Compensation Service Pre-Discharge Staff 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.

Call Notes for the July 2022 Call are 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#](tel:+18727010185,,63193284# )

The R/A will be attached to the Teams Chat.

We are no longer producing/using slides.

Remember to mute your microphone and turn off your camera.

To ask a question after the call begins, please raise your hand (click the hand icon) or type it in the Teams Chat—**do not unmute to make comments or respond to questions until called upon**. Once your question/comment is addressed, lower your hand (click the hand icon again). 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

**MSC Office Hours**

MSCs and other BDD/IDES personnel are reminded that the Pre-Discharge Programs Office has established the “Pre-Discharge Policy Channel” in Teams to support MSC Office Hours. Please see the attached PPT for details.

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**Exam Issues/Concerns/Reminders**

MSCs are reminded that even though exams are a part of the IDES process, the Pre-Discharge Staff is not the appropriate office to answer most questions about exam delays/issues or the exam vendors. Emails IRT exam questions/issues should be sent to the [Exam Staff](mailto:VAVBAWAS/CO/Contract%20Examination%20Inquiries%20%3cContractExam.VBAVACO@va.gov%3e) and Cc either the [BDD Mailbox](mailto:VAVBAWAS/CO/PREDISCHARGE%20%3cPredischarge.VBACO@va.gov%3e) or [IDES Mailbox](mailto:VAVBAWAS/CO/IDES%20%3cIDES.VBACO@VA.GOV%3e),

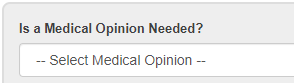
OFO put out on April 29, 2022: “MSCs and claims processors are to follow the Contract Exam Inquiry Guidelines where vendor information may be found and should consult with their station [Exam Liaisons (ELs)](https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/21/contractexams/docs/Exam%20Liaison%20Directory.xlsx) on any exam-specific questions.” If appointment or examination result statuses can’t be determined from the Exam Management System (EMS) or Vendor portals, have your station’s EL contact the applicable vendor and MDEO as needed.

MSCs will not contact exam vendors seeking claim status, but may reach out when circumstances require immediate vendor attention. Examples: notifying SM will not make scheduled appointment, rescheduling of appointments, exam portal says no-show but SM reports attendance, or SM contracted COVID. MDEO has informed us that the contract specifically requires Vendors not to have direct contact with RO employees with the exception of the EL, and that MDEO will provide a list and contact information for each EL.

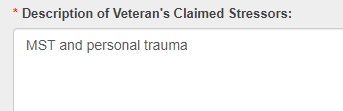
**Military Sexual Trauma (MST) Requirements**

After the last call we received clarification that the Exam Scheduling Request (ESR) **must** include the MST specialty language for all active duty and non-active duty IDES and all BDD and BDD excluded examination requests.

Select MST from the medical opinion drop down menu.



Here is an example of what can be written in the stressor description.

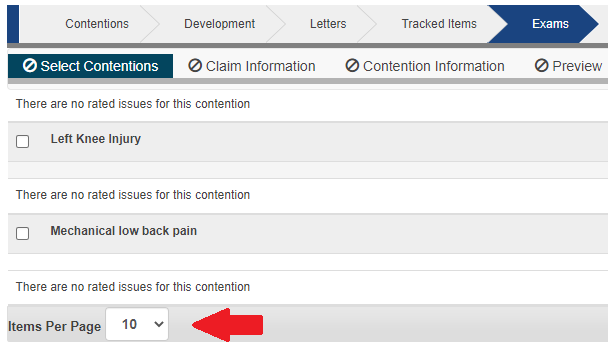


**PTSD Stressor Requirements**

Stressor statements, to include VA Form 21-0781 or 21-0781a, are required for all BDD and BDD-Excluded claims and non-active duty IDES referrals including MST claims. Stressor statements are not required for active duty IDES referrals. We are awaiting a decision on the proposal to remove this requirement for active duty BDD claims.

**Exam Requests**

When requesting exams in EMS, scroll to the bottom of the page and select the drop down menu to display all contentions to ensure all claimed contentions are on the exam request.



**Auto-selection of "Veteran Must Report To Exam" for Pre-Discharge Claims**

Based on input from the field, we have been working with MDEO to improve the Exam Management System (EMS). A planned update to EMS is scheduled for the VBMS 27.6 release on October 16, 2022. The “Veteran Must Report to Exam” radio-dial will be the default for IDES & BDD examinations.

**BDD Specific Topics**

**Tracking *Gulf War Presumptive – Airborne Hazards* Claims**

The electronic claims submission systems are automatically adding the above special issue for any 526EZ claim with these logic rules:

1. Rhinitis, Sinusitis, and/or Asthma claimed where
2. Military service is after 8/2/1990 and
3. There is no end date for the military service period after 8/2/1990

Electronic claims submission systems include:

* VA.gov
* VONAPP Direct Connect (VDC)
* Stakeholder Enterprise Portal (SEP)
* Digits-to-Digits (D2D)

IAW [M21-1, VIII.ii.2.B.1.b](https://www.knowva.ebenefits.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_ssnew/help/customer/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001018/content/554400000177442/M21-1-Part-VIII-Subpart-ii-Chapter-2-Section-B-Developing-Claims-Based-On-Fine-Particulate-Matter-Exposure-Under-38-CFR-3320?query=airborne%20hazard#1b), all claims processors have a responsibility to ensure the *Gulf War Presumptive – Airborne Hazards* special issue indicator is appropriately applied throughout the life of the claim. This includes removing this special issue if the claim does not qualify.

[M21-1, III.i.2.F.2.e.](https://www.knowva.ebenefits.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_ssnew/help/customer/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001018/content/554400000046277/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-F-Record-Maintenance-During-the-Development-Process?query=Agent%20Orange%20-%20Vietnam%20special%20issue#2e) instructs: “Special issues indicators may need to be updated throughout the life of a claim. It is important that claims processors are vigilant in identifying when the circumstances of the claim require the addition, removal, or editing of special issue indicators.”

Example:

We were provided a VA.gov claim that had the *Gulf War Presumptive – Airborne Hazards* assigned based on the rules 1-3 above. On the VAF 21-526EZ the claimant attributed the respiratory disability to a National Training Center (NTC) rotation and stated no service in a combat zone. [Veterans Information Solution (VIS)](https://vaww.visr.aac.va.gov/vis/) showed no overseas service. In such a scenario, claims processors can remove the special issue and place system note.

IDES Specific Topics

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

The Pre-Discharge Staff, in coordination with DoD, continues to track the HAIMS/VBMS/STRS/DBQ procedures.

* Works with VBMS, DAS and HAIMS to resolve any challenges identified
  + Duplicate DBQs that appear as STR in the VBMS eFolder
  + Still working to get accomplished-Target Date October 16, 2022.
* MSCs/Coaches should run the Pending CEST Report daily. If Military Treatment Facilities (MTF) 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](mailto:VAVBAWAS/CO/IDES%20%3cIDES.VBACO@VA.GOV%3e)
* The *HAIMS to VBMS STRs/DBQs Transfer Training Slides* on the [IDES Homepage](https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/vbadod/IDES.asp) have been updated with new M21-1 references

**Revised IDES Fact Sheet**

The IDES Fact Sheet has been updated and posted onto VA.gov by the Office of Strategic Engagement (OSE). Please delete existing stocks of “VA Benefits for Veterans Entering the Physical Evaluation Board” Fact Sheets and start providing the August 2022 version to your IDES participants, now renamed to “[VA Benefits for Service Members Considered for Medical Discharge](https://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/general/IDESfactsheet.pdf)”. OSE reported they are not translating any updated fact sheets at this time into other languages.

VTA Specific Topics

**Optum/OptumServe/LHI added as Exam Vendor**

Reminder from last month on how to track LHI exams in VTA.



Note: LHIs parent company is Optum, and Optum is used in the instructions.

Upcoming Conference Calls

The next BDD/IDES Call is scheduled for Tuesday, September 13, 2022, at 2PM ET. Please submit IDES questions and proposed topics for discussion to the [IDES Mailbox](mailto:VAVBAWAS/CO/IDES%20%3cIDES.VBACO@VA.GOV%3e), and BDD questions and proposed topics for discussion to the [BDD Mailbox](mailto:VAVBAWAS/CO/PREDISCHARGE%20%3cPredischarge.VBACO@va.gov%3e) no later than close of business (COB), Friday, August 26, 2022.

Open Floor

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

**Question: Is any additional language required for examination requests for active duty IDES participants and BDD claimants that claim PTSD due to MST or any other development required?**

**Answer:** This is addressed in the Military Sexual Trauma (MST) Requirements topic above.

**Question: LHI does not know that IDES exam requests do not include a RAD, can this be addressed with LHI?**

**Answer:** Yes, MDEO will address this issue with LHI.