

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
National Call Center Pilot and 3 Service Enhancements

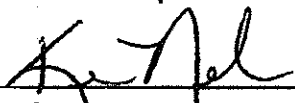
The following constitutes an agreement between the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), AFL-CIO National VA council (NVAC) #53, (Union) regarding the National Call Center Pilot and 3 Service Enhancements of Call Center Agents stopping and resuming payments via the telephone, Call Center Agents uploading 0820 forms into the VBMS system, and Call Center Agents re-sending documents to Veterans at point of call.

1. The focus of these enhancements is to increase point of call resolution and reduce processing times thus enhancing the service experience for the Veteran or dependent
2. National Call Center enhancement 1 is to allow certain benefit payments to be stopped or resumed over the phone. Specifically:
 - a. Allow Call Center Agent to suspend benefit of surviving spouse due to death or remarriage.
 - b. Allow Call Center Agent to resume benefits when suspended due to erroneous report of death, address discrepancy, or returned payment.
 - c. Allow Call Center Agent to stop payments at point of call to allow for Veterans to remain in assisted living or nursing home facilities.
3. A two (2) month pilot will be conducted at the Philadelphia Pension Call Center. The pilot is designed to test the training, concept of application and the process. Pilot call volumes will assist in determining the number of agents required to service these call types. These call types will be excluded from the average monthly talk time.
4. Upon successful completion of the pilot and the completion of national bargaining; this process will be deployed across all National Call Centers via a phased deployment plan. The deployment plan will range over a two (2) month window.

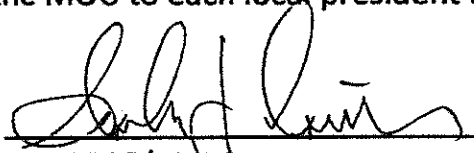
5. Pilot call volumes will assist in determining the number of agents required to service these call types. These call types will be excluded from the average monthly talk time. Agents will enter stop and resume payment calls into the exclusion database. Agents will be informed and trained on entering these stop and resume call types into the exclusion database during their weekly training. Call exclusion type will be pension-stop and resume payments.
6. The results of the pilot and the phased deployment plan will be provided to the AFGE VBA Mid Term Bargaining Committee Prior to expansion or national rollout.
7. National Call Center enhancement 2 is to allow certain 0820 forms to be uploaded to the VBMS system instead of emailing the form to the Regional Office email box. This will help to reduce processing timeframes and provide better service to Veterans and dependents. These forms include yet are not limited to:
 - a. 0820a (FNOD successfully processed in the system)
 - b. Report of medical evidence
 - c. Location of requested materials (STRs, Guard Records)
 - d. 10 Day Response Letter
 - e. Withdrawal of claim or issue
 - f. DRO/TAP Election
 - g. Request to transfer a file
 - h. Requesting, cancelling or rescheduling hearings if EP pending
 - i. Clarification of previously submitted form (medical expenses, 686c) if EP pending
8. National Call Center enhancement 3 is to allow agents to re-send documents to Veterans at point of call. Agents will send a copy of a previously sent letter/document to the Veteran upon request. This will eliminate the need for the Veteran to send in a written request.
9. Prior to implementation of each of the 3 service enhancements, VBA will provide training to all agents. Training will be completed across all Call Centers during the standing weekly training sessions. Training will be

provided in the form of class room instruction and practical application. Agents will enter these specific call types into the exclusion database. Agents will be informed and trained on entering these specific call types into the exclusion database during their weekly training.

10. There will be a 90 day acclimation period upon implementation, for each enhancement, after which the process will be incorporated in the existing performance standards under element 1 – Quality (critical)
11. Management will not hold employees accountable for factors or extenuating circumstances which affect performance that are beyond the employees' control in compliance with Article 27.
12. If after implementation either party is made aware of issues that may adversely affect employees, both parties agree to discuss the issues and work to mutually resolve the issues for the employees. Should discussions not resolve the issues; the parties will implement the negotiating process.
13. If either party is made aware of impact and implementation issues, the parties agree to discuss the issues and work to mutually resolve them. The parties agree to comply with Article 47 in this regard.
14. In accordance with Article 47 of the Master Agreement, Local bargaining shall take place at individual facilities and may include substantive bargaining that does not conflict with negotiated national policy and agreements.
15. Management will provide a copy of the MOU to each local president upon receipt.



Agency



AFGE/NVAG

02/19/15

Date