

**IDES CEST EP 689 - MSC
TRAINEE HANDOUT**

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OBJECTIVES

- Understand the process for establishing a claim in VBMS utilizing EP 689.
- Distinguish IDES participant corporate flash and other corporate flashes in SHARE.
- Differentiate the VBMS requirements for entering contentions, special issues labels, tracked items, and associated notes.

REFERENCES

All M21-1 references are located in the [Live Manual Website](#)

- [M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.D Integrated Disability Evaluation System](#)
- [M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii, 3.D, Claims Establishment](#)
- [M21-4, 4 and Appendix C. Index of Claim Attributes](#)
- [M21-1 Part III. Subpart ii, Chapter 7 - Referrals to the Rating Activity](#)
- VBMS User Guide
- SHARE User Guide

TOPIC 1: CEST EP 689 – CLAIMS ESTABLISHMENT

Preparing for Claims Establishment

Upon receipt of a complete IDES referral package from the Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officer (PEBLO), MSCs must ensure the PREPARE CLAIM START DATE field in Veteran's Tracking Assistant (VTA) reflects the date a referral package representing a *proper* referral became available to the MSC. (This date might be different than the date VA *received* the referral package if, for example, the MSC was on leave when the package arrived.)

Use Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) to determine whether the IDES participant has a pending claim.

Claims Establishment (CEST)

Claims are established in VBMS.

The date VA first receives VA Form 21-0819 from a PEBLO represents the date of claim (DOC) for claims establishment purposes (the DOC must match the VA date-stamp on the form), even if the MSC determined the initial referral was improper.

EP 689 and Claim Label

Log into VBMS and search for a VBMS record by searching the participant's social security number.

To begin claim establishment, go to the Actions dropdown menu and select New Claim

- select Benefit Type: C&P Live
- Payee: 00- Veteran
- Enter EP 689 DES – Disability Evaluation System claim label
- select the Claim Type: Claim
- Enter the Date of Claim
- Assign the IDES National Segmented Lane

Remember the following when establishing an EP 689:

- Do not select "Pre-discharge" when establishing this EP.
- EP 689 remains pending until the participant's service department
 - returns the participant to duty
 - finds him/her unfit for duty, or
 - disenrolls the participant from IDES for any other reason.
 - Exception: EP 689 must remain pending for 30 days after disenrollment when the service department disenrolls a participant solely because new referred conditions are added. If the service does not reenroll the participant within 30 days of the disenrollment, the MSC will prepare the disenrollment letter, conduct the exit interview and clear EP 689.

- The proposed rating is completed under EP 689.
- The final rating will be completed under the appropriate rating EP such as 110, 010, or 020.
- Only the Disability Rating Activity Site (DRAS) will establish rating EPs in the IDES program.

Paper Claims Folder or eFolder

Use the Control of Veterans Records System (COVERS) to determine whether VA has ever created a claims folder for the IDES participant. Refer to the table below to determine whether to create a paper claims folder or an eFolder.

If COVERS shows the participant ...	And the STRs provided are ...	Then the MSC must ...
does <i>not</i> have a claims folder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hard copies, or • a combination of hard copies and electronic 	create a paper claims folder according to the instructions in M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii, 3.B.
does <i>not</i> have a claims folder	electronic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create an eFolder • add the <i>No Paper Claim Folder</i> flash in Share, and • update the COVERS location in accordance with M21-1, Part III, Subpart ii, 3.B.1.i.
already has a claims folder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hard copies, or • electronic 	refer to M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.D.3.f.

Handling Evidence

Handle any evidence and STRs provided by the PEBLO (to include the Service Department Memorandum of Complete and Current STRs) in accordance with the table below.

If the documents are ...	And ...	Then the MSC must ...
provided electronically	received via encrypted e-mail	upload the documents into the participant's VBMS eFolder.
	received via compact disc (CD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • upload the documents into the participant's VBMS eFolder, and • hand-carry the CD to the local VA Records Management Officer (RMO) for review and/or destruction. <p><i>Note:</i> Ensure that the intake site has developed</p>

		a plan for assessing CD media security in cooperation with the local MTF ISO, VA ISO, or both, as appropriate.
	stored on a local shared drive	upload the documents into the participant's VBMS eFolder.
provided in hard copy	the MSC created a physical claims folder for an original claim	file the STRs in the claims folder.
	the MSC has taken action on an existing folder, as discussed in M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.D.3.f	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create a document control sheet (DCS) in VBMS, and • forward the STRs to the appropriate scanning vendor.

Notes:

If the MSC receives any evidence that may impact the DRAS's ability to award benefits in a timely manner and the MSC has the capability to scan and upload documents into Virtual VA, the MSC should upload the evidence into Virtual VA, before sending the evidence to the scanning vendor.

MSCs must ensure the intake site developed a plan in coordination with the local MTF ISO, VA ISO, or both (as appropriate). Any CDs received for IDES referrals must be hand carried to the local VA Records Management Officer (RMO) for review and/or destruction after the documents are uploaded into the eFolder.

Handling a Pending BDD or Other Pre-Discharge Claim by an Active Duty IDES Participant

The table below describes the actions that are necessary when a service member who filed a Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) or other pre-discharge claim is referred into IDES *before* his/her planned discharge date.

Responsible Party	Description of Necessary Action(s)
IDES/MSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain to the participant that because he/she will not be discharged as planned, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the BDD/pre-discharge claim will be closed, and ○ he/she will have an opportunity to submit a claim via the IDES process. • Notify the RO with jurisdiction over the BDD/pre-discharge claim that the claimant has been retained on active duty and referred to IDES. • Process the IDES claim in accordance with standard IDES procedures.
SOJ/Rating Activity Site (RAS)	Process the BDD/pre-discharge EP in accordance with M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.B.4.i.

Handling Pending Claims from Veterans in IDES

The table below describes the actions that must be taken if a service department refers a Veteran with a pending claim into IDES.

Important: The instructions in the table below apply to cases involving BDD or other pre-discharge claims, *provided* the Veteran was discharged from service before the IDES referral was made.

Responsible Party	Description of Necessary Action(s)
MSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain to the participant that VA will continue to process the pre-IDES claim separately. • Do not request transfer of or broker the pre-IDES EP(s). • Establish EP 689 and develop the IDES claim in accordance with standard IDES procedures. • Ensure all IDES development actions are clearly documented in VBMS. • Consider development actions taken by the RO working the pre-IDES EP, and avoid duplicative actions and examinations to the extent possible. • Ensure examinations are completed for all issues raised in IDES. • Take the following actions upon completion of IDES development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ broker the EP 689 to the appropriate DRAS ○ add the <i>IDES Transfer DRAS</i> special issue indicator to a contention under the EP 689, and ○ leave any pending pre-IDES EP to remain under the jurisdiction of the assigned RO. <p>Reference: For additional information on the acceptability of examinations completed outside of IDES, see M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.D.6.k.</p>
RO with jurisdiction of the pre-IDES EP(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify rating-related cases with a concurrent IDES claim by the presence of a pending EP 689. • Consider development actions taken by the IDES MSC, and avoid duplicative actions/examinations to the extent possible. • Continue to process the pre-IDES EPs in accordance with standard procedures, making all efforts to resolve the claim and EP as expeditiously as possible. • Take no action on EP 689.
Assigned DRAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add the <i>IDES Transfer to DRAS</i> special issue indicator to a contention under any pre-IDES EP that remains pending at the time the DRAS begins rating action. • Prepare the IDES rating under the existing rating EP. • Attempt to address <i>all</i> contentions (to include any undecided pre-

	<p>IDES issues) within the IDES rating.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the pre-IDES EP has been resolved prior to DRAS rating action, the DRAS must establish a new rating EP in accordance with M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.F.2.d. • The DRAS may defer any issue associated with a pre-IDES EP on the IDES rating if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the evidence of record is not sufficient to decide the issue, and ○ the issue was not claimed or referred as part of the IDES claim.
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IDES Participants with a Pending Appeal

If an IDES participant has an appeal pending with VA, and the appeal involves a disability the participant’s service department referred to VA, then MSCs must request examination of the referred disability. The DRAS will assign a disability evaluation for PEB purposes only and the issue will remain on appeal for the purpose of entitlement to VA benefits (the evaluation reflected on the proposed rating does not impact the existing appeal) and the final rating should not adjudicate issues on appeal to VA.

If an IDES participant has an appeal pending with VA, and the appeal involves a disability the participant claimed as a consequence of his/her involvement in the IDES, then MSCs inform the participant in the Section 5103 notice that VA will *not* address the disability in the rating decision it prepares in connection with the IDES, and *not* request examination of the disability. The DRAS will note in the participant’s proposed rating decision that the disability is currently under appeal and will not be addressed in connection with the IDES.

Relevance of the Duty Status of Members of the Reserves or National Guard

When a PEBLO submits a referral package for a member of the Reserves or National Guard, MSCs should attempt to obtain a copy of the member’s current orders from the PEBLO.

If the PEBLO fails to provide the orders, MSCs must contact the member and ask him/her to bring a copy of the orders to the initial interview.

In the absence of evidence to the contrary, MSCs must accept as credible the statements of members of the Reserves or National Guard regarding their duty status.

If a member states he/she is on active duty and provides orders showing he/she is currently active duty, and VA’s corporate record shows the member is currently receiving VA benefits, then MSCs must provide the station of jurisdiction (SOJ) with a copy of the orders so it can stop the member’s VA benefits.

If a member states he/she is on active duty and fails to provide current orders, and VA's corporate record shows the member is currently receiving VA benefits, then MSCs must notify the SOJ via the VSCM mailbox. The SOJ must send a letter to the member that proposes to stop his/her VA benefits effective the day after the last date the evidence of record confirms the member was *not* on active duty.

TOPIC 2: CORPORATE FLASHES

IDES Participant Corporate Flash

Corporate flashes are claimant-specific indicators which represent an attribute, fact, or status that is unlikely to change.

After the Claim has been established in VBMS, select the IDES Participant corporate flash in the SHARE. This flash will remain on the case indefinitely.

Other Corporate Flashes

A corporate flash can be automatically generated by the system, or managed manually by a user. The following are commonly used (but not limited to) additional flashes found on IDES cases:

Flash	Assigned by
GWOT Active Duty DoD	DoD
GWOT active Duty Veteran Provided	VA
GWOT Guard/Reserve DoD	DoD
GWOT Guard/Reserve DoD Veteran Provided	VA
Seriously Injured/Very Seriously Injured	VA or DoD

TOPIC 3: VBMS CONTENTIONS, SPECIAL ISSUES, TRACKED ITEMS, AND NOTES

VBMS Contentions and Special Issues

All referred and claimed conditions must be entered into the contentions list in VBMS.

Special issues are claim-specific indicators and can represent a certain claim type, disability or disease, or other special notation that is only relevant to a particular claim. Special issues must be identified and applied to a contention in VBMS. Some contentions may require more than one special issue, such as PTSD- Combat and Military Sexual Trauma (MST).

IDES Transfer to DRAS special issue must be applied to one contention under the pending EP 689 after all development is complete and the claim is ready for transfer to the DRAS.

VBMS Tracked Items

The purpose of tracked items is to control receipt or non-receipt of information requested from the claimant, beneficiary, or other information provider. Status of individual tracked items will be visible through eBenefits. Tracked items must be updated with the appropriate date and disposition to reflect the status of the corresponding request or development action.

Tracked items are required for each type of examination requested.

MSCs must use the Exam Request Builder (ERB) to generate the necessary language for examination requests when creating an exam or medical opinion request in CAPRI or medical opinion based on combat experiences, MST or service-connected death.

The ERB automatically adds tracked items upon generation of an exam request; however, if the ERB fails to add a tracked item, the MSC is responsible for taking this action. Enter a tracked item for the exam request and any other items you might have requested from the participant during the interview through the third party tab.

Many tracked items are created automatically upon finalizing VBMS letters created by the user. However, it is the MSC's responsibility to manually add tracked items, if necessary, to maintain a record of outstanding tasks for the claim.

VBMS Notes

VBMS notes are utilized as a communication tool between the MSC, DRAS, Regional Offices and National Call Centers to answer questions.

Keep the information to the point and as brief as possible.

The following items are examples of VBMS notes to enter:

- Initial interview conducted with IDES participant on January 26, 2016 and completed VA Form 21-0819. Exams requested. Waiting for notification of scheduled appointments.
- Participant identified dependents; however, he did not have their social security numbers. Provided VA Form 21-686c to participant. Appointment dates/times for exams (list the appointment schedule in the notes).
- Annotate any missed appointments and any additional exams the DRAS or MSC may have requested.