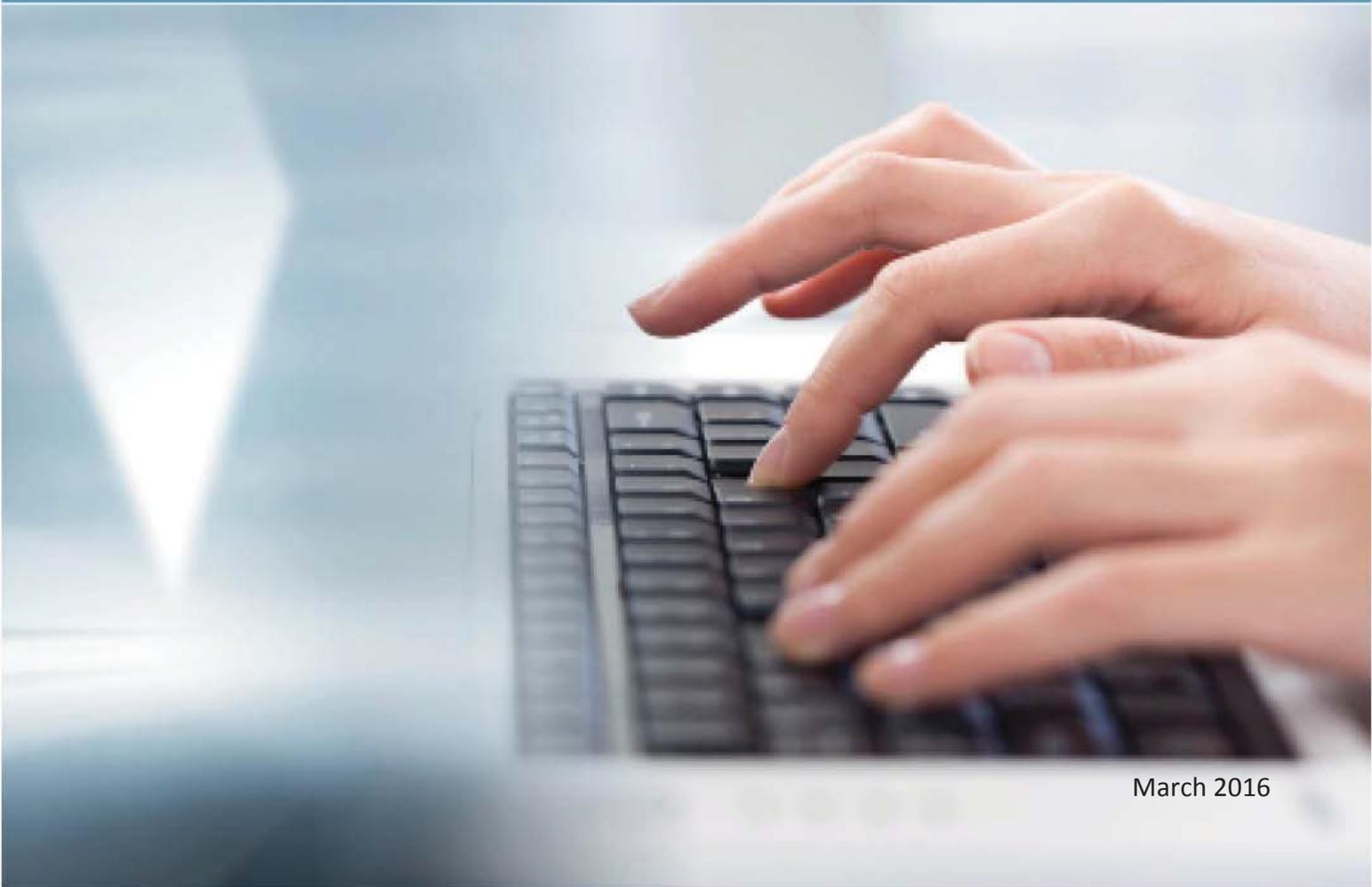


VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION (VSO)
VETERANS BENEFITS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (VBMS) COMMUNICATION
TOOLKIT

Controlled Unclassified Information



March 2016



Section	Content	Description
Key Information for VSOs	VSO FAQs (Updated)	Answers to FAQs specific to VSOs
Resources	VBMS Minute Videos	Visual aids that provide step-by-step instructions in order to assist end-users with completing specific tasks in VBMS
	Workload Management in VBMS for VSOs	Highlights workload management functionality and tools available in VBMS to VSOs
	VBMS for VSOs Job Aids	Easy-to-follow set of instructions to perform specific tasks while in the system
	VBMS Job Instruction Sheets for VSOs	Step-by-step instructions for VBMS processes and procedures

The Introduction, Overview, and Key Information sections provide basic background information about VBMS. The Resources section offers detailed step-by-step Job Aids and JISs to help VSO end-users utilize the system.

The VBMS Program Management Office (PMO) appreciates our VSO partners' commitment to working with the VBMS PMO to improve the timeliness and accuracy of Veterans' benefits claims processing. The VBMS PMO will continue to work closely with VHA to ensure that VHA has the necessary materials to successfully transition to the system.

Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) Major Release 10.1 Functionality Fact Sheet

FEATURES AVAILABLE IN THE LATEST VBMS RELEASE

VBMS is developed and released to the field in an iterative approach known as Agile development. Each major release introduces new features and system functionality, allowing VBMS to evolve to meet end-user and organizational needs over time. As major software releases are implemented, VBMS progresses toward the future end-state goal of a complete, end-to-end electronic claims processing system.

As a part of VBMS Major Release 10.1, end-users will see new functionality including:

Core

- Authorized end-users will have the ability to automatically generate the Request for Application (RFA) letter upon claims establishment
- End-Users will see enhancements to the automatic ready for decision / ready to work functionality when closing the last open tracked item

Awards

- Clothing allowance enhancements will further eliminate reliance on other business applications (VETSNET Awards)
- End-Users can generate an award for a non-rating end product when an associated rating end product has been deferred for rating correction
- Automatically populating Drill Pay in Award Adjustments Screen will provide end-users with an automatic calculation of award effective date and payment amount after Drill Pay adjustment

Rating

- Updated Musculoskeletal – Joints Calculator Tabbing Functionality
- Addition of Pelvic Inflammatory Disease Diagnosis in the Gynecological Calculator
- VBMS-R now recognizes when end-users select Complete under the Severity selection of the external popliteal nerve within the Neurological Conditions and Convulsive Disorders: Cranial / Peripheral Nerves Evaluation Builder



- VBMS-R now combines all painful and / or unstable scars into one evaluation under Diagnostic Code (DC) 7804, regardless of the location of the scar
- Addition of warning messages for Extra-schedular Individual Unemployability
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) calculator now includes a checkbox titled Facet cannot be used to support evaluation
- VBMS-R now generates deferred evaluation decision language for previously granted service-connected conditions



Veterans Service Organization (VSO) Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

KEY INFORMATION FOR VSOS

General Questions

What is the VBMS initiative?

The VBMS initiative is:

- A business transformation initiative, which assists the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in eliminating the claims backlog
- A web-based system, supported by improved business processes
- Designed to transition Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) from a paper-intensive claims process to an electronic environment

Please note, VBMS is a system used to process claims; it does not teach end-users the claims process.

Why is VBA undertaking the VBMS initiative?

VBA faces multiple challenges, including an increasing claims backlog, more complex claims, and more time needed to process claims. We are pursuing the VBMS initiative to transition VBA from a paper-intensive claims process to one that is web-based, electronic, and more efficient. By improving the claims process and equipping employees with enhanced technology, VBA can overcome these challenges.



How will VBMS address the backlog?

VBMS is still under development; however, once fully developed, key capabilities such as automated decision support tools and rules-based claims processing will help increase timeliness, accuracy, and consistency across all regional offices (ROs).

Will paper applications still be accepted?

Paper documents will still be accepted and scanned for processing; however, electronic documents are preferred and encouraged.

What will be the impact on VSOs?

In the near term, VSO end-users can anticipate that the successful transition to VBMS will require VSO commitment and cooperation. The VBMS Program Management Office (PMO) will support end-users through the transition by providing the necessary training opportunities, desktop reference materials, and coaching. It is important to note the system is being developed using an Agile methodology, and new functionality is continually being added.

Currently, there is one approved role for all VSOs and County VSOs. VSO end-user functionality includes the ability to review claims, track the status of claims, conduct searches, and navigate and view the electronic folder (eFolder). In the long term, VSO end-users will benefit from:

- A web-based system which provides real-time, on-demand access to information
- An electronic document and records environment, which enables faster benefits delivery by reducing dependency on paper and manual processes
- Automated processes which result in improved quality, accuracy, and timeliness of claims decisions
- Improved customer service due to the ability to provide more timely and responsive information to Veterans and their families

What can I do to stay informed about VBMS?

Project updates and answers to additional questions about the technology are posted to the [VBMS intranet site](#).



What kinds of resources are available to VSO employees about VBMS?

The VSO community has access to the VBMS Minute Videos, VSO Communication Toolkit, Job Aids, and Job Instruction Sheets to assist with VBMS usage. All materials and trainings are updated for end-users as soon as new functionality is released.

Functionality

Will VBMS completely automate the claims process?

VBMS will have decision-support tools and guides to assist employees, but the process will not be completely automated. Technology cannot replace the knowledge or expert judgment VBA employees contribute to the claims process.

What functionality is available in the VSO role?

Available functionality includes:

- Search capability for Veterans and documents
- View items assigned to their work queue
- View Veteran eFolder and annotations
- View Veteran Profile and service information
- View claim contentions and claim details
- View rated issues
- Conduct rating review

Is there another role that the VSO can be assigned?

No, the VSO role is the only approved role in VBMS for all VSOs, which includes County VSOs.

What general functionality was added in the latest VBMS Major Release 10.1?

New functionality available in VBMS Major Release 10.1 includes the ability for authorized end-users to automatically generate the Request for Application letter upon claims establishment. End-Users will also gain “tabbing” functionality to move vertically across the Range of Motion fields in all Musculoskeletal Joints calculators.



VBMS Major Release 10.1 also includes the Addition of warning messages for Extra-schedular Individual Unemployability, which will reduce rework, reduce reliance on LEB, increase quality, and promote standardization. These enhancements continue to advance VBMS toward the future end-state goal of a complete, end-to-end electronic claims processing system.

For more information on VBMS Major Release 10.1, please reach out to your VBMS Superuser, or refer to the [VBMS Major Release 10.1 Functionality Fact Sheet](#) located on the [VBMS Intranet site](#).

Does this release include any changes to my role in VBMS?

No, the VSO role does not change with VBMS Major Release 10.1. For more information please access the VBMS Intranet site [Resources](#) page.

Enhancements

What is the process for requesting improvements to the VBMS?

The VBMS PMO welcomes suggestions for system enhancements that will support VSOs in fulfilling their roles. Please contact the National Service Desk to request an [Enhancement Reporting Form](#) or to complete the form over the phone. The National Service Desk can be reached at either 1-855-NSD-HELP (1-855-673-4357) or NSDVBMS@va.gov. Your input is valuable. VBMS PMO experts will review all requests and determine the feasibility of the ideas.

Reporting System Issues

What is the process for reporting system issues?

Please contact the National Service Desk to request an [Incident Reporting Form](#) or to complete the form over the phone. The National Service Desk can be reached at either 1-855-NSD-HELP (1-855-673-4357) or NSDVBMS@va.gov.

