

All State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agency Call

Welcome

Regina Bowden welcomed everyone to the All State VR Agency call and acknowledged current events and the good news on the completed rescue of the 12 children and their soccer coach from the cave in Thailand.

Supplemental Claims

Candice Whaley reminded everyone that supplemental claims are for additional direct costs or post-employment costs associated with the original claim paid. In the past, there was no timeframe for submitting supplemental claims. However, due to an audit, there is now a supplemental claim timeframe. Effective September 2017, the submittal timeframe is within one year from the date that the original claim was paid. Refer to the State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Provider Handbook on page 19 or contact Candice directly at Candice.Whaley@ssa.gov.

Reconsiderations

Shada Roper noted that Social Security has been reviewing reconsideration information and wants to make sure State VR agencies are paid. When sending in a reconsideration from the old manual system, State VR agencies must put it in as an initial claim, state the original filing date, add remarks regarding each case for reconsideration, and add any other important information that Social Security does not have. If we do not have your original claim file date, the system will date it as of the reconsideration claim date. Social Security uses the original claim date in the remarks to make sure it is handled as a reconsideration claim.

There continues to be some confusion regarding 900 versus 950 claims and notices. A 900 claim is an initial claim on Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) that we paid. The 950 claim is a reduction to your payment due to savings to the Trust fund. If you have 950 claims with incorrect language regarding the dollar amount reduced, send a notice to the VR Help Desk or Shada.Roper@ssa.gov directly to have your notice corrected.

2018 Red Book, Notices of Determination, 620-Untimely Filing Denials, Portal Password Issues

Raquel Donaldson noted that the VR Help Desk has been receiving requests for the 2018 Red Book. The VR Team doesn't provide the Red Book. State VR agencies can request it by sending an email to DCBFQM.OFLM.OLM.RQCT.Orders@ssa.gov or faxing a request to 410-965-2037.

Donaldson shared that after a VR receives a Notice of Determination (NOD), the VR Help Desk often receives questions on SGA, net and gross payment periods. If State VR agencies look at the NOD, that will walk them through the amount requested, and the amount allowed. Please look at the explanations in the NOD before sending an inquiry on your payment shortage.

She also noted that there are issues with 620 denials related to reconsiderations. Be sure to put in your reconsideration claim remarks that you are doing a “reconsideration” and the date that the initial claim was originally sent. If these remarks are missing, you may get a 620 denial on a reconsideration. You should never receive a 620 on a reconsideration unless the initial claim should have been denied with a 620 denial.

We cannot help you with getting into the Portal if you are having password issues. Do not send requests for portal password assistance to the State VR Help Desk. For password assistance, you must call 1-800-772-1213. At the voice prompt, ask for “Help Desk” and you will hear a response of “My SSA Help Desk” letting you know you have reached the correct menu.

Ticket Portal Reminders and FAQ

Katie Striebinger reminded everyone that reconsideration claims entered through the Portal must have an initial submission date of March 2017 or later. For reconsideration claims prior to March 2017, VR agencies must mark the claim as an initial claim in the Portal and add remarks regarding the initial claim date and reconsideration. This is due to the transition of older cases into the Portal.

Social Security does not have funding to make changes to the Portal or the new VR payment system. Due to funding restrictions, programming and program decisions must take into consideration the amount of work, effort and impact.

We appreciate input on improvements and changes needed, but for now, we are at a standstill. We are working to fix a handful of production problems.

For the foreseeable future, we will not be able to combine all notices into one mailing, or all payments into one check. We will not be able to change the way the Portal allows you to search or submit claims. We will not be able to change the requirement that the first name and last name must match what is in SSA’s records. We will not be able to change the way claims are uploaded to the Portal.

You have two choices for uploading claims. You can either upload an XML file or build an XML file using the Portal screens. The entire system is built on an XML file. Either you are supplying an XML file to us through the upload or you are using the screen to build us an XML file. This is the reason you cannot save when you use the screen to submit a claim.

If you get an error, please report it to the VR Help Desk. We will fix the problem or give you a work-around. We rely on you to help identify problems for us.

An XML file upload is the fastest way to get claims to us. For example, you can submit 500 claims in one file and in an instant and they go right to a person's queue. We recommend that you use this method if you can.

However, there is a recurring problem with XML upload transactions. There are uploaded transactions that are not posting properly. It may look like the file is successful with no errors, but there may be errors.

Check your transmitted claims by opening the uploaded file. There will be an "N" in Column G indicating that the claim did not load properly, and you need to resubmit that specific claim. You will see the message: "Claim-validated=No. No validation errors found, but errors encountered in saving the VR claim". Cut and paste just that failed transaction into a new XML file with the required formatting and resend.

Since you cannot save when you enter a claim through the screen, we are advising you not to enter each of your direct costs one by one. Instead, enter one single direct cost that is the same amount as the total direct costs. You must follow up by sending us faxed information showing all related cost detail.

We cannot add the Quarterly Beneficiary Report (QBER) to the Portal, given the current funding constraints. We are working to provide you with a quarterly file that will show you earnings for specific beneficiaries. Since this will be a file that is emailed to a point of contact (POC) at your agency instead of something downloaded from the Portal, there will be several constraints. We have to follow all security protocols, protect PII, and manage any file size limitations. We plan to have more information on the next quarterly All VR call in October.

VR and Ticket to Work Trainings

Linda Custis noted that there have been requests for additional State VR agency and Ticket to Work program trainings. Social Security is looking at the possibility of providing a training in August or September. If any State VR staff is interested in the training, send an email to Linda.Custis@ssa.gov or Gloria.Blowe@ssa.gov by July 16.

Questions and Answers

A question and answer period, which is part of the call recording and transcript, concluded the call.

The full transcript and audio from the All State VR Agency Call are available at yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/events-archive

The next All State VR Agency Call will be held on **Tuesday, October 16, 2018, at 3 p.m. ET.**