Pension and Fiduciary (P&F) Service

Fiduciary Quality Call

Date: October 22, 2020

TMS: # VA 4561675

AGENDA TOPICS

AGENDA ITEMS

Agenda item: Changes to Field Examination and Accounting Checklists **Presenter:** Sandy Lundquist, Analyst

Target Audience:

Insert Targeted Audience Here (QRS, MGMT, etc.)

Discussion:

- Changes to Field Examination Checklist. On May 27, 2020 the Field Examination Checklist was updated to reflect changes to SDP procedures as part of the 12-point modernization plan. These changes include:
  - ✓ Added verbiage (at the time of the initial appointment) to E6
  - ✓ Added verbiage (correct letter and/or status reports) to J2
  - ✓ Added verbiage (appropriate information of record (to include competency memo, if applicable) and (verification of the fiduciary or SDP beneficiary) to M1
  - ✓ Added verbiage (to include adding any special issues) to Q3

- On June 12, 2020 the Field Examination Checklist was updated to reflect competency decision changes as part of the 12-point modernization plan. These changes include:

- ✓ Added verbiage (completing the final competency rating) to A1 and A2
- ✓ Moved E6 to A3
- ✓ Added verbiage (competency rating completed correctly) to B1 and B2
- ✓ Added new B3
- ✓ Combined M6 and M7 into new D2
- ✓ Removed Q5 (character reference)

- Changes to Accounting Checklist. On September 21, 2020 the Accounting Checklist was updated due to the implementation of FAST. These changes include:
  - ✓ Removed D5 (call letter for final accountings)
  - ✓ Removed D10 as reflected into new D7
  - ✓ Added new E6

The substantive errors by both the field examination and accounting checklist are as follows:

FIELD EXAMINATION CHECKLIST

Checklist Item	Substantive Error?	Checklist Item	Substantive Error?
A1	Yes	I1	
A2		J1	Yes
A3	Yes	J2	
B1		J3	Yes
B2	Yes	K1	Yes
B3	Yes	K2	Yes
C1		L1	Yes
D1	Yes	L2	Yes
D2	Yes	L3	Yes
E1		M1	
E2		M2	Yes
E3	Yes	M3	
E4	Yes	M4	
E5	Yes	M5	Yes
F1		N1	Yes
F2	Yes	O1	
F3	Yes	P2	
F4	Yes	Q1	
G1		Q2	
G2	Yes	Q3	
G3		Q4	
G4		Q5	
H1		Q6	
H2	Yes	Q7	
		Total	24

ACCOUNTING AUDIT CHECKLIST

Checklist Item	Substantive Error?	Checklist Item	Substantive Error?
A1		C7	Yes
A2		C8	Yes
A3		C9	
B1	Yes	C10	
B2	Yes	D1	Yes
B3	Yes	D2	Yes
B4	Yes	D3	
B5	Yes	D4	Yes
B6	Yes	D5	Yes
B7	Yes	D6	Yes
B8	Yes	D7	
B9		D8	Yes
C1	Yes	E1	
C2	Yes	E2	
C3	Yes	E3	
C4	Yes	E4	
C5	Yes	E5	
C6	Yes	E6	
		Total	14

References/Contacts

- ✓ Field Examination/Accounting Checklist: https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001030/content/554400000127439/Chapter%208.%20%20Fiduciary%20Hub%20(Hub)%20National%20Quality%20Reviews%20and%20Quality%20Review%20Teams%20(QRT)#Appendix%20A

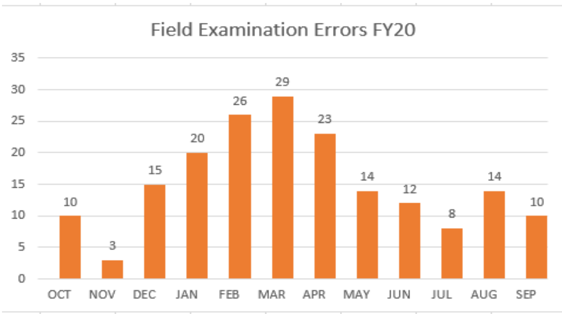
Agenda item: Quality Analysis – Year to Date Error Call

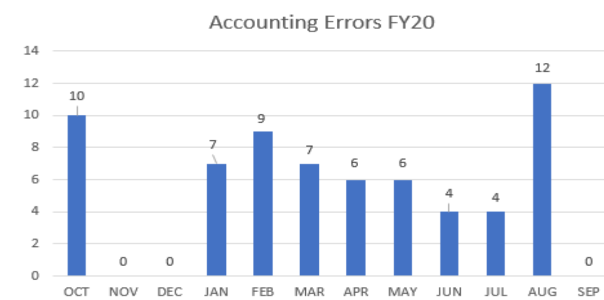
Presenter: Felecia Roberts and David Gunnell, Analysts

Target Audience:

Quality Review Specialists (QRS) and Quality Review Team (QRT) Coaches/Assistant Coaches

Discussion:





	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP
Competency Determinations (A-D)												1
Field Examinations (E-H)	4	1	5	7	12	7	8	3	5	4	5	3
Streamline Field Examinations (I-J)							1	1	1		1	1
Finalizing Field Examinations (K-M)	1		5	2	3	6	4	2	2	3	3	2
Fiduciary Adjustments (N-O)												
Administrative (P-Q)	5	2	5	11	11	16	10	8	4	1	5	3
TOTAL FIELD EXAMINATION ERRORS:	**10**	**3**	**15**	**20**	**26**	**29**	**23**	**14**	**12**	**8**	**14**	**10**

	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP
Accounting Audit (A-B)	2			1	1			2	2		7	
Accounting - FUM Protection (C)	1			1	1	1					2	
Accounting - Disposition (D)	1				1	1				3	2	
Administrative (E)	6			5	6	5	6	4	2	1	1	
TOTAL ACCOUNTING ERRORS:	**10**	**0**	**0**	**7**	**9**	**7**	**6**	**6**	**4**	**4**	**12**	**0**

- The National Quality goal is 92%. We are pleased to announce that we ended FY20 National Quality at **93.3**%. The above graph depicts the number of errors that we have cited for each month of the year. During the month of August, there was a slight increase in error calls on both field examinations and accounting. There were 14 errors called on field examinations and 12 errors were cited on accountings.

- The highest category of substantive errors in field examinations for the fiscal year was E3 (Does the field examination report document the beneficiary's current income, expenses, and assets?). We have seen an improvement of E3 error calls over the FY, most significantly during the last quarter.

- The highest category of substantive errors in accountings for the fiscal year was B7 (Was the accounting approved only after receipt of financial institution documents for the entire accounting period, when required?). This also has shown improvement during the last quarter with only three error calls.

- **Quality Reminders**.

  Over the course of our reviews we identified a few reminders as of October 22, 2020.

Applicable updates have been added where available.

- ✓ When establishing a 522 unscheduled field examination due to non-receipt or incomplete accountings (Historical FPM 3.E.4.b.),
    1. Ensure the due date is updated from 120 to 60 days,
    2. Unscheduled reason is “NONRECEIPT OF ACCOUNTING, P&F Service has seen many cases referenced as nonreceipt of accounting with a due date of 120 days, and multiple unscheduled reasons for nonreceipt or incomplete accountings.

  Following the FPM rewrite, this reminder applies to FPM, Part II, Chapter 3.
- ✓ When soliciting for the collection of a corporate surety bond, please use the template letter provided in FPM II.3.B.3.e. (Historical FPM 5.E.4.c., step 4). P&F has seen multiple versions of the letter. Additional language may be used for a specific case.

References/Contacts

- ✓ FPM I.3.E.1.b., Accounting Documents Are Incomplete or Not Received
- ✓ FPM II.3.B.3.c., Procedures for Collection of a Surety Bond

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Agenda item: STAR Deselection Process and Additional STAR Reviews **Presenter:** Alvin Hill, Analyst

Target Audience:

Quality Review Specialists (QRS) and Quality Review Team (QRT) Coaches/Assistant Coaches

Discussion:

- In the month of April, the Beneficiary Field Fiduciary System experienced a defect which caused STAR reviews which were completed previously to be selected again. This resulted in 14 cases which had to be replaced. We apologize for any inconvenience that this may have caused in accessing your reviews pulled for April of 2020. All of the affected cases have been replaced and reviewed.

References/Contacts

- ✓ Email dated May 20, 2020

Agenda item: VBMS Incorrect Claim Label and Category Type **Presenter:** Tom Visser, Analyst

Target Audience:

Quality Review Specialists (QRS) and Quality Review Team (QRT) Coaches/Assistant Coaches

Discussion:

- During the course of P&F Service review, it has been noted that many of the documents uploaded by the Hubs do not contain the correct category type or the incorrect date of receipt. Additionally, some Hubs create a claim label type as “Correspondence” for all fiduciary related documents (e.g., 21-4716a, 21-4703, etc.) when a specific category type exists.

- **Response**: Per the VBMS job aid, the user is to select the appropriate document type. Many documents which are incorrectly labeled results in the inability to locate specific documents after upload using the keyword search function. The date which is to be input into the date receipt field is supposed to be the date the document was received. However, many documents are uploaded with the incorrect date of receipt; the user is using the date the document was uploaded. This may create confusion for anyone reviewing the documents at a later time.

  As a reminder, the claim label type "Correspondence" can be seen by everyone who has access to VBMS – Veteran, VSC, etc.

References/Contacts

✓ VBMS User Guide: https://www.vbms.vba.va.gov/vbmsp2/resources_p4/webhelp/core_webhelp/guides_for_download/vbms_user_guide.pdf

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Agenda item: Future of National STAR Reviews **Presenter:** Kelly Wante, Chief

Target Audience:

Quality Review Specialists (QRS) and Quality Review Team (QRT) Coaches/Assistant Coaches

Discussion:

- **Question from Columbia:** Regarding the National STAR review process and BFFS being converted to read-only, will the Quality reviews for Hubs be moving to QMS or some other system?

- **Response:** National STAR reviews will be completed using a manual sample pull and review process beginning in December 2020 (November 2020 reviews). Fiduciary Hubs will be notified of any errors cited, both substantive and non-substantive, via a formal memorandum from the P&F Service Training, Quality, and Oversight mailbox. To ensure notices are received, the Fiduciary Hub managers will be copied. Requests for reconsideration during this period must be submitted on the P&F Service reconsideration template to the P&F Service Training, Quality, and Oversight mailbox within the designated timeframe outlined in M21-4, Chapter 8. P&F Service will continue to work with PA&I to migrate national STAR reviews to QMS as quickly as possible (estimated to be Quarter 2, FY 2021).

References/Contacts

✓ Email dated September 29, 2020

Agenda item: QRT Local Checklist Update **Presenter:** Kelly Wante, Chief

Target Audience:

Quality Review Specialists (QRS) and Quality Review Team (QRT) Coaches/Assistant Coaches

Discussion:

- **Question from Columbia:** Regarding the 12-point plan, when will the QRT Checklists be updated to align with the removal of the Streamlined process, completion of examinations by the FEs/FSRs, and transition into VBMS?

- **Response:** Local quality checklists for LIEs, FEs, and FSRs are currently under review by P&F Service. Any anticipated changes must be cleared with appropriate leadership before an implementation date can be confirmed, however, it is expected that this would be after the migration VBMS-Fiduciary and the publication of the FPM rewrite project.

References/Contacts

✓ Email dated September 29, 2020

Agenda item: Due Process Expiration **Presenter:** Tom Visser, Analyst

Target Audience:

Quality Review Specialists (QRS) and Quality Review Team (QRT) Coaches/Assistant Coaches

Discussion:

- **Question from Columbia:** Clarification is being requested for the date of Due Process expiration. The CFH and FPM advised that DP expires 65 days from the date of the DP letter. When checking package manager in VBMS to ensure the letter was mailed, there is often a date disparity from the date of letter versus when the letter was actually mailed by the centralized printing vendor. Should Due Process be the date of letter or the date the letter was mailed in VBMS Package Manager?

- **Response:** For purposes of computing due process time limits, fiduciary hubs should use the date of the due process notification letter as the date of mailing, as prescribed in 38 CFR 3.110. The minimum period for the proposed adverse action is 60 days. However, adverse action should not be taken until at least the 65th day to allow time for evidence to reach the hub unless the adverse action is waived by the beneficiary as provided in M21-1, Part I, 2.C.1.b.

References/Contacts

- ✓ 38 CFR 3.110
- ✓ M21-1, Part I, 2.C.1.b.

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Agenda item: VBMS-Fiduciary Transition Timeline and Training Plan **Presenter:** Kelly Wante, Chief

Target Audience:

Quality Review Specialists (QRS) and Quality Review Team (QRT) Coaches/Assistant Coaches

Discussion:

- **Question from Indianapolis:** What is the timeline for VBMS-Fiduciary transition and training plan from P&F Service to assist the fiduciary hubs to prepare for local training needs?

- **Response:** The timeline for VBMS-Fiduciary to transition is November 8, 2020. At this time, BFFS will be read-only. VBMS training will begin on October 27, which will be a live call that provides a high-level overview for management, and October 28, which will be a live call that provides a high-level overview for employees.

References/Contacts

✓ Email dated September 30, 2020

Agenda item: FPM Update for VBMS-Fiduciary **Presenter:** Kelly Wante, Chief

Target Audience:

Quality Review Specialists (QRS) and Quality Review Team (QRT) Coaches/Assistant Coaches

Discussion:

- **Question from Indianapolis**: What is the update on when FPM will be released to coincide with the transition to VBMS-Fiduciary?

- **Response**: Procedures is constantly updating the FPM. At this time, their focus is on updating the FPM with manual changes related to the 12-point modernization plan. As the time for migration gets closer, we anticipate more FPM changes coinciding with the transition to VBMS-Fiduciary.

References/Contacts

✓ Email dated September 30, 2020

Closing Comments

P&F Quality Mailbox:

We will solicit for agenda topic(s) for each future Quality Call. If you have a specific quality related topic suggestion, please feel free to email it to the Pension and Fiduciary (P&F) Quality mailbox at PFTNGQUALOVRST.VBACO@va.gov. For specific policy and procedures related topics, please email it to the Policy and Procedures mailbox at PFPOLPROC.VBACO@va.gov.

Quality Call Bulletins

Quality Call Bulletins can be found in the following locations: https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/PENSIONANDFIDUCIARY/Quality_Call_Bulletins.asp. The next Quality Call is tentatively scheduled for January 2021 (date TBD).

TMS Courses:

All Fiduciary Quality Calls and bulletins will be available in TMS. Once the monthly bulletin is finalized, information will be sent to the Fiduciary Hubs which will include the TMS #.

Post-Call Follow Up

Quality Call Recording:
A recording of the October 2020 Fiduciary Quality Call can be found here (open in Chrome): https://vba-media1.vbatraining.org/video/FID/4561675.html

TMS Course:
Available content from the Quality Call (bulletin, recording, etc.) will be available in TMS! The TMS # for the October 2020 Fiduciary Quality Call is VA 4561675 (Pension and Fiduciary Quality Call – Fiduciary October 2020)

The link to TMS is HERE. It is recommended to use Google Chrome when viewing the TMS information.

Q&A:

Question 1: Lincoln Fiduciary Hub
With all of the different changes upcoming in the manual, is there a single source document that the field can get for training purposes as we have upcoming training and if we have the document we can change our training to the updated material?

P&F Response:
Policy & Procedures along with Training are updating the items simultaneously.

Question 2:
Is there a projected date for the simultaneous release?

P&F Response:
Training for VBMS-Fiduciary begins on October 27, 2020 and continues through the week of November 2, 2020. The FPM rewrite is expected to be released on November 9, 2020 simultaneous to the migration to VBMS-Fiduciary.

Question 3: Columbia Fiduciary Hub
Are the trainings scheduled for next week live trainings?

P&F Response:
Yes, the trainings are scheduled to be live trainings but will be recorded and available in TMS following delivery.

Question 4: Louisville Fiduciary Hub
We have new folks on board, and we need to train them on BFFS. Since BFFS is going away do we have something we can train them within in this 2-week transition period?

P&F Response:
There is not a separate training for new employees prior to the training for all Hub employees.

Question 5: Indianapolis Fiduciary Hub
We have received guidance from our Director's Office regarding direct deposits. How will things work as they pertain to fiduciaries?

P&F Response:

Please continue to follow the interim guidance emailed October 13, 2020, which updated the guidance emailed August 25, 2020, until the FPM rewrite is published. Fiduciaries exempt from obtaining a properly titled account per 38 CFR 13.200(b) may utilize the National Call Center (or submit a completed Standard Form (SF) 1199a if this is not possible) for direct deposit changes. For fiduciaries which must obtain a properly titled account, the primary method of direct deposit change will be the completion of the SF 1199a.

Question 6: Indianapolis Fiduciary Hub
With regard to the previous question, will Veterans/Beneficiaries with fiduciaries be blocked from making self-service changes?

P&F Response:
P&F Service does not control the self-service website and therefore cannot speak to the internal rules that exist there. However, P&F Service has not been made aware of any changes being made to the accessibility of the self-service portal. If beneficiaries were systematically blocked from performing self-service changes before the updated process, they will still be blocked from performing self-service changes now. It is not the intention of P&F Service to recommend self-service direct deposit changes for beneficiaries within the Fiduciary Program. Please follow the interim guidance mentioned above.

Question 7: Indianapolis Fiduciary Hub
Will the fiduciaries be able to use this self-service capability in place of the Veteran/beneficiary?

P&F Response:

No, there are privacy concerns with allowing fiduciaries to have access to the self-service portal. The portal potentially gives access to sensitive medical records to which the fiduciary should not have access. Please follow the interim guidance mentioned above.

Question 8:
In instances where there are letters, most of our LIEs upload them in the form of a PDF document. They are uploaded together and go out together in the package manager. In this instance, the 4703 would be combined with the letters in the mailer. Are you saying that the letters cannot be sent out together as a package?

P&F Response:
VA Form 21P-4703 may be combined with other documents for mailing purposes. Completed forms should be uploaded separately into VBMS so that it can be easily identified as a standalone document.

Question 9:
Is this the same requirement with the appeals package? Would you prefer the appeals forms be uploaded separately?

In instances where there are letters, most of our LIEs upload them in the form of a PDF document. They are uploaded together and go out together in the package manager. In this instance, the 4703 would be combined with the letters in the mailer. Are you saying that the letters cannot be sent out together as a package?

P&F Response:
The forms within the appeals package are included as attachments for beneficiary to fill out. As the forms are not yet completed, Hubs can continue to include within the package to the beneficiary.

Question 10: Lincoln Fiduciary Hub
The VSC has instructed the field to upload the VA Form 4716a as correspondence and not as a "fiduciary document" as fiduciary documents can only be reviewed by fiduciary personnel. In this instance we must place the 21-4716a as "Correspondence." Are we stating that we want this separately or under the fiduciary label?

P&F Response:
VA Form 4716a should not be uploaded as "Correspondence" but rather its appropriate document type. FPM I.2.E.3.d. was updated on December 30, 2020 to instruct the Hubs to include all relevant details that are necessary to take award action on potential change in benefit entitlement on *VA Form 27-0820*.

Question 11: Salt Lake City Fiduciary Hub
Are we seeing the labeling issue on the Fiduciary side or are we seeing this more from the VSC?

P&F Response:
We are experiencing this issue on with uploads from the Hub and not the VSC.

Question 12: Louisville Fiduciary Hub
Was the VBMS Users Guide updated to show the proper labeling of forms?

P&F Response:
P&F Service is reviewing and will provide a separate response to the Hubs.

Question 13:
When Fiduciary moves into VBMS will it be anticipated that National STAR and Locality Quality Checklists will be the same?

P&F Response:
They will remain separate checklists due to the way that that National Star reviews a case and the way that the hubs review the cases. The hub looks at an in-process review on an individual level while National STAR looks at a completed work item for the entire Station.

Question 14: Indianapolis Fiduciary Hub
Do you have an anticipated date for the migration from Aspen to QMS and will we receive training on the nuances?

P&F Response:
The transition for National Quality is estimated to occur in January 2021, while the transition for local quality is estimated to occur mid-2021. Hubs will receive training for both transitions.

Question 15:
Will there be a change in the number of quality reviews that are performed each hub for this FY?

P&F Response:
PA&I is currently reviewing national STAR sample sizes for adjustment in FY 2021. We have not been notified by PA&I of a change in the number of reviews, therefore, sample sizes from FY 2020 will continue to be used. P&F Service will notify the field of any changes to the sample sizes.

Question 16: Lincoln Fiduciary Hub
With the 12-Point Plan transitioning the roles of the field examiner, will there be an update to field examiner functions in Aspen so that the field can review the proper work credit? For instance, the 12-Point Plan requires field examiners to close their own cases. In Aspen this is listed as a LIE function. If this remains, the field examiner will be unable to take credit for the action and the local quality reviewers will not be able to review this credit for the field

examination. There seems to be a gap in the plan to provide for this update. Will there be an update to the system for these instances?

P&F Response:
The Office of Field Operations (OFO) is responsible for updating the production activity during the transition. Additional information was provided by Lincoln and was forwarded to OFO for consideration.

Question 17: Lincoln Fiduciary Hub
Is the streamline process going away altogether?

P&F Response:
The streamline process is undergoing a rebrand which will reflect the 12-Point Plan.

Question 18: Louisville Fiduciary Hub
Is the Director’s dashboard updated to include September’s numbers?

P&F Response:
We apologize for the delay. The Directors Performance dashboard for September 2020 fiduciary quality metrics which were published on November 2, 2020.