



## PENSION AND FIDUCIARY SERVICE

PMC VSR Advanced Core Course  
Phase 5: Stages of a Claim  
Part 1: Determine Eligibility

# **Lesson 27: Overview of Ready to Rate**

Lesson Plan

October 28, 2016

Version 1.0

**Lesson 27: Overview of Ready to Rate  
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**Overview of Ready to Rate**

**Lesson Overview**

Topic	Description
Time Estimate:	1 hour
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 types of claims that require rating decisions. They will learn to identify claims that require a rating decision and the required evidence that is necessary to determine whether a claim is ready to rate.
Prerequisite Training Requirements:	Prior to taking the Overview of Ready to Rate lesson, trainees must complete PMC VSR Course Phases 1–4 and Phase 5, Part 1, lessons 1–26. (Refer to the <b>Master Course Map</b> learning aid for a list of lessons.)
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>• M21-1 III.ii.2.D.3.a. (Referring Additional Medical Evidence to the Rating Activity)</li> <li>• M21-1 III.ii.7.1.a. (Referring Claims to the Rating Activity After Development Is Complete)</li> <li>• M21-1 III.ii.7.3.a. (Authority of Rating Activity)</li> <li>• M21-1 III.iii.7.1. (General Information on Proof of Permanent Incapacity for Self-Support)</li> <li>• M21-1 III.iii.7.2.b. (Considerations of the Rating Activity in Any Claim for Permanent Incapacity for Self-Support)</li> <li>• M21-1 III.iv.1.1.c. (Definition of the Rating Activity)</li> <li>• M21-1 III.iv.1.1.d. (Specific Decision-making Responsibilities of the Rating Activity)</li> <li>• M21-1 III.iv.6.C.1.b. (Definition: Rating Decision)</li> <li>• M21-1 III.iv.8.A.1.d. (Making a Finding of Incompetency)</li> <li>• M21-1 III.iv.8.A.2.a. (Considering Whether to Address</li> </ul>

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Topic	Description
	<p>Competency of a Veteran)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M21-1 III.iv.8.A.5.b. (Determining When a Competency Rating is Needed After a Decree by a Court)</li> <li>• M21-1 IV.ii.1.A.1.a. (General Overview of the Compensation Claims Development Process)</li> <li>• M21-1 IV.iii.1.B.1.e. (Evidence Required to Determine Entitlement to DIC)</li> <li>• M21-1 IV.iii.1.B.1.g. (Obtaining Evidence Relating the Cause of Death to an SC Condition)</li> <li>• M21-1 IV.iii.1.B.1.i (Refer DIC Cases to the Rating Activity)</li> <li>• M21-1 IV.iii.1.B.2.a.–c. (DIC Under 38 U.S.C. 1151)</li> <li>• M21-1 IV.iii.2.A.1.g. (When a Survivor Claim Does Not Require a Rating Decision)</li> <li>• M21-1 V.i.2.2.a. (When a Rating Determination of Permanent and Total Disability Is Not Required)</li> <li>• M21-1 V.i.2.2.e. (When a Rating Determination of Permanent and Total Disability Is Required)</li> <li>• M21-1 V.i.2.2.f. (Acceptable Medical Evidence and VA Examination Authorization)</li> <li>• M21-1 V.i.2.2.g. (Obtaining Evidence Before Referring a Claim to the Rating Activity)</li> <li>• M21-1 V.ii.3.1.b. (Medical Evidence Used for A&amp;A Ratings)</li> <li>• M21-1 VIII.1.4.a. (General Policy Information)</li> <li>• M21-1 VIII.4.1.d. (Consider a Rating Decision Dated Prior to Death)</li> <li>• 38 CFR 3.159 (Department of Veterans Affairs Assistance in developing claims)</li> <li>• 38 CFR 3.202(b)(4) (Evidence from foreign countries)</li> <li>• 38 CFR 3.211 (Death)</li> <li>• 38 CFR 3.3.51(d) (Housebound, or permanent and total plus 60 percent; disability pension)</li> <li>• 38 CFR 3.353 (Determinations of incompetency and</li> </ul>



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Topic	Description
	competency) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid</li> </ul>
Knowledge Check:	Phase 5: Stages of a Claim, Part 1(d): Beyond Basic Eligibility and Ready to Rate Knowledge Check
Technical Competencies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program Benefits and Eligibility (PMC VSR)</li> <li>• Processing Claims (PMC VSR)</li> <li>• Special Monthly Pension (SMP) Processes</li> <li>• VBA Applications (PMC VSR)</li> </ul>
Lesson Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine whether a claim requires a rating decision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Explain why a claim requires a rating decision.</li> <li>○ Identify the types of claims that require a rating decision.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• List the required evidence for a claim that is ready to rate.</li> </ul>
What You Need:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson Plan</li> <li>• <b>Master Course Map</b> learning aid</li> <li>• Slides</li> <li>• Projector</li> <li>• Access to CPKM to display the references</li> <li>• Access to the <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid from VSR Assistant</li> </ul>

**Instructor Notes**

This lesson provides trainees with the information, references, and opportunities for practice necessary to identify claims that require a rating decision and the required evidence that is necessary to determine whether a claim is ready to rate.

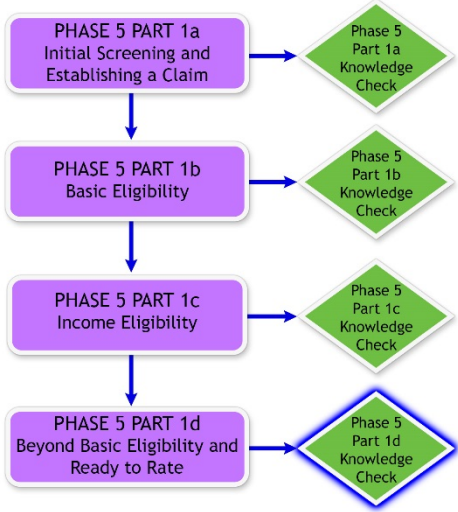

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Lesson 27: Overview of Ready to Rate</b></p>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p>1. "Lesson 27: Overview of Ready to Rate"</p> <p><b>INTRODUCE</b> yourself as the instructor.</p> <p><b>INTRODUCE</b> the lesson.</p>
<p><b>You Are Here</b></p>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p>2. "You Are Here"</p>  <p><b>REFER</b> trainees to the <b>Master Course Map</b> learning aid in the trainee guide.</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>INFORM</b> trainees that Phase 5, Part 1: Determine Eligibility contains four subparts. The fourth subpart contains several lessons that focus on eligibility issues that are beyond basic because they occur less frequently and/or are more complex.</p>  <p><b>EMPHASIZE</b> to trainees that each of these lessons relates to the others as part of the tasks beyond basic eligibility and determining if a claim is ready to rate.</p>


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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Beyond Basic Eligibility and Ready to Rate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verify Proof of Death of Veteran for Survivors' Benefits</li> <li>• Apply Liberalizing Law to Pension Eligibility</li> <li>• Process Veteran-Married-to-Veteran Cases</li> <li>• Determine Accrued Benefits Eligibility</li> <li>• Determine Burial Benefits Eligibility</li> <li>• Determine Eligibility for Month of Death (MOD) Benefit</li> <li>• <b>Overview of Ready to Rate</b></li> <li>• Determine Eligibility for DIC and Parents' DIC</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide 3. "Beyond Basic Eligibility and Ready to Rate"</p> <p><b>REMIN</b>D trainees of the basic eligibility process.</p> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> that they learned about the tasks that go beyond basic eligibility and know they will learn about the requirements to determine whether a claim is ready to rate.</p> <p><b>INFORM</b> trainees that this lesson will focus on identifying claims that require a rating decision and the evidence required to determine whether a claim is ready to rate.</p>
<p><b>Technical Competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program Benefits and Eligibility (PMC VSR)</li> <li>• Processing Claims (PMC VSR)</li> <li>• Special Monthly Pension (SMP) Processes</li> <li>• VBA Applications (PMC VSR)</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide 4. "Technical Competencies"</p> <p><b>REVIEW</b> technical competencies with trainees.</p>
<p><b>Lesson Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain why a claim requires a rating decision.</li> <li>• Identify the types of claims that require a rating decision.</li> <li>• List the required elements for a claim that is ready to rate.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide 5. "Lesson Objectives"</p> <p><b>PRESENT</b> the objectives for the lesson.</p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
 <pre> graph TD     A[PHASE 5 PART 1a Initial Screening and Establishing a Claim] --&gt; B[PHASE 5 PART 1b Basic Eligibility]     B --&gt; C[PHASE 5 PART 1c Income Eligibility]     C --&gt; D[PHASE 5 PART 1d Beyond Basic Eligibility and Ready to Rate]     A --&gt; AC{Phase 5 Part 1a Knowledge Check}     B --&gt; BC{Phase 5 Part 1b Knowledge Check}     C --&gt; CC{Phase 5 Part 1c Knowledge Check}     D --&gt; DC{Phase 5 Part 1d Knowledge Check}         </pre>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>6. "Knowledge Check"</b></p> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> that a Knowledge Check will be given at the end of Phase 5, Part 1d that covers all the material learned in Phase 5, Part 1d.</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>
<p><b>Why It Matters!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevents delay in claims processing</li> <li>• A claim that is ready to rate allows the RVSR to make determination for benefit entitlement</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>7. "Why It Matters!"</b></p> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> that all necessary evidence should be present for the rating activity, which allows the rating activity (i.e., the RVSR) to efficiently and effectively determine benefit entitlement to the Veteran or claimant.</p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>What Is the Purpose of a Rating Decision?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rating decision defined</li><li>• Rating activity defined</li><li>• Why a rating decision is needed</li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide 8. "What Is the Purpose of a Rating Decision?"</p> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> that a rating decision is a document detailing the formal determination made by the rating activity regarding one or more issues of benefit entitlement. The rating decision states the decision(s) made and provides an explanation supporting each decision.</p> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> that the rating activity is a group of specially qualified employees vested with the authority to make decisions and take other actions on claims that require a rating decision.</p> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> that typically the rating job title within the rating activity will be Rating Veterans Service Representative also known as an RVSR or Rater.</p> <p></p> <p><b>EMPHASIZE</b> that a rating decision is needed to determine whether the claimant is entitled to benefits based on available evidence in accordance with VA laws and regulations.</p>



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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>When Is a Claim Ready to Rate?</b></p> <p>A claim is ready to rate when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All necessary evidence is of record and is adequate for rating purposes; or</li><li>• All development actions, including VA examinations, have been completed</li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide 9. "When Is a Claim Ready to Rate?"</p> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> that each type of claim or rating issue requires adequate evidence that is necessary for a claim to be considered ready to rate.</p> <p><b>REFER</b> to the <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid and discuss how the job aid was designed for the PMC VSR to identify required evidence to determine whether a type of claim or rating issue is ready to rate.</p> <p><b>REMIND</b> trainees that Fully Developed Claims (FDCs) must meet the FDC program requirements. Otherwise, development may be required to prepare claim for the rating activity.</p> <p><b>PROVIDE</b> an example from personal experience of a claim that was ready to rate and explain why it was ready to rate.</p> <p><b>INFORM</b> the trainees that they will learn more about the development process in later lessons.</p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Check on Learning Quiz</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Instructions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Divide into groups of three.</li><li>○ Each group is to appoint one member as the representative of their group.</li><li>○ Each group is to answer one of the three questions assigned by the instructor.</li><li>○ Do not refer to your trainee guide to determine the answers.</li><li>○ The representative will present the answer to the class.</li></ul></li><li>• Time: 10–15 minutes</li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>10.</b> “Check on Learning Quiz”</p> <p><b>DIVIDE</b> the class into groups of three.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Quiz questions are on the next slide.</p>


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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Check on Learning Quiz: Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question 1: Why is determining whether a claim is ready to rate important?</li> <li>• Question 2: What is the purpose of a rating decision?</li> <li>• Question 3: When is a claim ready to rate?</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide  <b>11.</b> "Check on Learning Quiz: Questions"</p> <p><b>ASSIGN</b> one question to each group.</p> <p><b>DIRECT</b> the groups to answer the question and select a group representative to present the group's answer to the class.</p> <p><b>DO NOT ALLOW</b> the trainees to refer to their trainee guide to determine the answers.</p> <p><b>ALLOW</b> 5 minutes for the three groups to formulate their answers.</p> <p><b>DIRECT</b> each group representative to provide the group's answer and wait for feedback.</p> <p><b>PROVIDE</b> immediate feedback after a group presents its answer. Indicate whether the question is correct or incorrect by displaying corresponding answer slide. Then direct the next group's representative to provide group's response until all questions are answered.</p> <p><b>ALLOW</b> 5 to 10 minutes to complete the quiz.</p>
<p><b>Check on Learning Quiz: Answers (1 of 3)</b></p> <p>Question 1: Why is determining whether a claim is ready to rate important?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Prevents delay in claims processing</i></li> <li>• <i>Allows the RVSR to make determination for benefit entitlement</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide  <b>12.</b> "Check on Learning Quiz: Answers (1 of 3)"</p> <p><b>PROVIDE</b> immediate feedback.</p>



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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Check on Learning Quiz: Answers (2 of 3)</b></p> <p>Question 2: What is the purpose of a rating decision?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A rating decision is needed to determine whether the claimant is entitled to benefits based on available evidence in accordance with VA laws and regulations</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide  <b>13.</b> "Check on Learning Quiz: Answers (2 of 3)"</p> <p><b>PROVIDE</b> immediate feedback.</p>
<p><b>Check on Learning Quiz: Answers (3 of 3)</b></p> <p>Question 3: When is a claim ready to rate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>All necessary evidence is of record and is adequate for rating purposes; or</i></li> <li>• <i>All development actions, including VA examinations, have been completed</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide  <b>14.</b> "Check on Learning Quiz: Answers (3 of 3)"</p> <p><b>PROVIDE</b> immediate feedback.</p>



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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Pension-Related Claim Types/Rating Issues That Require a Rating Decision</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent incapacity for self-support (helpless child)</li> <li>• Permanent and total disability</li> <li>• Accrued</li> <li>• Service-connected death for burial benefits</li> <li>• Service-connected death for DIC</li> <li>• DIC based on 38 U.S.C. 1151 or 38 U.S.C. 1318</li> <li>• Competency</li> <li>• Special Monthly Pension (SMP)</li> <li>• Reopen, new, or reconsideration claim</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slides</p> <p><b>15.</b> "Pension-related Claim Types/Rating Issues That Require a Rating Decision"</p>  <p><b>REFER</b> to M21-1 III.iv.1.1.d. (Specific Decision-making Responsibilities of the Rating Activity) and read through the list of claim types/rating issues for which the rating activity is responsible.</p> <p><b>ASSOCIATE/MATCH</b> the claim types/rating issues listed on the slide to the issues listed in the manual.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> This may be the trainees' first encounter with many of these rating issues. The trainees will learn more about these pension-related claim types/rating issues in later lessons.</p>



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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>When Is a Rating Decision Required?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When determination of entitlement is dependent on medical evidence and/or establishing service-connected claim</li><li>• See Table 2: Specific Ready to Rate Requirements within the <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid</li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>16.</b> "When Is a Rating Decision Required?"</p> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> that a rating decision is required when determination of entitlement is dependent on medical evidence and/or establishing service-connected claim.</p> <p></p> <p><b>REFER</b> to Table 2: Specific Ready to Rate Requirements within the <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid and read through the "When Required" column for each rating issue/claim type with the trainees.</p> <p></p> <p><b>EMPHASIZE</b> that each rating issue/claim type has varying criteria when a rating decision is needed and not needed. For more information, refer to the Reference column of the <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid.</p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Scenario—When a Rating Decision Is Required</b></p> <p><b>Scenario:</b></p> <p>Vietnam Veteran Joseph Griggs, who is 60 years old, submits an original application for pension including VA Form 21-526 (Veterans Application for Compensation and/or Pension); VA Form 21-2680 (Examination for Housebound Status or Permanent Need for Regular Aid and Attendance) and a certified military discharge document verifying honorable wartime service. The Veteran has no income (e.g., no Social Security disability) or net worth and is requesting the maximum benefit with Special Monthly Pension (SMP).</p>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>17.</b> "Scenario—When a Rating Decision Is Required"</p> <p><b>READ</b> the scenario with trainees.</p> <p><b>DISCUSS</b> when a rating decision is required. Use the scenario to guide your discussion.</p> <p><b>SELECT</b> a trainee to read the scenario aloud.</p>  <p><b>REFER</b> trainees to Table 2: Specific Ready to Rate Requirements within the <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid.</p>  <p><b>ASK</b> why a rating decision is required.</p>
<p><b>Scenario—When a Rating Decision Is Required Answer</b></p> <p><i>A rating determination of permanent and total disability is required because the Veteran is under age 65, is not in receipt of Social Security disability, and is not a patient in a nursing home.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, the Veteran submitted VA Form 21-2680, which is a claim for SMP that requires a rating decision.</i></p>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>18.</b> "Scenario—When a Rating Decision Is Required Answer"</p> <p><b>PROVIDE</b> feedback to trainees based on their answers in accordance with the answer below:</p> <p><i>A rating determination of permanent and total disability is required because the Veteran is under age 65, is not in receipt of Social Security disability, and is not a patient in a nursing home.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, the Veteran submitted VA Form 21-2680, which is a claim for SMP that requires a rating decision.</i></p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Scenario—When a Rating Decision Is NOT Required</b></p> <p><b>Scenario:</b></p> <p>58-year-old Veteran Aaron Williams submitted VA Form 21P-527EZ (Application for Pension) and VA Form 21-0779 (Request for Nursing Home Information in Connection with Claim for Aid and Attendance). Our records indicate that the Veteran served honorably in the Vietnam War and is currently a patient in a nursing home for long-term care. He is within the income limit and has minimal net worth.</p>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>19.</b> "Scenario—When a Rating Decision Is NOT Required"</p> <p><b>READ</b> the scenario with trainees.</p> <p><b>DISCUSS</b> when a rating decision is not required. Use the scenario to guide your discussion.</p> <p><b>SELECT</b> a trainee to read the scenario aloud.</p>  <p><b>REFER</b> trainees to Table 2: Specific Ready to Rate Requirements within the <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid.</p>  <p><b>ASK</b> why a rating decision is not required.</p>
<p><b>Scenario—When a Rating Decision Is NOT Required Answer</b></p> <p><i>A rating determination of permanent and total disability is not required to establish eligibility for Veterans Pension since the Veteran is a patient in a nursing home for long-term care because of disability.</i></p>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>20.</b> "Scenario—When a Rating Decision Is NOT Required Answer "</p> <p><b>PROVIDE</b> feedback to trainees based on their answers in accordance with the answer below:</p> <p><i>A rating determination of permanent and total disability is not required to establish eligibility for Veterans Pension since the Veteran is a patient in a nursing home for long-term care because of disability.</i></p>



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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>What Are the Basic Requirements for a Claim to Be Ready to Rate?</b></p> <p>See Table 1: Basic Ready to Rate Requirements within the <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid</p>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide  <b>21.</b> "What Are the Basic Requirements for a Claim to Be Ready to Rate?"</p> <p><b>TRANSITION</b> to identifying the requirements for a claim to be ready to rate.</p>  <p><b>REFER</b> to Table 1 within the <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid and read through the "Evidence Required" column for each rating issue/claim type with the trainees.</p> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> that Table 1: Basic Ready to Rate Requirements displays the basic requirements needed for all pension-related rating issues/claim types.</p>  <p><b>EMPHASIZE</b> that table 1 details the requirements for adequate medical evidence and U.S.C. 5103 notice.</p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>What Are the Specific Requirements for a Claim to Be Ready to Rate?</b></p> <p>See Table 2: Specific Ready to Rate Requirements within the <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid</p>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>22.</b> "What Are the Specific Requirements for a Claim to Be Ready to Rate?"</p>  <p><b>REFER</b> to Table 2 within the <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid and read through the "Evidence Required" column for each rating issue/claim type with the trainees.</p> <p><b>EXPLAIN</b> that Table 2: Specific Ready to Rate Requirements displays the various evidence requirements needed for pension-related rating issues/claim types. The evidence requirements vary based on the rating issue/claim type.</p>
<p><b>Ready to Rate Scenario Practice Exercise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work independently.</li> <li>○ Complete the Ready to Rate Scenario Worksheet provided.</li> <li>○ Be prepared to discuss your answers and rationale with the class.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Time: 20 minutes</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>23.</b> "Ready to Rate Scenario Practice Exercise"</p> <p><b>ENSURE</b> that each trainee has access to the Ready to Rate Scenario Worksheet.</p> <p><b>DIRECT</b> each individual trainee to complete the worksheet and be prepared to discuss their responses and rationale with the class.</p> <p><b>ALLOW</b> 20 minutes.</p> <p><b>DISCUSS</b> the findings for the scenarios using the Ready to Rate Scenario Worksheet Answer Key.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Answers to the scenarios are displayed on the next five slides.</p>

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**Ready to Rate Scenario Worksheet**

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**SCENARIO 1:**

On February 25, 2016, the claims intake center received VA Form 21P-530 (Application for Burial Benefits) from Jackie Clause, the surviving spouse of Vietnam War Veteran Jim Clause. Jackie claimed service-connected burial benefits and verified that she incurred the Veteran's burial expenses. Jackie submitted supporting documents including a death certificate with the cause of death pending and proof of the Veteran's burial expenses from the funeral home. In review of the claim, the PMC VSR was able to verify that the Veteran was in receipt of 60% service-connected benefits for diabetes mellitus.

1. What type of claim did Jackie Clause submit?
  
2. Does it require a rating decision?
  
3. What evidence is required for the claim to be ready to rate?

**BONUS QUESTION:** Is any evidence missing? If so, list the missing evidence.

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**SCENARIO 2:**

Rebecca Wilson, the 27-year-old surviving child of Veteran Andrew Wilson, submits a VA Form 21-534EZ (Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits) to apply for survivor pension benefits. Mr. Wilson did not have a running award before his death and there is no living surviving spouse or indication of a previous surviving spouse award. Based on the evidence within the eFolder, Rebecca indicates that she is a helpless child on her application. Along with her application, Rebecca submits a signed statement from her social worker that includes the social worker's name and signature. The social worker states that he does not believe that the child is capable of self-support.

1. What type of claim did Rebecca Wilson submit?
  
2. Does the claim require a rating decision?
  
3. If claim requires a rating decision, what evidence is required for the claim to be ready to rate?

**BONUS QUESTION:** Is any evidence missing? If so, list the missing evidence.

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**SCENARIO 3:**

On January 4, 2016 the claims intake center received a completed claim for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) based on USC 1318 from Jennifer Hands, the surviving spouse of Vietnam War Veteran Edward Hands. Based on evidence within the eFolder, the Veteran died December 14, 2015 due to dementia (which is not a presumptive disability) according to the death certificate. A rating decision granting total disability (i.e., 100% service connected) is of record in the eFolder. The Veteran's corporate record shows he was properly service connected for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) at 100% and right knee injury at 10% effective March 15, 1990. The Veteran's DD Form 214 shows he served in the Army from October 1, 1965 through October 3, 1969.

1. What type of claim did Jennifer Hands submit?
  
2. Does the claim require a rating decision?
  
3. If claim requires a rating decision, what evidence is required for the claim to be ready to rate?

**BONUS QUESTION:** Is any evidence missing? If so, list the missing evidence.

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**Ready to Rate Scenario Worksheet Answer Key**

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**SCENARIO 1:**

On February 25, 2016, the claims intake center received VA Form 21P-530 (Application for Burial Benefits) from Jackie Clause, the surviving spouse of Vietnam War Veteran Jim Clause. Jackie claimed service-connected burial benefits and verified that she incurred the Veteran's burial expenses. Jackie submitted supporting documents including a death certificate with the cause of death pending and proof of the Veteran's burial expenses from the funeral home. In review of the claim, the PMC VSR was able to verify that the Veteran was in receipt of 60% service-connected benefits for diabetes mellitus.

1. What type of claim did Jackie Clause submit?
  - o *Jackie Clause submitted a claim for service-connected burial benefits*
2. Does the claim require a rating decision?
  - o *Yes*
3. If claim requires a rating decision, what evidence is required for the claim to be ready to rate?
  - o *Proof of death*

**BONUS QUESTION:** Is any evidence missing? If so, list the missing evidence.

- o *Yes, the proof of death must include the specific cause of death. The scenario indicates that the cause of death is pending on the death certificate.*

**SCENARIO 2:**

Rebecca Wilson, the 27-year-old surviving child of Veteran Andrew Wilson, submits a VA Form 21-534EZ (Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits) to apply for survivor pension benefits. Mr. Wilson did not have a running award before his death and there is no living surviving spouse or indication of a previous surviving spouse award. Based on the evidence within the eFolder, Rebecca indicates that she is a helpless child on her application. Along with her application, Rebecca submits a signed statement from her social worker that includes the social worker's name and signature. The social worker states that he does not believe that the child is capable of self-support.

1. What type of claim did Rebecca Wilson submit?
  - o *Rebecca Wilson submitted a claim for permanent incapacity for self-support (helpless child)*
2. Does it require a rating decision?

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- Yes
- 3. If claim requires a rating decision, what evidence is required for the claim to be ready to rate?
  - *A statement from the child's medical doctor or medical records*
  - *Statements of persons having knowledge of the facts known to them personally in regards to the child, such as teachers, tutors, or social workers*

**BONUS QUESTION:** Is any evidence missing? If so, list the missing evidence.

- *A statement from the child's doctor or medical records that show(s) the date of onset and extent of child's disability, diagnosis, and prognosis, including a description of the present condition, was NOT present within the eFolder.*
- *The statement from the social worker is not sufficient. The social worker's statement does not go into specific detail regarding the extent of the child's physical or mental abilities, schooling, material improvement in his condition, employment, marital status, or present condition.*

### **SCENARIO 3:**

On January 4, 2016 the claims intake center received a completed claim for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) based on USC 1318 from Jennifer Hands, the surviving spouse of Vietnam War Veteran Edward Hands. Based on evidence within the eFolder, the Veteran died December 14, 2015 due to dementia (which is not a presumptive disability) according to the death certificate. The rating activity granting total disability (i.e., 100% service connected) is of record in the eFolder. The Veteran's corporate record shows he was properly service connected for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) at 100% and right knee injury at 10% effective March 15, 1990. The Veteran's DD Form 214 shows he served in the Army from October 1, 1965 through October 3, 1969.

1. What type of claim is this?
  - *Jennifer Hands submitted a claim for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) based on U.S.C. 1318*
2. Does it require a rating decision?
  - Yes
3. If claim requires a rating decision, what evidence is required for the claim to be ready to rate?
  - *Proof of death*

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- *Rating decision of record indicating total disability (i.e., 100% service connected) for:*
  - *10 or more years immediately preceding death, or*
  - *A continuous period of not less than five years from the time of separation from service until death, or*
  - *One or more years immediately preceding death if the Veteran was a Former Prisoner of War (FPOW)*

**BONUS QUESTION:** Is any evidence missing? If so, list the missing evidence.

- *None*



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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Ready to Rate Practice Exercise Answer for Scenario #1</b></p> <p>1. What type of claim did Jackie Clause submit?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o <i>Jackie Clause submitted a claim for service-connected burial benefits</i></li></ul> <p>2. Does the claim require a rating decision?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o <i>Yes</i></li></ul> <p>3. If claim requires a rating decision, what evidence is required for the claim to be ready to rate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o <i>Proof of death</i></li></ul> <p><b>BONUS QUESTION:</b> Is any evidence missing? If so, list the missing evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o <i>Yes, the proof of death must include the specific cause of death. The scenario indicates that the cause of death is pending on the death certificate.</i></li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>24.</b> "Ready to Rate Practice Exercise Answer for Scenario #1"</p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Ready to Rate Practice Exercise Answer for Scenario #2</b></p> <p>1. What type of claim did Rebecca Wilson submit?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>Rebecca Wilson submitted a claim for permanent incapacity for self-support (helpless child)</i></li></ul> <p>2. Does it require a rating decision?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>Yes</i></li></ul> <p>3. If claim requires a rating decision, what evidence is required for the claim to be ready to rate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>A statement from the child's medical doctor or medical records</i></li><li>○ <i>Statements of persons having knowledge of the facts known to them personally in regards to the child, such as teachers, tutors, or social workers</i></li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>25.</b> "Ready to Rate Practice Exercise Answer for Scenario #2 (1 of 2)"</p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Ready to Rate Practice Exercise Answer for Scenario #2</b></p> <p><b>BONUS QUESTION:</b> Is any evidence missing? If so, list the missing evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>A statement from the child's doctor or medical records that show(s) the date of onset and extent of child's disability, diagnosis, and prognosis, including a description of the present condition, was NOT present within the eFolder.</i></li><li>○ <i>The statement from the social worker is not sufficient. The social worker's statement does not go into specific detail regarding the extent of the child's physical or mental abilities, schooling, material improvement in his condition, employment, marital status, or present condition.</i></li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>26.</b> "Ready to Rate Practice Exercise Answer for Scenario #2 (2 of 2)"</p>



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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Ready to Rate Practice Exercise Answer for Scenario #3 (1 of 2)</b></p> <p>1. What type of claim is this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>Jennifer Hands submitted a claim for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) based on U.S.C. 1318.</i></li></ul> <p>2. Does it require a rating decision?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Yes</li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>27.</b> "Ready to Rate Practice Exercise Answer for Scenario #3 (1 of 2)"</p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Ready to Rate Practice Exercise Answer for Scenario #3 (2 of 2)</b></p> <p>3. If claim requires a rating decision, what evidence is required for the claim to be ready to rate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>Proof of death</i></li><li>○ <i>Rating decision of record indicating total disability (i.e., 100% service connected) for:</i><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>10 or more years immediately preceding death, or</i></li><li>▪ <i>A continuous period of not less than five years from the time of separation from service until death, or</i></li><li>▪ <i>One or more years immediately preceding death if the Veteran was a Former Prisoner of War (FPOW)</i></li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>BONUS QUESTION:</b> Is any evidence missing? If so, list the missing evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>None</i></li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>28.</b> "Ready to Rate Practice Exercise Answer for Scenario #3 (2 of 2)"</p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Questions</b></p> 	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide 29. "Questions"</p>  <p><b>ASK</b> if they have any questions before proceeding.</p>
<p><b>Summary (1 of 4)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why does a claim require a rating decision?</li><li>• When does a claim require a rating decision?</li><li>• Which types of claims require a rating decision?</li><li>• Where would you find the criteria for sufficient medical evidence?</li><li>• Where would you find list of required evidence for a claim to be ready to rate?</li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide 30. "Summary (1 of 4)"</p> <p><b>DISCUSS</b> the following questions with the class. Ensure understanding of all concepts.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Answers are on the next three slides.</p>

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<p><b>Summary (2 of 4)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why does a claim require a rating decision?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>A rating decision is needed to determine whether the claimant is entitled to benefits based on available evidence in accordance with VA laws and regulations.</i></li></ul></li><li>• When does a claim require a rating decision?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>A rating decision is required when determination of entitlement is dependent on medical evidence.</i></li></ul></li></ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>31.</b> "Summary (2 of 4)"</p>

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PowerPoint Slides	Instructor Activities
<p><b>Summary (3 of 4)</b></p> <p>Which types of claims require a rating decision?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Permanent incapacity for self-support (helpless child)</i></li> <li>• <i>Permanent and total disability</i></li> <li>• <i>Service-connected death for burial benefits</i></li> <li>• <i>Service-connected death for DIC</i></li> <li>• <i>DIC based on 38 U.S.C. 1151 or 38 U.S.C. 1318</i></li> <li>• <i>Competency</i></li> <li>• <i>Special Monthly Pension (SMP)</i></li> <li>• <i>Reopen, new, or reconsideration claim</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>32.</b> "Summary (3 of 4)"</p>
<p><b>Summary (4 of 4)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where would you find the criteria for sufficient medical evidence? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Table 1: Basic Ready to Rate Requirements within the <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Where would you find list of specific evidence required for a claim to be ready to rate? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Table 2: Specific Ready to Rate Requirements within the <b>Ready to Rate</b> job aid</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>DISPLAY</b> slide</p> <p><b>33.</b> "Summary (4 of 4)"</p>



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<b>PowerPoint Slides</b>	<b>Instructor Activities</b>
<b>What's Next?</b> Phase 5, Part 1(d), Lesson 28: Determine Eligibility for DIC and Parents' DIC	<b>DISPLAY</b> slide <b>34.</b> "What's Next?" <b>EXPLAIN</b> upcoming Phase 5, Part 1(d), Lesson 28: Determine Eligibility for DIC and Parents' DIC.