



# VIP RVSR

## Classroom Instructor Job Aid

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## Overview

As you begin the next four weeks of VIP RVSR Classroom, the following is a helpful guide to assist with trainee instruction and engagement. This job aid will provide information on classroom preparation, items in need of completion, where to locate specific training items, and suggested activities for lesson reinforcement.

Classroom preparation prior to the arrival of the trainees is essential. The following tips will help to create and maintain an environment that is conducive to learning once training begins.

Become familiar with all training materials by reading the Instructor Lesson Plan or Instructor Slide Notes, as applicable, while simultaneously reviewing the corresponding Public Presentation File. Please note that while both the slide notes and the lesson plan are downloadable, the public presentation file is not; it is web-based. This will provide you the opportunity to see the connection between the notes and presentation materials, which will allow for a more structured presentation during the training session. Finally, due to the recent changes in the M21, instructors will need to review the materials and provide current references, during and following instruction, if applicable.

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 notes or lesson plan, the trainee handouts, and the slides to ensure your timing is on track with the length of the lesson.

Remember, the lesson plan belongs to you. Feel free to highlight headings, key phrases, or other information to help the instruction flow smoothly. Feel free to add any notes or information that you need in the margins. To enhance your lesson, discuss experience working claims related to the lesson and steps you took to resolve situations ones may encounter while developing a claim.

Arrive early to the classroom to ensure access to the facility and computers.

Test the computer and projector to ensure they are working properly.

Before class begins, open the presentation to the first slide. This will help to ensure the presentation is functioning properly.

Prior to the arrival of the trainees, print out and place name tents on the computers on the first day of class so the trainees will know where to sit upon entering the classroom.

Ensure the trainees have access to VBMS, VBMS-R, CAPRI, and JLV.

## Welcome to VIP Classroom and Introductions

During this period, trainees and instructor introductions will take place. This is an opportunity for the instructors to provide information about their VA background or specialties. The trainees are encouraged to share information about themselves to help the group bond.

Introductions may be established simply by having each trainee stand, state their name, and share at least one interesting thing about themselves.

Take this opportunity to obtain the correct spellings and pronunciations of names as well as find out name preferences.

Introductions may also be established with the use of an icebreaker. A few popular icebreakers are listed below as a suggestion, but are not meant to be limiting:

- People Bingo: <https://www.wikihow.com/Play-Human-Bingo>
- Candy Introductions: <https://www.icebreakers.ws/get-to-know-you/candy-introductions.html>
- Interview game: <https://www.icebreakers.ws/classroom-icebreaker/interview-game.html>
- Two Truths and a Lie: <https://www.icebreakers.ws/get-to-know-you/two-truths-and-a-lie.html>

During this time, the trainees should be oriented to the training location and made aware of the nearest restrooms, break areas, and fire exits and meeting location in case of an emergency.

These guidelines should also be followed in the event instruction is taking place in a virtual environment. Classes may be conducted over Microsoft Teams, as this is a secure line of communication.

To maintain a training environment that is conducive to learning, the establishment of classroom rules and expectations should be developed and communicated. Please note, the adherence to classroom rules by all is best achieved when developed with trainee participation. During your discussion, have the trainees assist with the development of the classroom rules.

Noting some liberties may need to be given based on the training location, please ensure the following items are included in the classroom rules:

- Cellphone usage during instruction
- Cellphone ringtones (silent or vibrate mode)
- Talking during instruction

- Internet usage during instruction
- Microsoft Teams usage during instruction
- Email usage during instruction
- Showing courtesy and respect towards each other while in the classroom
- How questions will be addressed during instruction
- Classroom participation.

Please also provide additional information on the following:

- Start and end times for training
- Break times (inclusive of timely returns from break)
- Lunch time
- End of day assessments
- Contact information of the designated person the trainees are to contact in case of emergencies and/ or sick leave.

This listing is not intended to be all-inclusive. Feel free to add to this listing. Upon completion of the explanation of the classroom rules, they are to be posted inside the classroom.

### **Systems Check with IT**

Contact your IT staff prior to the start of training. Discuss scheduling a time for IT to briefly come by the classroom to assist with any technical problems the trainees may be experiencing. Ensure all trainees have proper access to the system and all necessary applications as well as fully operational equipment (two monitors, mouse, etc.).

This is also the time to ensure that all reasonable accommodations have been met and implemented.

Reminder: Ensure the trainees have access to VBMS, VBMS-R, CAPRI, and JLV.

*It is noted that some trainees may be training at a different location from their home station. Therefore, it is important to ensure all have proper access and permissions at the training site.*

## **Homeroom**

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

This time can also be used to address and 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.

\*On day 1, the recap will consist of answering questions about information learned while enrolled in IWT. Recaps may be provided in an open class discussion format or with the use of a poll or activity. Creativity is encouraged.

## **Daily Assessments**

As we are committed to providing quality training, trainee feedback plays an essential part. The RVSR trainees are required to complete an online daily assessment based on the instruction provided that day.

Please allot enough time at the end of each day after the lesson recap for the trainee to adequately complete the assessments.

## **Vision RVSR Classroom (449182)**

This lesson provides a regulatory and procedural basis for rating of eye diseases. Upon completion of this lesson, the trainee should be able to:

- Identify common eye conditions and choose the correct evaluation criteria in the rating schedule.
- Describe the General Rating Formula for Diseases of the Eye, including incapacitating episodes.
- Discuss visual impairment and the basic evaluation criteria for each impairment.
- Demonstrate how to review the eye conditions DBQ and locate the appropriate diagnostic code and evaluation in the rating schedule.

## **Medical Opinions and You (4202061)**

This lesson provides an introduction into understanding requests for medical opinions.

Upon completion of this lesson, the trainee should be able to:

- Identify when duty to assist criteria are met for the ordering of a direct medical opinion.
- Identify when duty to assist criteria are met for the ordering of specialized medical opinions.
- Construct appropriate medical opinions using mandated tools.

### **ERB and EMS Demo**

This is noted to be a demonstration of the Exam Request Builder (ERB) and the Exam Management System (EMS) to comply with the M21 -1 III.iv.3.A. requirement for RVSRs to create and request complex medical opinions. The expectation is that the instructor will provide a demonstration of an input of medical examination request for a live Veteran.

Instructors should be aware of this lesson and have searched/ reviewed a live case from your RO's queue to provide a live demonstration.

### **CAPRI and JLV Demo**

This is also a live demonstration of reviewing, filtering, and searching the CAPRI and Joint Legacy Viewer (JLV) databases for a Veteran or claimants claimed and presumptive conditions. The instructor will also demonstrate how to input an exam created with ERB (in previous lesson). Finally, the instructor will review the regulatory requirements for associating the federal records with the Veteran or claimant's electronic file.

### **Deferred and Partial Ratings (4192343)**

This lesson provides information about when a case must be deferred. Upon completion of this lesson, the trainee should be able to:

- Identify when to correctly complete a partial rating decision and/ or a deferred rating decision.
- Differentiate between a deferred issue of entitlement and a deferred issue of evaluation.

### **Routine Future Exams (4188404)**

The purpose of this lesson is to expose trainees to the regulations and policies related to routine future examinations.

Upon completion of this lesson, the trainee should be able to:

- Identify the regulations that determine when and when not to schedule a routine future exam.
- Identify the regulations that determine what action to take if a reexamination shows improvement.
- Determine what action to take when there is a reduction in the evaluation of a service-connected disability.

### **VBMS/VBMS-R and live case walk-through with signature configuration**

This is a live demonstration of VBMS and VBMS-R. The trainees had a VBMS-R demo while in IWT, however, all eCases were completed in the VBMS-R demo environment and this is the first opportunity for the trainees to receive a live demonstration of both systems. The instructor should have a live Veteran's claim that is ready to rate, with minimal documents that can be completed during this demonstration.

The second part of the demonstration is the signature configuration in VBMS-R as required per [M21-1 V.iv.1.B.7](#). While one instructor is demonstrating, a second instructor should be either online or in the physical classroom, answering questions and ensuring the inputs are done correctly.

### **Supplemental Claims and New and Relevant Evidence (4189217)**

This lesson provides an overview of Supplemental Claims and new and relevant evidence. Upon completion of this lesson, the trainee should be able to:

- Understand the background associated with supplemental claims.
- Define supplemental claims.
- Identify prescribed forms associated with supplemental claims.
- Identify new and relevant evidence.
- Understand the necessary rating actions for previously denied claims when new and relevant evidence is/ is not received.

### **Individual Unemployability (4179838)**

This lesson includes discussions and exercises that provide an opportunity for the trainees to:

- Determine the requirements for eligibility to individual unemployability benefits.
- Identify the requirements for gainful employment.
- Identify the correct effective dates related to IU claims
- Identify ancillary benefits available associated with a grant of individual unemployability.

## **Effective Dates (4192416)**

This lesson explains various types of effective dates and provides trainees with the references available to assist in assigning the proper effective dates.

Upon completion of this lesson, the trainee should be able to:

- Identify the importance of the correct effective date.
- Explain how the VA determines the effective date for benefit claims.
- Explain the general rule for effective dates.
- Explain date of receipt of claim, intent to file, increased evaluations.
- Explain liberalizing law.
- Review effective dates for Special Monthly Compensation.
- Review effective dates for decisions made after February 19, 2019.
- Explain effective date reductions.

## **Gulf War Presumptives and Specific Environmental Hazards (4212148)**

This lesson provides trainees with a comprehensive understanding of rating claims for disabilities resulting from exposure to specific environmental hazards in the Gulf War and disabilities based on the provisions of §3.317.

Upon completion of this lesson, the trainee should be able to:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of rating claims for disabilities resulting from exposure to specific environmental hazards in the Gulf War and disabilities based on the provisions of §3.317, to include undiagnosed illness and medically unexplained chronic multi-symptom illness (MUCMI).
- Recognize and apply the eligibility criteria for service connection of presumptive respiratory diseases under § 3.320.
- Identify the appropriate decisional action to take, diagnostic code(s), evaluation(s), and special issue indicators.

Upon completion of the lesson, direct the trainee to the Gulf War eCase for the practical application exercise in the Adobe Prime. All eCase material will be accessed through Adobe Prime.

Direct the trainees to upload their completed eCase to the Adobe Prime and complete the associated feedback assessment.

Instructors also have the option of having the trainees submit their completed eCase to them for review and discussion.



### **38 USC 1702 and Competency (4184366)**

This lesson provides a review of 38 USC 1702 benefits available to Veterans and guidance for processing claims involving a grant or denial of 38 USC 1702 benefits or a determination of competency

Upon completion of this lesson, the trainee should be able to:

- Recognize claimants eligible for 38 USC 1702 benefits.
- Render a grant or denial of 1702 benefits based on evidence of record.
- Note competency and propose incompetency in a rating decision when required by regulation or evidence of record.
- Understand the procedure for final determinations of competency or incompetency in a rating decision.

### **Service Connection for National Guard and Reserves (4212166)**

This lesson provides trainees with a comprehensive understanding of rating claims for disabilities resulting from National Guard and/ or Reserve service.

Upon completion of this lesson, the trainee should be able to:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of what is considered active duty and/ or qualifying service for National Guard and Reserves.
- Identify when a rating decision is the appropriate action to take.

Following the completion of the instructor-led lesson, the trainees will complete the associated National Guard eCase. All eCases are found in Adobe Prime and are completed in VBMS-R Demo then uploaded to the specific lesson in Prime.

Instructors also have the option of having the trainees submit their completed National Guard eCase to them for review and discussion.

Upon completion of this lesson, the trainee should be able to identify the steps required to review a claim with claimed National Guard and/ or Reserve service and determine if service connection is warranted based on qualifying service.

### **Introduction to Higher Levels of SMC (4411527)**

This lesson provides a brief overview and introduction to higher levels of special monthly compensation (SMC) levels.

Upon completion of this lesson, and given the provided job aid and access to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and appropriate tools, trainees should be able to:

- Describe the entitlement criteria for each paragraph of special monthly compensation (SMC).
- Identify disability criteria and evaluation levels consistent with entitlement to specific paragraphs of SMC.
- Determine the appropriate SMC coding for specific paragraphs of entitlement.

### **That Tingling Feeling: Peripheral Nerves Exercise (4523326)**

This course is designed to guide trainees through the process of determining the correct evaluation for peripheral nerve disabilities. This is a two-part lesson; the instructor will first review the rating schedule guidelines for peripheral nerve ratings and associated disabilities then the trainees will complete a self-paced module in Adobe Prime.

This is an interactive course demonstrated via the Adobe Captivate platform.

### **Military Sexual Trauma (4179698)**

Military sexual trauma (MST) claims are highly sensitive in nature, and VA employees must be cognizant of their sensitivity when gathering evidence and providing a decision to claimants.

Upon completion of this lesson, the trainee should be able to:

- Identify the legal requirements which govern VA in the claims process.
- Cite the rating requirements for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- List evidence requirements to substantiate a claim for PTSD due to MST.
- Identify markers of in-service sexual assault.

Please note that because MST claims are only worked by specialized processors at designated Regional Offices, trainees will not be rating these types of claims during VIP nor immediately following. Regional Offices are required to assign the appropriate TMS courses and mentors to continue the MST rating training if the employee is to be an MST specialized processor.

### **Diabetic Complications (4191577)**

This lesson builds on what trainees have already learned about diabetes and provides an overview of complications resulting from diabetes mellitus.

Upon completion of this lesson, the employee should be able to evaluate chronic complications of diabetes mellitus.

Following the completion of the instructor-led lesson, the trainees will complete the associated Diabetic Complications eCase. All eCases are found in Adobe Prime and are completed in VBMS-R Demo then uploaded to the specific lesson in Prime.

Instructors also have the option of having the trainees submit their completed Diabetic Complications eCase to them for review and discussion.

Upon completion of this lesson, the trainee should be able to identify the steps required to review a claim with claimed National Guard and/ or Reserve service and determine if service connection is warranted based on qualifying service.

### **Practical Application**

Practical application is the allotted time for trainees to work live claims. Work with your station to secure live cases for the trainees to process during this training period. Please see the attached Classroom Claim Exclusion list for claims not considered suitable for RVSR trainee live work.

When assigning live claims to the trainees, it is extremely important for both the instructors and trainees to follow the guidelines as written in the “Informal Assessment Period” section of the RVSR Playbook.

Specific lessons on the schedule have eCase assignments during the practical application period. The structuring of eCases are to reinforce the accompanying lesson and ensure the trainees gain exposure to these special issue claims.

The trainees can access the eCase material from Adobe Prime. The rating of the eCase will be conducted through VBMS-R Demo using the trainees RSTUDENT number and their assigned RSTUDENT number.

When the eCase rating decision is completed, the trainee will upload their completed claim to the Adobe Prime. This assists with tracking the number of Residency eCases completed by each trainee.

\*Instructors also have the option of having the trainees also submit their completed eCases to them for review and discussion. A note for the mentors: the VBMS-R Demo environment does not allow for the changing of the Veteran’s name, PII, service period, etc. Commentary on items that are system generated for Classroom eCases should be excluded from these reviews.

Just as working a live claim, the trainees are highly encouraged to work their cases independently so we may gain an accurate measurement of learning gaps. Unlike the live claims, a review of the completed eCase can be provided with the

whole class as a participatory activity as they all have a copy of the material (excluded the completed rating answer key).

*To assist with mentoring and timely feedback in the classroom, it is highly encouraged that each instructor be assigned a group of trainees. Depending on the trainee to instructor ratio, divide the trainees into groups.*

### **VIP Classroom Practicum**

A final test will be provided to the trainee as a review of course content covered while in training. This test consists of a multiple-choice test and a subsequent eCase with a feedback assessment. Encourage the trainees to work independently as we would like to learn about any training gaps they may have. All trainees in the training class will start taking the Practicum at the same time.

*Email and Teams usage is not permitted during the Practicum; however, the trainees are encouraged to use the Compensation Job Aids and Medical EPSS as well as any personal notes, they may have taken during the class session. \*The Practicum is “open book, not open friend.”*

### **Review of the RVSR Practicum**

Once all trainees have completed the test, take the time to review it with the class to provide additional clarifications of the training information, manual references, and any regulatory guidance.

Encourage the trainees to ask any additional questions they may have about processing cases.

### **Wrap-up and Feedback of RVSR Curriculum**

Should the trainee complete the Practicum and test prior to others, they should be directed to complete any remaining live case corrections.

The trainees should be directed to complete the End of RVSR VIP and Classroom Survey. The completion of the survey is an opportunity for the trainees to provide constructive feedback for the instructors about the whole RVSR training experience.

### **Questions?**

Questions regarding this information should be directed to the Compensation Service, VIP Mailbox: VAVBAWAS/ CO/ VIPTraining.

For issues concerning the daily assessment, contact VAVBAWAS/ CO/ VBATMSHELP.

## **Classroom Claim Exclusion list**

Return to active duty cases  
AMA/ RAMP with legacy appeals/ HLR  
DIC claims  
Helpless child claims  
Claims for accrued benefits  
Sensitive level files (6 or higher)  
Nehmer cases  
1151 claims  
Homeless cases MS/ ALS/ Parkinson cases  
Pension/ dual claims  
Foreign claims  
MST claims  
Initial Agent Orange/ BWN claims  
Greater than 7 issues  
IDES Claims