how to read and understand a return, and how to ensure the HLR is completed correctly.

[Back to Top](#)

Live Case Work

Students will review live claims in VBMS and determine the appropriate action to take.

Instruct students to:

- draft all actions necessary to move the claim to the next step and
- input claim notes in VBMS regarding the appropriate action.



Example: Student reviews the claim and determines that a PIES request is needed. Student should add a claim note in VBMS informing the instructor which request the student intends to submit. The instructor will complete the quality checklist in QMS to confirm whether the request is the correct action. If it was not necessary, the instructor will let the student know why it was not necessary through the checklist in QMS.

Important: Ensure students **do not** take any final action on a claim without instructor review of the actions.

Office of Administrative Review

DRO Onboarding Program– Instructor Guide (Full)

Checkpoint Discussions for Live Case Work

Checkpoint Discussions are guided discussions that provide an opportunity for instructors to

- engage with students in a format other than formal instruction (i.e., PowerPoint use)
- use a guided, structured discussion to check-in with students and ensure learning is occurring before moving on to a new topic, and
- bridge any gaps between instructor-led content and Live Case Work application.

The Live Case Work activities also have accompanying Checkpoint Discussions. Access the Checkpoint Discussions from the VBA LC with as instructed in the [Instructor-Led Lesson](#) section above. For each Checkpoint, follow the instructions in the Instructor Handout. Ensure that students have an opportunity to ask any questions on the topic outside the ones provided.

[Back to Top](#)

Final Examination

Preparation

During the final examination preparation,

- review material learned from the two-week Classroom session,
- ensure that each course receives a brief but thorough review, and
- encourage students to ask questions.



Once preparation is complete, provide students with instructions to complete the final examination in TMS.

Review

After the examination is complete

- review the results with the students,
- discuss commonly missed questions and provide generalized feedback, and
- allow students to ask questions about the examination process.

Office of Administrative Review

DRO Onboarding Program– Instructor Guide (Full)

Important: Individual results should not be discussed with the class.

As this is the culmination of the DRO Onboarding Program, encourage students to ask any remaining questions they may have about any topics from the week.

[Back to Top](#)

Questions

Direct questions as noted below:



- DRO Onboarding Program schedule and content, contact OAR Quality & Training at VBAWASOARQUALITYTRN@va.gov
- TMS troubleshooting, contact the TMS Help team at VBATMSHELP.VBAVACO@va.gov