



## PENSION AND FIDUCIARY SERVICE

PMC VSR Core Course  
Phase 3: PMC VSR Resources

# **Lesson 1: VA Terminology**

## Lesson Plan

October 28, 2016

Version 1.0

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## VA Terminology

### Lesson Overview

Topic	Description
Time Estimate:	30 min
Purpose of the Lesson:	This lesson is part of the entry-level curriculum, Core Course for PMC VSRs. The purpose of this lesson is to introduce PMC VSRs to VA Terminology.
Prerequisite Training Requirements:	Prior to taking the VA Terminology lesson, trainees must complete PMC VSR Core Course Phases 1 and 2.
Target Audience:	This lesson is for entry level PMC VSRs.
Lesson References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Master Course Map</b> learning aid</li><li>• <b>Common VA Terms</b> job aid</li></ul>
Knowledge Check:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Phase 3: PMC VSR Resources Knowledge Check</li></ul>
Technical Competencies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Program Benefits and Eligibility (PMC VSR)</li></ul>
Lesson Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define common VA terms used in VA correspondence</li><li>• Identify common VA terms used in VA correspondence</li><li>• Identify when it is appropriate to use VA terms</li></ul>

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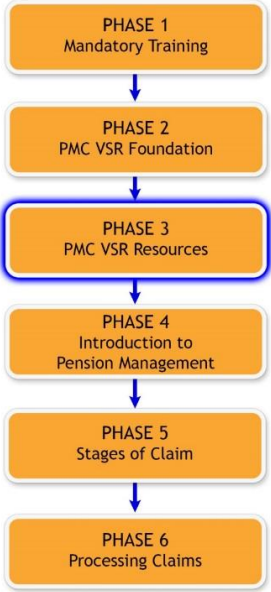

Topic	Description
What You Need:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson plan</li> <li>• <b>Master Course Map</b> learning aid</li> <li>• Appendix A: VA Terminology worksheet</li> <li>• Slides</li> <li>• Projector</li> <li>• Access to VBA Intranet</li> <li>• Access to the <b>Common VA Terms</b> job aid from VSR Assistant</li> </ul>

**Instructor Notes**

This lesson provides trainees with the information and references needed to properly define and identify VA terms used in all VA jobs, tasks, and correspondence.

PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<b>Lesson 1: VA Terminology</b>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>1.</b> "Lesson 1: VA Terminology"</p> <p><b>INTRODUCE</b> yourself as the instructor.</p> <p><b>INTRODUCE</b> the lesson.</p>

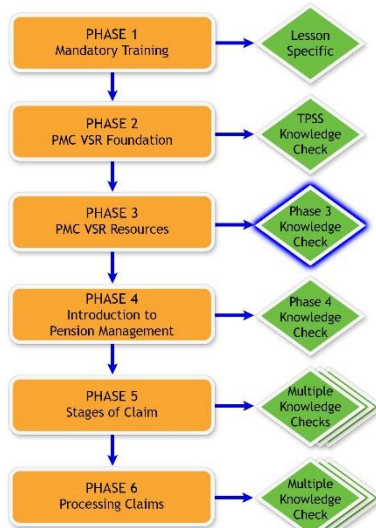

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>You Are Here</b></p>  <pre> graph TD     P1[PHASE 1 Mandatory Training] --&gt; P2[PHASE 2 PMC VSR Foundation]     P2 --&gt; P3[PHASE 3 PMC VSR Resources]     P3 --&gt; P4[PHASE 4 Introduction to Pension Management]     P4 --&gt; P5[PHASE 5 Stages of Claim]     P5 --&gt; P6[PHASE 6 Processing Claims]     style P3 stroke:#0000FF,stroke-width:2px     </pre>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>2.</b> "You Are Here"</p> <p><b>DESCRIBE</b> the diagram.</p>  <p><b>REFER</b> to the <b>Master Course Map</b> learning aid in the Trainee Guide. Explain that they can use this aid throughout the course to identify where they are in the PMC VSR Core Course.</p> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> where the trainees are in the phase, what they have completed, and where they are headed next.</p>
<p><b>The Importance of Knowing VA Terminology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA terminology (i.e. abbreviations, acronyms, and initialisms) are regularly used in all PMC VSR jobs and tasks.</li> <li>• It is important to know your audience when using VA terms.</li> <li>• When used incorrectly, VA terms can cause confusion and misunderstanding, especially when used incorrectly with Veterans and claimants.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>3.</b> "The Importance of Knowing VA Terminology"</p> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> to trainees some of the places VA terms are used such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical records</li> <li>• Claimant files</li> <li>• Inter office correspondence</li> </ul> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> that it is important to consider the audience when using VA terminology as claimants and Veterans may not know the definitions or reasons for certain VA terms.</p>



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<b>PowerPoint Slides</b>	<b>Instructor Activities</b>
<p><b>Examples of How to Use VA Terminology in Claimant Correspondence</b></p> <p>Correct way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We considered your expenses for Medicare Part B premium for both you and your spouse, which totaled \$2,517.00; however, your income for VA purposes is still greater than the allowable limit. We can consider only medical expenses that are more than \$842.00, which is 5% of \$16,851.00, the basic maximum annual pension rate.</li> </ul> <p>Incorrect way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We considered your expenses for Medicare Part B premium for both you and your spouse, which totaled \$2,517.00; however, your IVAP is still greater than the allowable limit. We can consider only UMEs that are more than \$842.00, which is 5% of \$16,851.00, the basic MAPR.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>4.</b> "Examples of How to Use VA Terminology in Claimant Correspondence"</p> <p><b>DISCUSS</b> each example and why it is correct/incorrect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correct example: The VA terms are spelled out, therefore, making the statements easier to understand and comprehend.</li> <li>Incorrect example: The VA terms are used instead of the full definitions. A claimant or Veteran may not be able to fully understand the purpose of these statements or why they are important.</li> </ul> <p><b>REVIEW</b> why it is important to consider the audience when using VA terms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When used incorrectly, VA terms can cause confusion and misunderstanding, especially when used incorrectly with Veterans and claimants.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Technical Competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program Benefits and Eligibility (PMC VSR)</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>5.</b> "Technical Competencies"</p> <p><b>REVIEW</b> technical competencies with trainees.</p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Lesson Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define common VA terms used in VA correspondence.</li> <li>• Identify common VA terms used in VA correspondence.</li> <li>• Identify when it is appropriate to use VA terms.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>6.</b> "Lesson Objectives"</p> <p><b>PRESENT</b> the objectives for the lesson.</p>
<p><b>Knowledge Check</b></p> 	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>7.</b> "Knowledge Check"</p> <p><b>INFORM</b> the trainees that they will be assessed on this content in the Phase 3: PMC VSR Resources Knowledge Check.</p>  <p><b>REFER</b> to the <b>Master Course Map</b> learning aid, <i>Lessons by Phase</i> section, to review the lessons included within the Knowledge Check.</p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Commonly Used VA Terms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPKM</li> <li>• VBA</li> <li>• PIF</li> <li>• FTI</li> <li>• DEA</li> <li>• DIC</li> <li>• PCAN</li> <li>• VBMS</li> <li>• STR</li> <li>• CEST</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>8.</b> "Commonly Used VA Terms"</p> <p><b>REVIEW</b> some commonly used terms but do not give away their meaning.</p>  <p><b>REFER</b> the trainees to Part A of Appendix A: VA Terminology worksheet.</p>
<p><b>Practice Exercise—Fill in the Blanks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete Part A of Appendix A: VA Terminology worksheet</li> <li>○ Access the <b>Common VA Terms</b> job aid located in the VSR Assistant from the PMC VSR button</li> <li>○ Complete the worksheet using the job aid by writing the correct phrase next to the corresponding VA term.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Time allowed: 3 minutes</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>9.</b> "Practice Exercise—Fill in the Blanks"</p> <p><b>INSTRUCT</b> trainees that they have 30 seconds to fill in as many acronyms as possible. Let them know when the 30 seconds starts and stops.</p>  <p><b>REFER</b> trainees to the <b>Common VA Terms</b> job aid, located in the VSR Assistant from the PMC VSR button.</p> <p><b>ALLOW</b> 3 minutes to complete exercise.</p>

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<b>PowerPoint Slides</b>	<b>Instructor Activities</b>
<p><b>Practice Exercise—Fill in the Blanks Answers (1 of 2)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• VBA—Veterans Benefits Administration</li><li>• CPKM—Compensation and Pension Knowledge Management</li><li>• STR—Service Treatment Records</li><li>• CEST—Claims Establishment</li><li>• MOD—Month of Death</li><li>• PCGL—Personal Computer Generated Letters</li><li>• CFID—Change of Fiduciary</li><li>• PCHG—Pending Issue File Change</li><li>• ASPEN—Automated Standardized Performance Elements Nationwide</li><li>• PCLR—Pending Issue File Clear</li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>10.</b> “Practice Exercise—Fill in the Blanks (1 of 2)”</p> <p><b>REVIEW</b> correct answers with trainees and address any questions.</p> <p><b>PROVIDE</b> any other common VA terms and their meaning that you use regularly on the job.</p>



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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Practice Exercise—Fill in the Blanks Answers (2 of 2)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEA—Dependents Educational Assistance</li> <li>• MAPR—Maximum Annual Pension Rate</li> <li>• DIC—Dependency and Indemnity Compensation</li> <li>• DTA—Duty to Assist</li> <li>• NOD—Notice of Death or Notice of Disagreement</li> <li>• PCAN—Pending Issue File Cancel</li> <li>• VBMS—Veteran Benefits Management System</li> <li>• FTI—Federal Tax Information</li> <li>• DUPC—Duplicate Record Consolidation</li> <li>• PIF—Pending Issue File</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>11.</b> “Practice Exercise—Fill in the Blanks (2 of 2)”</p> <p><b>REVIEW</b> correct answers with trainees and address any questions.</p> <p><b>PROVIDE</b> any other common VA terms and their meaning that you use regularly on the job.</p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Using VA Terminology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid VA terms in all VA letters to Veterans and claimants.</li> <li>• If using VA terms, write out the words for the VA term the first time, followed by the abbreviated VA term in parenthesis.</li> <li>• Example: "Your claim for Coronary Artery Disease (CAD) is being processed."</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>12.</b> "VA Terminology"</p> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> why VA jargon should be avoided in VA correspondence to Veterans and claimants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can cause confusion</li> <li>• Can lead to misunderstanding of information or benefits</li> </ul> <p></p> <p><b>DISCUSS</b> common errors related to VA terminology, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the incorrect VA term in records or systems.</li> <li>• Interpreting a VA term incorrectly.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Practice Exercise—Identify the VA Terms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete Part B of Appendix A: VA Terminology worksheet</li> <li>○ Using the <b>Common VA Terms</b> job aid, identify the terms found in the statements</li> <li>○ Write the VA term followed by the words for the VA term in the spaces provided in the worksheet</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Time allowed: 10 minutes</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>13.</b> "Practice Exercise—Identify the VA Terms"</p> <p></p> <p><b>REFER</b> trainees to Part B of Appendix A: VA Terminology worksheet and the <b>Common VA Terms</b> job aid, located in the VSR Assistant from the PMC VSR button.</p> <p><b>INSTRUCT</b> trainees to complete the worksheet and inform you when complete.</p> <p><b>REVIEW</b> correct answers with trainees and address any questions.</p> <p><b>ALLOW</b> 10 minutes to complete exercise.</p>




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<b>PowerPoint Slides</b>	<b>Instructor Activities</b>
<p><b>Practice Exercise—Identify the VA Terms Answers (1 of 2)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Statement 1: His DD 214 shows his discharge was HON and he had VE service. RAD was 06-19-72.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ DD 214—Department of Defense discharge form</li><li>○ HON—Honorable</li><li>○ VE—Vietnam Era</li><li>○ RAD—Release from Active Duty</li></ul></li><li>• Statement 2: His POA is MOPH. The EP is a 110.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ POA—Power of Attorney</li><li>○ MOPH—Military Order of the Purple Heart</li><li>○ EP—End Product</li></ul></li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>14.</b> "Practice Exercise—Identify the VA Terms Answers (1 of 2)"</p> <p><b>DISCUSS</b> answers with trainees and address any questions or issues.</p>

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<p><b>Practice Exercise—Identify the VA Terms Answers (2 of 2)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Statement 3: The Veteran met the disability criteria for P&amp;T, but we still have to deny the NSC claim.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ P&amp;T—Permanent and Total</li><li>○ NSC—Non-Service Connected</li></ul></li><li>• Statement 4: His IVAP, including the UME’s, is over the MAPR and his service was PTE.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ IVAP—Income for Department of Veterans Affairs Purposes</li><li>○ UME—Unreimbursed medical expenses</li><li>○ MAPR—Maximum Annual Pension Rate</li><li>○ PTE—Peacetime Enlistment</li></ul></li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>15.</b> “Practice Exercise—Identify the VA Terms Answers (2 of 2)”</p> <p><b>DISCUSS</b> answers with trainees and address any questions or issues.</p>

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<p><b>Lesson Summary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid VA terms in all VA letters to Veterans and claimants.</li> <li>• If you use VA terms, write out the words for the VA term the first time followed by the abbreviated VA term in parenthesis.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>16.</b> "Lesson Summary"</p> <p></p> <p><b>REVIEW</b> common errors related to VA terminology, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the incorrect VA term in records or systems</li> <li>• Interpreting a VA term incorrectly</li> </ul> <p><b>REVIEW</b> with trainees when to use and when not to use VA terms (i.e. spelling it out on the first use, followed by the acronym in parenthesis).</p>
<p><b>Questions?</b></p> <p></p>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>17.</b> "Questions?"</p> <p></p> <p><b>ASK</b> trainees if they have any questions or concerns regarding VA terms. Use this time to clear up any confusion or misconceptions about the information presented.</p>
<p><b>What's Next</b></p> <p>Phase 3, Lesson 2, VBA Intranet Resources for the PMC VSR</p>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>18.</b> "What's Next"</p> <p><b>DISCUSS</b> the next lesson: Phase 3, Lesson 2, VBA Intranet Resources for the PMC VSR with trainees.</p>