Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) Claims Establishment (CEST)

Trainee Handout

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Objectives

* Distinguish a BDD from a BDD excluded claim.
* Understand the process for establishing BDD and BDD excluded claims.
* Comprehend the requirements for updating VA systems for BDD and BDD excluded claims.

References

* [M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.A. General Information on Pre-Discharge Claims](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014099/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-A-General-Information-on-Pre-Discharge-Claims%20-%202d)
* [M21-4, Appendix C Index of Claim Attributes](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000036570/Appendix%20C.%20Index%20of%20Claim%20Attributes)
* [VBMS User Guide](https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/VBMS/Resources_Technical_Information.asp)
* [Share User Guide](http://css.vba.va.gov/SHARE/)

All M21-1 references are found in the [Live Manual Website](https://vaww.compensation.pension.km.va.gov/). Explain how to access these references.

Topic 1: Pre-Discharge BDD Claims Establishment

**Identifying a Pre-Discharge BDD Claim**

Upon receipt of a claim, review the claim form to determine if the claim is from an active duty Servicemember (SM) with 90-180 days prior to discharge. Pre-Discharge BDD claims must be received on VA Form 21-526EZ, *Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits*. This prescribed claim form provides sections that allow a SM to indicate if they are currently on active duty and an anticipated release date from service.

Furthermore, it is important that you identify that the SM meets the qualifications for the BDD program and that there are no reasons to exclude the claim from the BDD program.

**Placing BDD and BDD-Excluded Claims under Diary EP Control**

Upon receipt of a BDD or BDD-excluded claim, the MSC or other BDD claims processor ***must*** place the claim under control by establishing the appropriate diary EP in the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) according to [M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.A.2.c](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014099/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-A-General-Information-on-Pre-Discharge-Claims#2d) for BDD claims, or [M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.A.2.h](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014099/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-A-General-Information-on-Pre-Discharge-Claims#2h) for BDD-excluded claims.

This process includes:

For BDD or BDD-excluded claims:

* Select EP & claim label 336 BDD
* Select *Pre-Discharge* for the Claim Type
* Select *BDD* for Pre-Discharge Type
* Assign the claim to the BDD (National) segmented lane in VBMS for BDD claims only,
* select the appropriate INTAKE SITE
* enter the day following the anticipated date of separation from active duty as the SUSPENSE DATE
* check the ALLOW POA ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS box, if applicable

***Exceptions***:

* Claims excluded from establishment in VBMS must be established in SHARE.
* BDD claims by a Servicemember with 180 days to 90 days remaining on active duty, that are received via eBenefits or submitted electronically by the Servicemembers’ Veterans Service Organization (VSO), are automatically established as provided in [M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.A.2.e.](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014099/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-A-General-Information-on-Pre-Discharge-Claims#2d)

***Note***: Intake sites ***must*** use EPs 010, 110, and 020 with their appropriate claim labels to control Pre-Discharge claims that are excluded from the BDD program.

**Date of Claim (DOC)**

The DOC for a BDD claim or any other disability compensation claim received prior to discharge from active duty is the first day following the anticipated date of release from active duty (RAD), regardless of the date VA received the claim. The suspense date should always be entered as the day following the anticipated date of separation from active duty.

**Intake Site**

Select the intake site where the BDD claim was received from the VBMS dropdown box.

Examples:

* If the claim was received at the Denver RO select “Denver”
* If the claim was received at the Annapolis intake site select “Annapolis NS/USNA”

**EPs and Claim Labels Adjustment Following Completion of BDD Intake Site Development Action**

Once all development actions are completed, the diary 336 EP for a BDD claim will be changed to the proper EP and claim label as shown in the table below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Claim Type** | **BDD EP – Claim Label** |
| Original  | * 110 – BDD-Initial, or
* 010 – BDD-Initial 8+ issues
 |
| * New SC or
* Increased evaluation
 | 020 – BDD-Supplemental |

**NOTE:** Third digit modifiers for Pre-Discharge claims are terminated.

**EPs and Claim Labels for Pre-Discharge Claims Received Electronically**

If a Pre-Discharge claim is received via eBenefits or submitted by the SM’s Veterans Service Organization (VSO), the claim will be automatically established as follows

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date of receipt** | **EP and claim label automatically established** |
| Received within 90-180 days prior to discharge | 336 - *BDD* |
| Received within 1-89 days prior to discharge | 337 – *Quick Start* |
| Received when a claim is already pending | * 400 – *eBenefits 526EZ Pre-Discharge (400)*
 |

* The 336 – *BDD* EP and claim label will remain until the examinations have been requested and all other development is complete. Upon completion of development, the diary EP must be changed to the proper rating EP per [M21-1, Part III, Subpart I, 2.A.2.d](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014099/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-A-General-Information-on-Pre-Discharge-Claims#2h).
* The 400 EP must be reviewed and adjusted accordingly as explained below.

**BDD-Excluded Claims Received Electronically**

* The EP 337 – *Quick Start* must be changed to the proper rating EP for BDD-excluded claims in accordance with [M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.A.2.f](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014099/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-2%2C-Section-A---General-Information-on-Pre-Discharge-Claims).
* Process the claim under the Fully Developed Claim (FDC) program or any other qualifying program, if the service member selected FDC in Box 1 of the VA Form 21-526EZ
* “Pre-Discharge Type" needs to show as "Quick Start"
* *BDD-Excluded* Special Issue needs to be added to one claimed contention requiring an examination request.

**Processing Additional Contentions from BDD Claimants**

Additional contentions that are submitted by BDD claimants with 90 or more days remaining on active duty, at the time the additional contention is submitted will be associated with the pending BDD diary 336 EP or proper rating EP (110, 010, or 020).

As noted in [M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.A.2.i](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014099/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-2%2C-Section-A---General-Information-on-Pre-Discharge-Claims#2f), BDD claimants with less than 90 days remaining on active duty who submit claims for additional contentions will have those additional contentions processed under a separate EP as a BDD-excluded claim. These claims will be established as indicated by the table below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **If the pending BDD EP is an…** | **Then establish…** |
| * 110 – BDD-Initial, or
* 010 – BDD-Initial 8+ issues
 | Establish an EP 020 with the appropriate claim label.  |
| 020 – BDD-Supplemental | Establish an EP 021 with the appropriate claim label. |

***Note***: All additional contentions that are received for BDD claimants with less than 90 days remaining on active duty will be included and processed under the BDD excluded EP 020 or 021 as noted above.

***Important:***

Concurrently pending BDD and BDD-excluded rating EPs **are** allowed and should not be combined unless as noted in [M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.B.3.d](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014101/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-B-Division-of-Responsibilities-for-Processing-Benefits-Delivery-at-Discharge-BDD-and-BDD-Excluded-Claims#3d).

**Responsibility for Processing BDD Excluded Claims**

The ROJ is responsible for processing BDD-excluded claims through the standard claims process, the FDC program, or any other applicable claims process unless otherwise stated.

When initially establishing a Pre-Discharge claim that is excluded from the BDD program, the station of origination (SOO) must use EPs 010, 110, or 020 as appropriate as provided to the claim type (original <8 issues, original 8+ issues, new, increase, reopen) and attach an appropriate non-BDD claim label.

***Example***: An original claim for service connection containing more than 8 issues is received prior to discharge. A COD is required. The claim is excluded from the BDD program. The SOO would establish EP 010 and use the claim label *Initial Compensation 8+ Issues*.

***Important***: Excluded BDD claims must also be established as a diary EP as noted in [M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.A.2.a](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014099/M21-1-Part-III-Subpart-i-Chapter-2-Section-A-General-Information-on-Pre-Discharge-Claims%20-%202d)

**Notification of BDD Exclusion**

If a claim is excluded from the BDD program, the following actions must be taken:

* Generate the BDD exclusion letter using the Letter Creator tool
* Select the appropriate reason for not meeting the BDD requirements, and
* Change the EP to the proper non-BDD EP and claim label.
* Change the “Pre-Discharge Type” to “Quick Start”
* Add the “BDD Excluded” Special Issue to one BDD excluded contention requiring an examination request

This is the responsibility of whomever is processing the claim and identifies it as an excluded BDD claim. However, if a claim processor notices that the BDD exclusion letter has not been provided to the claimant, it is their responsibility to provide notification.

Exception: If the SM is notified in person of the reason why they do not meet the BDD program requirements, it is not necessary to also send the BDD exclusion letter if this in-person notification is documented in VBMS notes.

Topic 2: Updating VA Systems

**VBMS Contentions and Special Issue Labels**

All claimed issues must be entered into the contentions in VBMS.

Be sure to add all necessary special issue labels to the contentions in VBMS, such as Military Sexual Trauma (MST), PTSD – Combat, etc.

**VBMS Notes**

VBMS Notes are utilized as a communication tool between the MSC or other BDD claims processor, Regional Offices (ROs), 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:

* Met with SM on April 14, 2017 and completed VAF 21-526EZ. Exam requested.
* SM submitted claim with less than 90 days prior to discharge. Established BDD Excluded Diary EP. Sent BDD exclusion letter. RO must request examinations.
* Claim excluded from Pre-Discharge program due to SM residing in a foreign country and unable to attend exams in an available OCONUS location. Established claim with a BDD excluded EP and claim label. Sent BDD exclusion letter.

**Flashes**

All Coporate flashes must be assigned based on information found in the case file. The following are commonly used (but not limited to) additional flashes found on Pre-Discharge 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  |