

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Claims Automation - Decision Support Pilot Expansion

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 Veterans Affairs Council (NVAC) #53, (Union) regarding the Claims Automation - Decision Support Pilot Expansion.

1. Employees will receive training on the new procedures and policies related to the program prior to expansion. This training will be available in TMS. All employees will be on excluded time while attending such training.
2. The parties recognize the intent of the pilot is to verify the accuracy of the decision support tool(s), i.e. pre-populated calculator and evidence review summary. As such, during the pilot phase, employees should continue to review the full file and assist in identifying inaccuracies generated by the tool(s). Employees will not be cited for errors on their Individual Quality Reviews when the error is determined to be solely caused by the automated decision support tool.
3. The initial pilot sites are the Boise Regional Office, the Des Moines Regional Office, the Montgomery Regional Office, and the Pittsburgh Regional Office. Management will inform the Union if additional sites are added.
4. Management will provide quarterly updates of pilot progress to include the addition of new claim attributes. Attributes refer to the type of claim, number of issues, and medical contentions.
5. Employees are responsible for notifying management when the information provided by the tool is inaccurate. Supervisors shall grant appropriate excluded time for employees to provide feedback during the pilot.
6. After the expanded pilot program is completed, the VBA AFGE Midterm Bargaining Committee will be briefed on the results. All bargaining obligations will be met prior to national rollout.
7. Consistent with the procedures set forth in 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.
8. After implementation, if either party is made aware of issues that may affect employees, both parties agree to discuss the issues and work to mutually resolve the issues for the employees. If the parties are unable to resolve the issue(s) by discussion, the parties will implement the negotiating process to the extent required by the statute.

9. Management shall provide a copy of this MOU to the local president and/or designee at each AFGE local within (10) ten days of the date this MOU is signed.

Jessica R. Minnich
For the Agency

Paul H. Fleming
For AFGE/NVAC

August 29, 2022
Date