

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Benefits Administration

VBA - AFGE Memorandum of Understanding

Claims Process Improvement

Consistent with provisions contained within the Master Agreement, the following constitutes an agreement between the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO, National VA Council #53 (NVAC). The subject of this agreement is the implementation of the Claims Process Improvement Task Team's recommendations.

1. Implementation of the Claims Process Improvement Model will not affect promotion potential for those employees in career ladder positions. All necessary training will be afforded employees in career ladder positions impacted by implementation of specialized processing teams.
2. Employees in a career ladder will not have their promotions delayed if the implementation of the six-team concept causes delays in training if they meet the statutory and contractual requirements of promotion.
3. Due to the unique nature of individual field stations, rotational plans will be developed locally. This plan will specify how often employees on each team must move to another team. The sample rotation plan provided in the approved CPI report can be used as a guide in the development of local plans.
4. VBA will closely monitor the impact of the establishment of the specialized teams on the national Performance Standards for journey level RVSRs and VSRs to assure the plans measure performance in each specialized team accurately and equitably. Modifications to the performance plans will be made if necessary.
5. Any necessary refresher training will be provided to journey level employees when rotating between specialized teams.
6. During the initial establishment of specialized teams, Management will offer employees an opportunity to select a choice of teams (3 choices) on which they would like to serve. Every effort will be made by Management to accommodate choices.
7. The Public Contact Specialists GS-9 position will replace the VBC position for those who opted out of VSR training. Incumbents of these positions will not be rotated through the other five specialized teams. Veteran Claims Examiners who opted out of VSR training will not be assigned to Public Contact Teams in the CPI model, and will retain their present grade.
8. Where possible, all scheduled leave requests for the remainder of the year shall be honored.
9. All Veterans Service Center (VSC) employees will have access to the approved CPI plan.

10. The parties may negotiate locally on this subject provided it does not conflict, interfere with, or impair the implementation of this MOU and the Master Agreement.

11. Management will provide a copy of this agreement to the local upon receipt.

/S/ Crystal D. Wiggins
VBA Management
AFGE NVAC

/S/ Alberta Franklin

Date: June 19, 2002

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