Compensation Service Pre-Discharge host this call to announce updates, address issues, and field questions related to Pre-Discharge Programs (BDD/IDES). All Military Services Coordinators (MSCs), Disability Rating Activity Sites (DRAS), Regional Offices and other VA personnel supporting Pre-Discharge Programs are invited to participate.

This Read-Ahead (R/A) is provided to facilitate discussion during the conference call.

The Call Notes for the February 2022 Call are located in Appendix 1. The TMS # for this month’s call will be provided during the call and will be active within a week of the call’s completion. A Calendar Blast will notify the field when the TMS # is active.

**Call-in Information**

Microsoft Teams meeting

[Click here to join the meeting](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3Ameeting_MGQ3YzU1N2EtMWJiOC00NzA4LWJmYmYtYTc3ZjhlYjFmNWY5%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22e95f1b23-abaf-45ee-821d-b7ab251ab3bf%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22a0338b5c-0526-4e13-9809-5d0ecc8cdeb8%22%7d)

+1 872-701-0185: 63193284#

The R/A and slides will be attached to the Teams Chat. They are also located on the [BDD](https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/vbadod/predischarge.asp) and [IDES](https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/vbadod/IDES.asp) Homepages.

Note: The slides will not be available on the homepages until about noon of call day.

Remember to mute your microphone and turn off your camera.

To ask a question after the call begins, please raise your hand or type it in the Teams Chat—do not unmute to make comments or respond to questions.

Raise your Hand to ask a question over the phone, and you will be called upon for your question/comment. Once your question/comment is addressed, lower your hand (click the hand again). **Please do not talk/blurt out your question/comments unless called upon.** Scenario/Case Specific questions will not be answered on the call. Send an email with details to the appropriate staff email box. Ask questions in reference to the topic(s) being discussed, all other questions should be asked during Open Floor.

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 R/A is available and for notification when the TMS number is active.

General Topic for Discussion

**VA Health Liaison Program as part of VHA’s Post-9/11 Transition and Case Management**

As part of our ongoing series to have guest speakers on upcoming calls to present various topics, today we have Kathy Dinegar. She is the National Program Manager for Veterans Health Administration (VHA)’s VA Liaison Program. Her slides will be available on our “What’s New” section of our intranet website. Public information about the VA Liaison Program, its locator tool, and other aspects of VHA Post-9/11 Transition and Case Management may be found here: [Post-9/11 Transition and Case Management Home (va.gov)](https://www.va.gov/POST911VETERANS/index.asp).

**Use Veterans Claims Intake Program (VCIP) for BDD and IDES Shipping**

We worked with the Office of Field Operations (OFO) who put out a reminder to the field on 03/28/22 about VCIP shipping of BDD and IDES claim packets. Claims processors must use the VCIP procedures outlined in M21-1, [X.i.6.C.1.b.](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.knowva.ebenefits.va.gov%2Fsystem%2Ftemplates%2Fselfservice%2Fva_ssnew%2Fhelp%2Fcustomer%2Flocale%2Fen-US%2Fportal%2F554400000001018%2Fcontent%2F554400000177951%2FM21-1-Part-X-Subpart-i-Chapter-6-Section-C-Division-of-Responsibilities-Benefits-Delivery-at-Discharge-BDD-and-BDD-Excluded-Claims%3Fquery%3Dvcip%231b&data=04%7C01%7C%7Cdbfbbd679ea54c00c38f08da10bb5ed7%7Ce95f1b23abaf45ee821db7ab251ab3bf%7C0%7C0%7C637840694172940736%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=0XlKKCYPLOa0b%2FXauDkBncnCNKqt79LlT7KVfw6wB0M%3D&reserved=0) for BDD and M21-1, [X.i.6.F.1.g.](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.knowva.ebenefits.va.gov%2Fsystem%2Ftemplates%2Fselfservice%2Fva_ssnew%2Fhelp%2Fcustomer%2Flocale%2Fen-US%2Fportal%2F554400000001018%2Fcontent%2F554400000177955%2FM21-1-Part-X-Subpart-i-Chapter-6-Section-F-Integrated-Disability-Evaluation-System-IDES-Development-and-Examinations%3Fquery%3Dship%231g&data=04%7C01%7C%7Cdbfbbd679ea54c00c38f08da10bb5ed7%7Ce95f1b23abaf45ee821db7ab251ab3bf%7C0%7C0%7C637840694172940736%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=Llkivg2%2Fiu5LLRYwz%2FT%2FxLEeFpoLcksryIm5bWlzEb0%3D&reserved=0) for IDES. The shipping of BDD or IDES items using the Centralized Mail process is not currently permitted.” Here is a copy of the email:



Acknowledging that much of BDD/IDES material is received electronically, especially since recent IDES inter-departmental transfer improvements, when shipping *is necessary* the forwarding of BDD/IDES material to VCIP scanning site must be within five calendar days from date the documents were received.

**Proper Disability Benefits Questionnaire (DBQ) Selection**

The policy of providing a single General Medical (GENMED) Examination for separating and recently released Service members dates back to the 1990’s. Between 1996 and 1997, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Defense (DoD) initiated a “One Exam” pilot designed to meet the needs of both agencies. Ever since then, the Departments have continued to improve the process of providing a single examination at discharge to jointly meet both VA & DoD requirements.

Please refer to [M21-1, V.i.2.E.3.b](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000180507/M21-1-Part-IV-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-E-Examinations-in-Special-Situations#3b) *What the SHA Examination Covers*. As presented on our [JAN21](https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/VBADOD/docs/predischarge/Jan2021BDDIDESCallReadAheadFinal.pdf) call, the [GENMED Separation Health Assessment (SHA)](http://vbacoweb03.dva.va.gov/bl/21/DBQ/docs/InternalDBQs/General%20Medical%20-%20Separation%20Health%20Assessment%20%28tentatively%20scheduled%20for%20a%20December%202020%20release%29.pdf) findings are not just for VA rating purposes, but are also sent to and used by DoD for separation purposes under interagency agreement. Every IDES or BDD claimed disability on an Exam Scheduling Request (ESR) must be associated with the GENMED SHA.

The GENMED SHA will instruct the examiner to “complete appropriate DBQ/Exam template as indicated”; thus claims processors do not order individual [Specialty](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000015809/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-iv-Chapter-3-Section-A-Examination-Requests-Overview#6) DBQs like: MUSC Foot Conditions including flatfoot (pes planus), DERM Skin diseases, NEURO Peripheral nerves conditions, etc. This aligns with the logic found in, [M21-1, IV.i.2.A.5.a.](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000180498/M21-1-Part-IV-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-A-Examination-Requests-Overview#5a), namely: “**do not** request that the examiner also complete specific individual DBQs for each claimed disability **except in cases where claimed contentions require examination by a** [Specialist](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000015809/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-iv-Chapter-3-Section-A-Examination-Requests-Overview#6)” (to address Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), hearing, vision, dental, or psychiatric issues).

Because VA examiners can only schedule Specialist DBQs when requested to do so by VBA (see [M21-1, IV.i.2.B.1.e](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000180501/M21-1-Part-IV-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-B-Scheduling-Examinations#1e)), IDES/BDD claims processors will request the GENMED SHA for all issues, as well as any needed Specialist DBQs corresponding with conditions requiring such examination. For example, both the SHA and the Hearing Loss and Tinnitus DBQs will be assigned in ESR to a hearing loss issue.

**March 2022 MSC Training Event**

Thank you for your participation in the March 2022 MSC Training Event! We hope you enjoyed your experience addressing program and policy updates, and other valuable information necessary to support MSCs in their service to transitioning SMs, Veterans and their families.

The Pre-Discharge Staff has reviewed the results of the MSC Training Event Survey and plan to use your feedback for future MSC training events.

If you have questions, please reach out to IDES Mailbox or BDD Mailbox.

**MSC/IDES/BDD Community Discussion on MS Teams**

MSCs and other members of the IDES/BDD community are currently using an MS Teams Chat titled “Monthly Comp Service BDD/IDES Call” to communicate, collaborate and share information. The discussion began when a few questions were posed to a Chat associated with this now outdated MS Teams Meeting; since that time, this Chat has spontaneously grown into a robust discussion between members of the BDD/IDES community.

Please note, although the title of this Chat appears to be associated with the Compensation Service (CS) Monthly BDD/IDES Call, these communications do not represent formal guidance from CS and are not continuously monitored by CS Staff. The Pre-Discharge Staff at CS may participate in these discussions; however, it should not be assumed that all questions and responses posed in this forum will be reviewed and addressed by CS or that all communications in the Chat represent official policy.

MSCs are encouraged to use MS Teams to share information and collaborate with other members of the IDES/BDD community. However, for policy/procedural questions requiring a formal response from CS, MSC must continue to email the BDD/IDES Corporate Mailboxes.

If you don’t have the FY21 Monthly BDD/IDES Call item in your MS Teams history and want to view or participate in the ongoing chat, please contact the BDD or IDES mailbox so you can be added to the Chat.

MSCs are reminded use the chat to engage the community in a productive and professional manner, and to refrain from posting PII/PHI into Chat.

**BDD Specific Topics**

**Chief of Outreach, Office of Transition and Economic Development (OTED)**

Reginald Washburn is currently detailed as the Chief of Outreach within OTED. Please refrain from directly IM’ing or emailing him on BDD matters until further notice. Send inquiries to the BDD Mailbox or other BDD Staff as needed.

**Current BDD Program Timeliness**

As VA’s frontline contact with SMs and Veterans, it is vital that we are transparent in our communications regarding claims processing times. Below is the current program timeliness data as of April 5, 2022.

|  |
| --- |
| **BDD Timeliness Data** |
| **Data Points** | **Goal** | **April 5, 2022** |
| **Completed FYTD** |  | **21,245** |
| **Receipts FYTD** |  | **20,729** |
| **Pending** |  | **10,277** |
| **# Completed w/in 30 Days of Discharge** |  | **9,368** |
| **% Completed w/in 30 Days of Discharge** | **100%** | **44.1** |
| **Avg. Days to Complete FYTD** | **30** | **70.18** |

***Source:*** *Tableau BDD History Report, April 5, 2022*

IDES Specific Topics

**Recent PEBLO Guidance for when Previously Claimed Conditions are Deemed Unfitting and Referred**

On March 10, 2022, Army PEBLOs were provided guidance indicating that when previously claimed (but not previously referred) conditions are found to be unfitting, they will provide the MSC with a notice of the new referred condition. The Army guidance initially indicated that a new 21-0819 will be prepared, but a subsequent revision removed this requirement. The Army guidance (to include the subsequent revision) conforms entirely to existing VA requirements (shown in [M21-1, X.i.6.K.1.e](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000177960/M21-1%2C-Part-X%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-6%2C-Section-K---Special-Situations-Related-to-Integrated-Disability-Evaluation-System-%28IDES%29#1)) and represents no change to any MSC or VA procedure. [M21-1, X.i.6.K.1.e](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000177960/M21-1%2C-Part-X%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-6%2C-Section-K---Special-Situations-Related-to-Integrated-Disability-Evaluation-System-%28IDES%29#1) stipulates only that Service Department provide VA notice when a claimed IDES issue is subsequently deemed unfitting/referred. When MSCs receive this notice, they must ensure the document is uploaded to the VBMS eFolder according to the specifications outlined in the table below. This standardized naming convention will allow these notices to be identified more readily in the eFolder.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject:** | Additional Referred Conditions Notice  |
| **Category-Type:**  | Correspondence: Correspondence  |
| **Content Source:**  | PEBLO (IDES) |
| **Associate to:** | Claims; 689 Disability Evaluation System  |
| **Actionable:** | Yes  |
| **New Mail:** | Yes  |
| **Date of Receipt:** | MM/DD/YYYY |

Notes:

* It is preferrable that PEBLOs provide this notice via a memorandum or equivalent document so that the file can be uploaded directly into the eFolder. If the notice is indicated in the body of an email only (and in no other document), the email must be saved as a PDF file and then uploaded into the eFolder according to the specifications above
* It remains acceptable for Service Departments to provide VA notice that a claimed condition has been deemed referred using a new/revised 21-0819. If a VA Form 21-0819 is used for this purpose, it should reflect all conditions considered unfitting/referred at the time. In these instances, the MSC must upload the form using the Category-Type: 21-0819; however, the Subject and all other fields must be entered as indicated above

Important: The March 10 Army guidance makes no change to the process for when previously unclaimed conditions are now deemed unfitting or referred. In these instances, the Service department must provide a new 21-0819 (per [M21-1, X.i.6.K.1.f](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000177960/M21-1%2C-Part-X%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-6%2C-Section-K---Special-Situations-Related-to-Integrated-Disability-Evaluation-System-%28IDES%29#1)). Further, if the case requires additional examinations, these cases will need to be disenrolled in VTA, then re-enrolled under a new VTA Case ID (per [M21-1, X.i.6.K.1.f](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000177960/M21-1%2C-Part-X%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-6%2C-Section-K---Special-Situations-Related-to-Integrated-Disability-Evaluation-System-%28IDES%29#1)).

**HAIMS/VBMS/STR/DBQ Update**

The IDES Program Office, in coordination with DoD, continues to track the HAIMS/VBMS/STRS/DBQ procedures.

* The staff continues to work with VBMS, DAS and HAIMS to resolve any challenges identified.
	+ Duplicate DBQs that appear as STR in the VBMS eFolder
* Ensure you are running the Pending CEST Report daily
* If MTFs are having issues with uploading or not aware of the HAIMS/VBMS/DBQ transfer process, send details including VTA Case ID (if applicable) to the IDES Mailbox

**Returning Referrals**

[M21-1, X.i.6.E.3.h.](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000177953/M21-1-Part-X-Subpart-i-Chapter-6-Section-E-Integrated-Disability-Evaluation-System-IDES-Referrals-and-Initial-Processing?query=ides)discusses the returning of referrals by the MSC:

A referral can be returned if:

* the referral package is incomplete, or
* the participant is not available for either the initial meeting (within 5 days of referral) or VA examinations (within 30 days of referral)

Recent examples of cases where the MSC should have returned the case and removed the Prepare Claim Start Date (PCSD).

1. MSC note: “SM is in a three-month treatment program for their MEB conditions”. Pending Claims Dev 45 days.
2. MSC note: “Was informed the SM is on TDY for the next 5 weeks”. Pending Claims Dev 30 days.

Note: PEBLO can re-submit when SM is available with new PCSD. We should not be on the clock for these type cases.

Cases where the interview has been conducted and exams ordered do not meet/fall under this reference.

Ex: MSC conducts interview and orders exams and 2 days later the SM gets injured during physical training, requires surgery and at least 8 weeks of recovery. In instances like this the PEBLO should defer or disenroll the case and the MSC should cancel the exams and update VTA. When SM is ready to move on, the PEBLO will remove the deferment and MSC will order the exams and update VTA with new SHA Requested Date. If case was disenrolled PEBLO will refer a new case and MSC will work the new case per the M-21.

Note: If a referral is returned, remove the Prepare Claim Start Date and add a Corrective Action

**MSC Responsibility to Review Exam Reports**

Per [M21-1, X.i.6.F.3.c.](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000177955/M21-1%2C-Part-X%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-6%2C-Section-F---Integrated-Disability-Evaluation-System-%28IDES%29-Development-and-Examinations) MSCs are responsible to review Exam Reports to ensure all exams were conducted and have been received before providing to the PEBLO. We have seen an uptick in recent months where the PEBLO is catching exam report issues which in the end delays the SMs case.

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. Current program timeliness data (ADC) for March 2022.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage/Phase** | **IDES Goal (AD/NAD)** | **March 2022 (AD/NAD)** |
| **Claim Dev**  | **5/11** | **7/6** |
| **Medical Stage** | **32** | **48/61** |
| **Proposed Ratings** | **20** | **11/19** |
| **Recon Ratings**  | **4** | **9/12** |
| **Exit Interviews** | **14** | **11/9** |
| **Final Ratings** | **30/na** | **25/na** |

 ***Source:*** *VTA Completed Reports (Days to Complete Including Deferment) April 4, 2022 (8ET).*

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

VTA Specific Topics

**Pending Exit Interview Report**

MSC Coaches and MSCs are requested to run the Pending Exit Interview Report IOT see their cases needing an Exit Interview. As of 4/8/22 there were 256 cases pending between 15 and 205 days.

**VTA Reminders**

* When a user has an issue with VTA the first action is to look at the Homepage Announcements Section

to see if an announcement (old or new) discusses your issue.

If nothing is posted, then contact VRST@vba.va.gov or your VTA POC

* When a new announcement is added to the Announcements Section of VTA the box below will appear

the first time you sign-in after the announcement has been posted or when you move around in VTA.

This is telling you there is a new announcement, and you should read it. It might be the answer to

your issue and you will not have to email VRST@vba.va.gov

* Do NOT send PII in an unencrypted email
* VRST@vba.va.gov is for VTA technical issues. They do not support VTA/IDES policy questions/issues.

Contact your DoD or VA POC

* Questions/issues on Case Disenrollments/Re-enrollments:

PEBLOs should contact osd.pentagon.ousd-p-r.mbx.ides@mail.mil

Note: These have also been provided to DoD.

Upcoming Conference Calls

The next BDD/IDES Call is scheduled for Tuesday, May 10, 2022, 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 BDD Mailbox no later than close of business (COB), Friday, April 22, 2022.

Open Floor

**Appendix 1: Call Notes from the February 2022 BDD/IDES Conference Call**

**Question: I previously sent an email to box asking about the annotation on the VA Form 21-526EZ, if it is required and was informed no, but I see it on the new IDES Development Checklist.**

**Answer:** The statement of “*Annotate that IDES Claim is controlled under EP 689, DOC, MSC Initials, and Date (if paper)*” has been removed and the revised checklist was posted to intranet on February 9, 2022.

**Question: Some of the checkboxes on the side of the checklist work and some don’t and don’t understand their purpose.**

**Answer:** On the left side of the new IDES Development Checklist in the VTA column, there are buttons underneath the instructions “Check Box if VTA Fields Completed”. Please check those boxes to indicate all VTA actions for that section are completed. The IDES Development Checklist is stored as a Portable Document Format (PDF) and is best operated by using Adobe Acrobat Pro DC or Reader DC. When using a browser, we recommend using Chrome, as sometimes Edge has difficulty rendering the PDF using a plugin/extension to load full Adobe capability.

**Question: VTA 2.4.13: What email is the VTA generated about the Exit Interview being sent to?**

**Answer:** It is sent to the SMs Personal Email shown on the PEBLO Tab.

**Question: If MSC Training Events are going to be scheduled in the future, can you let us know months in advance? Some MSCs schedule appointments months out and a short notice forces us to miss the event or re-schedule appointments.**

**Answer:** We will work to get the dates out as soon as possible.