**MEMORANDUM**

Date: January 20, 2021

Subj: DRAS Development Pilot: MSC SOP

# PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to standardize MSC operating procedures and delineate development responsibilities for Army IDES cases processed as part of the DRAS Development Pilot.

# REFERENCES

# DOD Referral Process, M21-1, III.i.2.D.2.a.

# MSC Actions When Processing the Referral M21-1, III.i.2.D.3.d.

# Conducting the Initial Interview M21-1, III.i.2.D.4.a

# MSC Actions Immediately Following the Initial Meeting M21-1, III.i.2.D.5.a

# ****OVERVIEW****

# Local MSCs will retain IDES responsibilities for:

# accepting referral packages from PEBLOs

# reviewing referrals for completeness

# scheduling and completing initial interviews

# establishing EP 689, and entering contentions

# exit interview activity

# return to duty letters and actions (when applicable), and

# completing all required VTA updates associated with the actions above.

# Local MSCs will not be responsible for the following actions (these will be completed by VSRs at DRAS):

# submitting IDES exam requests

# notifying the PEBLO of requested exams

# reviewing IDES exam results for completion

# entering data relating to VA examinations on the MSC tab in VTA

# making EP 689s “RFD”

# The table below outlines the actions the local MSC must take upon conclusion of the initial interview (changes to current procedure are shown in red text). Note: the initial interview is considered “concluded” immediately upon return of the VA From 21-526EZ or the participant’s statement decline to file a VA claims, or if no application is returned within the 5-day suspense period allowable by M21-1 III.i.2.D.4.g.

# **The below table reflects current VTA fields and the manual changes are forthcoming.**

| **Step** | **Action** |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | Update the fields on the MSC tab in VTA, as shown in the table below.

| **Field Name** | **User Input** |
| --- | --- |
| NUMBER OF CLAIMED CONDITIONS | Enter the total number of disabilities the participant claimed.( to include those referred by the service department, provided that the participant submitted a VA Form 21-526EZ).Note: If the participant declined to file a VA claim or failed to return a VA Form 21-526EZ, enter “0”.   |
| ELECTRONIC STRS | * *Yes*, if all STRs were received electronically, or
* *No*, if any hardcopy STRs were received.
 |
| MSC/SERVICEMEMBER INTERVIEW DATE | Enter the date of the interview with the participant. |
| MSC/SERVICEMEBER INTERVIEW TYPE  | Select the manner in which the interview was completed  |
| VA FORM 21-526EZ OUTCOME  | Select the status of the participant’s application submission upon conclusion of the initial interview  |
| VA FORM 21-526EZ RECEIVED  | Indicate whether the participant has submitted a VA Form 21-526  |
| VA FORM 21-526EZ RECEIVED DATE | Enter the date the VA Form 21-526EZ was received  |

 ***Important***:  If an MSC fails to assign an IDES case to him/herself, VTA will not save any of the other data he/she enters for the case. |
| 2 | If a hard copy [*VA Form 21-526EZ*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-526EZ-ARE.pdf) was completed/submitted, annotate it with the following:* *IDES Claim—Controlled under Existing EP689*
* the date of claim of the EP 689
* the MSCs initials, and
* the current date.

***Note***:  If the application was completed/submitted electronically, it is not necessary to make the annotations listed above.  However, the MSC must ensure that when the application is uploaded it is associated with the EP 689 in VBMS per [M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.D.3.m](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000033257/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-2%2C-Section-D---Overview-of-the-Integrated-Disability-Evaluation-System-%28IDES%29-and-Initial-Claims-Development#3m).  |
| 3 | Enter all conditions listed on the [*VA Form 21-0819*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-0819-ARE.pdf) and the [*VA Form 21-526EZ*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-526EZ-ARE.pdf) as contentions under the EP 689 in VBMS; the date of contention must reflect the date stamp on [*VA Form 21-0819*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-0819-ARE.pdf)*.* ***Exception***:  Conditions listed on a [*VA Form 21-526EZ*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-526EZ-ARE.pdf) that was not returned within five days of the initial interview must be entered in VBMS with a date of contention which reflects the date the [*VA Form 21-526EZ*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-526EZ-ARE.pdf) was received. |
| 4 | Enter any applicable special issues in VBMS in accordance with [M21-1, Part III, Subpart iii, 1.F.2](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000071983/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-iii%2C-Chapter-1%2C-Section-F---Record-Maintenance-During-the-Development-Process).Also add the IDES Development Special Issue.***Reference***:  For more information on available special issue flashes, see [M21-4, Appendix C, Section III](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000036570/Appendix-C.-Index-of-Claim-Attributes). |
| 5 | Did the participant notify VA of additional, relevant evidence that is not already of record?* If *yes*, go to the next step.
* If *no*, go to Step 8.
 |
| 6 | Undertake development to assist the participant in obtaining any additional evidence that is relevant to his/her case according to the instructions in [M21-1, Part III, Subpart iii](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000014151/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-iii%2C-Chapter-1%2C-Section-A---General-Considerations-Regarding-the-Development-Process). |
| 7 | Forward any paper documentation, including the referral package (if provided in hard copy) and any paper documents submitted by the participant during the interview to the scanning vendor in accordance with [M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.D.3.j](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000033257/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-2%2C-Section-D---Overview-of-the-Integrated-Disability-Evaluation-System-%28IDES%29-and-Initial-Claims-Development#3j).***Note***:  Under circumstances described in [M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.D.3.k](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000033257/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-2%2C-Section-D---Overview-of-the-Integrated-Disability-Evaluation-System-%28IDES%29-and-Initial-Claims-Development#3k), MSCs may scan documents locally and upload them directly into the eFolder as an alternative to sending the paper documentation to the scanning vendor. |
| 8 | Upload any documents the participant submitted electronically to the participant’s eFolder, according to specifications outlined in [M21-1, Part III, Subpart i, 2.D.3.e](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001034/content/554400000033257/M21-1%2C-Part-III%2C-Subpart-i%2C-Chapter-2%2C-Section-D---Overview-of-the-Integrated-Disability-Evaluation-System-%28IDES%29-and-Initial-Claims-Development#3e). |
| 9 | Provide to the participant’s PEBLO* a copy of the completed [*VA Form 21-526EZ*](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-526EZ-ARE.pdf) (or notice that the participant declined to submit a VA claim, if applicable),
* Note: DRAS VSR will provide a list of exams ordered
 |
| 10 | Verify that VA Form 21-0819 and a Signed VA Form 21-526ez or VA Form 21-4138 documenting veteran declines to file claim are available for viewing in VBMS. |
| 11 | Complete and upload MSC Checklist to VBMS (excluding examination request and review). |
| 12 | Place claim in OPEN status; broker EP 689 to the Seattle DRAS. |

# ****EXAMINATION REPORTS:****

# **Completed examination reports will be available to the PEBLO in HAIMS via automatic transfer; the DRAS entry of the Medical Evaluation End Date in VTA will serve to notify the PEBLO of the availability of exams. However, if the completed DBQs fail to transfer to HAIMS, the local MSC must provide the exam results to the PEBLO.**

# **Note: It is a known defect Non-Active Duty exams are not available in HAIMES via automatic transfer; therefore, until this is resolved, the DRAS VSR will provide the exam(s) in Non-Active Duty cases.**