**VBA Resource Allocation Process Narration for 508 Compliance**

**Scene 1:**

Welcome to the Veterans Benefits Administrations Resource Allocation Process Training.

**Scene 2:**

This training is designed to outline the governance and collaboration components of the Human Capital Resource Allocation Process or RAP for Veterans Benefits Administration leaders and supervisors. The VBA Resource Allocation Process occurs as a subset of the annual VA budget execution process. This process is driven by the President’s budget, Congressional requirements, and the Department of Veterans Affairs business outcomes.

In this training, you will learn about the Resource Allocation Process and the Critical Action Areas outlined in the Standard Operating Procedure or SOP.

This video along with the SOP and supporting documents will provide a detailed explanation of the Resource Allocation Process that VBA will utilize in the next budget execution cycle.

**Scene 3:**

As background, the Veterans Benefits Administrations prior operational structure and decision-making processes for distributing Human Capital, limited the Veterans Affairs Central Office and the Office of Field Operation’s ability to have the appropriate oversight, communication, and accountability necessary to make informed decisions.

To address these issues and to improve the transparency and effectiveness of staff resource allocation processes, the Under Secretary for Benefits sanctioned a senior level team to develop and implement a well-defined structured process. The team developed the processes documented in the Resource Allocation Process Standard Operating Procedure through collaboration across the organization to include Veterans Benefits Administration Executive leadership, Lines of Business leaders, and the District and Regional Directors.

**Scene 4:**

The new RAP will ensure that Veterans Benefits Administration leaders and staff operate in an environment that:

* Fosters a Culture of Collaboration
* Continues to look at processes to improve our work outcomes
* And provides strong fiscal accountability

All of which will help us to be good stewards of our most important resources and take better care of our Veterans

**Scene 5a:**

Now, let’s review the core process players and the activities included on the Resource Allocation Process Map.

The Resource Allocation Process unofficially kicks off when the Veterans Benefits Administrations Chief Financial Officer initiates the fiscal year budget allocation activities. The RAP includes various levels of analysis, review, and collaboration involving the following core process players:

* the Under Secretary for Benefits (USB)
* the Lines of Business (LOB)
* the Office of Field Operations (OFO)
* the District Offices (DO)
* and the Regional Offices (RO)

Next, we’ll discuss the higher-level Resource Allocation Process Map and the sub-processes.

**Scene 5b:**

At a high-level, the process of moving budget appropriations to operation plans through apportioning budgeted staffing resources involves 12 major sub-processes:

* Negotiate and deliver budget
* Receive FTE apportionment per Lines of Business policy
* Review and confer on adjustments
* Apply Resource Allocation Model (RAM) and produce initial position allocations
* Initiate notifications
* Receive position allocations by District Offices/Regional Offices
* Review position allocation by Regional Offices
* Review and bundle impact statements
* Adjudicate impact statements
* Develop operating plans
* Execute the Position-Based RAM Change Request process throughout the fiscal year
* Formulate the next fiscal year budget

Many of the sub-processes include multiple activities undertaken by specific stakeholders. Collectively, this workflow, and key decisions translate budget appropriations into specific resource allocations for each Regional Office and Lines of Business.

Each of these sub-processes can be further broken down into specific steps as seen in this detailed version of the Resource Allocation Process Map.

**Scene 6:**

Next, we will look at the annual review process. Each year, the prior year’s performance data, position allocations, position change requests and additional inputs are utilized to develop initial position allocations for the current year

The Lines of Business and Office of Field Operations work collaboratively to conduct an annual review and suggest distribution of FTE’s within each Line of Business.

The annual review sets the foundation for all other decisions within the Resource Allocation Model adjustment negotiations and results in the current year algorithm for resource allocations.

We will now look at these resource allocation sub-processes and steps in closer detail.

**Scene 7:**

The first sub-process is “Negotiate and deliver budget.” These are headquarter-level activities that translate budget outputs to VA organizational allocations.

Once the VA budget formulation process is complete, the Veterans Benefits Administrations Chief Financial Officer and the Lines of Business Directors review the Veterans Benefits Administrations budget appropriation. These activities as noted in steps 2-4 will shape the decisions made across the Veterans Benefits Administration enterprise. These activities include:

* Step 2: The Veterans Benefits Administrations Chief Financial Officer initiates the new Fiscal Year budget allocation activities
* Step 3: The Veterans Benefits Administrations CFO and Lines of Business work together to translate the final appropriation into FTE apportionments
* Step 4: The Under Secretary for Benefits reviews recommended FTE apportionments against each Line of Business’ budget submission. The initial resource allocation typically follows each Line of Business’ General Operating Expense Budget Submission, but additional changes are possible to ensure that Veterans Benefits Administration does not exceed its overall budget authority.

**Scene 8:**

The Under Secretary for Benefits reviews the recommendations for the FTE apportionments across business lines resulting in Decision Point 1.

If the Under Secretary for Benefits does not approve the FTE apportionments, the apportionments go back to the Chief Financial Officer and Lines of Business leadership in step 3 for revisions.

Once the Under Secretary for Benefits approves the resource allocations in Decision Point 1, the allocation notice is sent to the Lines of Business Directors and the Deputy Under Secretary for Field Operations as noted in Step 5a.

**Scene 9:**

The next sub-process is “Receive FTE apportionment per Lines of Business policy” and includes Steps 5a and 5b. In this sub-process, the Chief Financial Officer sends the FTE apportionment notice to the Office of Field Operations and the Lines of Business.

In Step 5a, the Office of Field Operations and Lines of Business receive and review the Under Secretary for Benefits approved FTE apportionment.

It is important to note that there are exceptions to this model for certain Lines of Business such as Insurance represented in Step 5b.

**Scene 10:**

The next sub-process is “Apply RAM and produce initial position allocations. This sub-process includes Steps 5a1, 5a2, and 5a3.

In Step 5a1, the Office of Field Operations applies the Resource Allocation Model to assign the Lines of Business positions.

Next, in Step 5a2, the Office of Field Operations will produce the District Offices and Regional Offices position allocation report by taking the following actions:

* Develop performance requirements based on projected targets;
* Develop the Regional Office Footprint Model to define the method for performance-based position allocations; and finally,
* Along with the District Office Directors, determine position allocation distribution

In Step 5a3, the Office of Field Operations collaborates with the individual Lines of Business.

Final review and concurrence from the Lines of Business Directors is provided after the completion of Steps 5a3 and 5b.

This leads into the next sub-process, *Review and Confer on Adjustments,* which includes Steps 6 and 7.

**Scene 11:**

In Step 6, the Line of Business Directors review the FTE allocations received from the Office of Field Operations. This leads to Decision Point 2 where the Line of Business Directors concur or non-concur with the FTE allocations.

If the Line of Business Directors non-concur with the FTE allocations, the Line of Business Directors and the Office of Field Operations will confer and agree on the adjusted FTE allocations in Step 7 before proceeding to the next sub-process.

If the Line of Business Directors concur with the allocations in Step 6, the allocations go directly to the next sub-process.

**Scene 12:**

The next sub-process is “Initiate notifications” which is Step 8, where the Office of Field Operations provides a Decision Memorandum with the approved position allocations to the District Offices and Regional Offices.

**Scene 13:**

This brings us to the next sub-process “Receive position allocations by District Offices and Regional Offices,” which is Step 9 on the Resource Allocation Map.

**Scene 14:**

This takes us to the next sub-process, “Review position allocation by Regional Offices,” which includes Step 10. In this step, the Regional Offices review their resource allocations and either concur or non-concur with the allocated FTE. This is Decision Point 3.

If the Regional Offices provide concurrence and accepts the allocations, they will move to the next sub-process, “Develop the Operating Plan,” Step 11, and plan their activities for the upcoming year.

However, if the Regional Offices non-concur with the allocation, the Regional Offices initiate Step 10a where they prepare the Impact Statement.

**Scene 15:**

The purpose of the “Impact Statement” is to allow the Regional and District Offices a process to present information necessitating the need for the Veterans Benefits Administration (OFO) to consider a reallocation of FTE’s.

The Impact Statement should outline the requested change to the resource allocation and provide supporting justification to including:

* a succinct description of issues to support a reallocation decision
* key risk factors,
* overview of the options considered,
* summary of the analysis and
* the supporting reasons for recommendations

**Scene 16:**

The next sub-process is “Review and bundle impact statements” and includes Step 10b.

In Step 10b, the District Offices receive and review the Regional Office Impact Statements. The District Offices may resolve the requests at the District level and send out a notification of the final decisions to all Regional Offices.

If the District Offices are not able to resolve the requirements, they will “bundle” the unresolved Impact Statements for the Office of Field Operations. However, before sending the consolidated impact statements to the Office of Field Operations, the District Offices must receive concurrence or non-concurrence from all offices in their district.

For decisions that are not forwarded, the District Office will notify their Regional Offices of the decision.

**Scene 17**

This brings us to the next sub-process “Adjudicate impact statements “which includes Steps 10c-10e. It is important to note that the Office of Field Operations must receive the requests from **all** District Offices before adjudication can begin.

In Step 10c, the Office of Field Operations will review and adjudicate the Impact Statements and collaborate with the Lines of Business and the Under Secretary for Benefits as needed.

In Step 10d, the Office of Field Operations will determine final allocations.

In the next step, Step 10e, the Office of Field Operations sends a revised Decision Memorandum with the revised allocation**.** The Decision Memorandum is sent concurrently tothe Regional Offices, District Offices and the Lines of Business and will include the final distribution along with a brief overview of the information used to support the updated decisions.

**Scene 18:**

The revised allocation is then advanced to the next sub-process “Develop operating plan” which includes Step 11. Upon receiving the decision memorandum, the Regional Offices plan activities against position allocations and develop their operating plans for review and action by local management.

**Scene 19:**

The next sub-process is “Execute position-based RAM Change Request process throughout the Fiscal Year” which is Step 12. During the fiscal year, the Regional Offices will manage ongoing requirements by submitting position-based RAM change requests when adjustments are needed to the staffing model. The position-based RAM change request process is outlined in the Resource Allocation Process SOP.

**Scene 20:**

This brings us to the final sub-process, which is Step 13. In this final step of the RAP, the District and Regional Offices submit the documentation needed to support the budget formulation process and Steps 2-4 for future fiscal cycles.”

It is important to note that in Steps 9 through 13, the series of activities at the District and Regional Offices are essential for both validating the District and Regional staffing needs for the current fiscal year and also for providing essential documentation to validate future fiscal year staffing requirements for the annual review and algorithm formulation.

**Scene 21:**

Now that we have reviewed the Resource Allocation Process, we will take a closer look at the five critical areas within the process. These areas represent places where the effective execution of key activities significantly drive and support major strides to ensure collaboration and transparency in the process. To highlight the importance of teamwork, and to illustrate the areas of responsibility for all involved stakeholders, the Resource Allocation Process Critical Action Table (CAT) was developed as a summary reference table.

Now, let’s look at the table in more detail.

**Scene 22:**

Reading the table from left to right, the **Action** is defined as the specific activity taken by the process player. **Input** defines who and what are considered key contributions necessary to carry out the action. **Recommend** defines who has authority to recommend specific approaches or solutions. **Decide** defines who has final decision-making authority related to an action or approval. **Approve** defines who has authority to validate decisions made by other stakeholders, or to formally authorize action on a subject. **Perform** defines who has responsibility for executing the action. Grayed out cells represent categories that are not applicable during the designated action.

Now, let’s break down the table by critical action areas.

**Scene 23:**

The Resource Allocation Map Critical Actions Table includes the following five critical actions:

* **Critical Action 1**: The Office of Field Operations and Lines of Business agree on RAM framework for current fiscal year;
* **Critical Action 2**: The Under Secretary for Benefits approves apportionment for the Lines of Business and the Office of Field Operations;
* **Critical Action 3**: Lines of Business concur on position allocations and Office of Field Operations forwards notifications to District Offices
* **Critical Action 4**: The District Offices and Regional Offices receive initial allocation and Regional Offices review for concurrence;
* **Critical Action 5**: Post Allocation: Position-based RAM Change Request Process, which is an ongoing action.

Next, we will provide greater context to specific process players, actions and responsibilities.

**Scene 24:**

Let’s begin with Critical Action 1.

The **process step** aligned with Critical Action 1 is the Annual RAM review in the Resource Allocation Process map.

The **action** for Critical Action 1 involves the Office of Field Operations and the Lines of Business agreeing on the RAM framework for the current fiscal year.

The **input** for Critical Action 1 includes previous guidance, Lines of Business past performance, and demand models.

The Lines of Business **recommend** any adjustments to the RAM algorithms.

The Lines of Business and the Office of Field Operations leadership then make the final **decision** on the RAM algorithm.

The Under Secretary for Benefits **approves** the decision.

The Office of Field Operations staff then develops the framework.

**Scene 25:**

Next, let’s look at Critical Action 2.

The **process steps** aligned with Critical Action 2 are Steps 1,2,3,4, and D1 in the Resource Allocation Process map.

The **action** for Critical Action 2 involves the Under Secretary for Benefits approving the apportionment for the Lines of Business and the Office of Field Operations.

The **input** for Critical Action 2 includes the appropriation from the budget office and the submitted budget request from the Lines of Business and Office of Field Operations.

The Chief Financial Officer **recommends** the apportionment.

The Under Secretary for benefits makes the final decision on the apportionments.

The Lines of Business and the Office of Field Operations **reviews** the Under Secretary for Benefit’s apportionment decision.

These activities will shape the human capital resource distribution decisions made across the Veterans Benefits Administrations enterprise.

**Scene 26:**

Now, let’s look at Critical Action 3.

The **process steps** aligned with Critical Action 3 are Steps 5a, 5b, 6, 7, D2, and 8 in the Resource Allocation Process Map.

The **action** for Critical Action 3 involves the Lines of Business concurring with the position allocations and Office of Field Operations forwarding the notification to the District Offices.

The **input** for Critical Action 3 includes:

The Chief Financial Officer Apportionment

The Resource Allocation Model decision-making framework and

The individual Lines of Business current FTE projections

The Office of Field Operations **recommends** the position allocations.

The Lines of Business **decide** on the accuracy of the position allocations.

Once there is an agreement on the FTE allocations, the Office of Field Operations will notify the District Offices and Regional Offices of the approved position allocation through a decision memorandum.

**Scene 27:**

Next, let’s look at Critical Action 4.

The **process steps** aligned with Critical Action 4 are Steps 9, 10, 10a-e, D3, and 11 in the Resource Allocation Process map.

The **action** for Critical Action 4 involves the District Offices and Regional Offices receiving the initial allocation, and the Regional Offices reviewing for concurrence or non-concurrence. The **input** for Critical Action 4 includes:

The impact statements in the event of non-concurrence or planning activities upon concurrence.

The District Offices **recommend** the allocations.

The Office of Field Operations reviews and makes the **decision** on the allocations.

The Lines of Business **approve** the allocations.

**[Perform]** The Regional Office Staff reviews the allocations.

These two rows highlight the sub-actions for Critical Action 4 depending on whether the Regional Offices concur or non-concur with the position allocation decision.

**Scene 28a:**

Finally, let’s look at Critical Action 5.

The **process step** aligned with Critical Action 5 is Step 12 on the Resource Allocation Process Map.

The **action** for Critical Action 5 involves the on-going Position-based RAM Change Request Process that occurs post allocation.

The **input** for Critical Action 5 includes the Regional Offices providing:

Workload reports and

Demand Projections

The District Offices review the input and **recommend** the changes to the allocations.

The Office of Field Operations reviews and makes the final **decision** on the allocation request.

The Lines of Business **approve** the allocations

For circumstances not meeting the threshold for a formal request, the Regional Office Directors can make internal adjustments or work with the District Offices to seek assistance for adjustments.

**Scene 28b:**

Finally, these three rows highlight the detailed sub-actions for Critical Action 5.

You have now been introduced to the five critical action areas of the Resource Allocation Process.

**Scene 29:**

This brings us to the conclusion of our training. In summary, you have learned about:

* The Veterans Benefits Administration’s Human Capital Resource Allocation Process;
* The key decisions and activities associated with the process;
* The roles of the key process players and
* Key documents such as the Decision Memorandum, Impact Statement, and Change Request used during the decision-making process.

For more detailed information, please refer to the Resource Allocation Process Standard Operating Procedure.

Thank you for your efforts to ensure our Veterans receive the benefits they have earned.