All State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Call

Welcome

Jennelle Bratcher welcomed everyone to the call. She was pleased to see those who attended last week's SSA in-house training and at the CSAVR meeting. Another VR training will be hosted this summer. Look for the upcoming GovDelivery announcement.

Office of Retirement and Disability Policy (ORDP) Data Exchange: State Verification Exchange System (SVES)

Raquel Donaldson introduced Laura Mezzanotte from ORDP. Laura is the developer for the SVES, which allows access to Title II and Title XVI verification, including the individual's name, DOB and Social Security number.

The discussion was tabled when it was realized that the request by VR state agencies on how to access the SVES data needs more involvement than initially thought. Laura will meet with others in the ORDP group, including policy staff to review how state VR agencies located in a variety of state departments or existing as stand-alone state agencies may best access SVES data. She will follow up with Raquel Donaldson.

If you have questions on SVES, contact Raquel Donaldson at the VR Helpdesk (VR.Helpdesk@ssa.gov) and she will follow up.

RSA-911 (Cost Formula); Claim backlog

Jennelle Bratcher noted there is a joint effort with RSA staff on deriving appropriate data elements from the RSA 911 and RSA 2 forms to support state agencies' cost formulas. The team will provide information in time for setting the FY20 cost formulas in September.

There is a current cost-reimbursement claim backlog, mostly due to staff attrition. SSA is trying to mitigate the processing delays by providing some overtime and is considering special cadres to deal with cases pending for more than 60 days. Everyone is reminded that there is a long-standing policy that VR agencies should reach out only if the claim has been pending for more than 60 days. SSA asks VRs to adhere to this policy. When VRs contact SSA before 60 days, it bottlenecks the system and increases the backlog. SSA is working diligently to mitigate the backlog and achieve a good processing time.

Systems update

Katie Striebinger shared that a March 30 systems release corrected a systems problem dating back to 2015. If VRs recently notice more error messages regarding the inability to open a beneficiary because they are not in current pay status, this is a correct error message. SSA closed a logic loop that previously allowed VRs to open cases when a beneficiary was not in current pay status. If you notice anything odd, let the VR Helpdesk know.

Regarding the status of Timely Progress Reviews (TPR), it remains the same. SSA is getting TPR business processes and materials together and will provide advance notification and training before anything new occurs with TPR.

VR on-site two-day training

Shada Roper noted the successful 2-day training held last week and thanked all who attended. Trainees are being solicited for a summer training event. SSA must have at least four trainees to host an event. E-mail your interest in securing a summer training slot to Linda Custis (Linda.Custis@ssa.gov), (Shada.T.Roper@ssa.gov) or to the VR Helpdesk. VRs need to confirm their attendance 2 weeks prior to the training and the agenda will be sent.

Reconsiderations, VR Help Desk, Upload errors, VRENs

Raquel Donaldson shared the following reminders:

- Reconsiderations
  When submitting reconsiderations in the Portal, remember to put notes in the comment section as to when you initially submitted the claim. This helps assure that it is processed as a reconsideration. If you have a question on a reconsideration that was denied 620 for untimely filing, e-mail the VR Helpdesk, provide information about the initial denial and request to have the denial reviewed.

- VR Helpdesk and e-mails
  When you have questions regarding a denial, it is much easier if you put all of your denial questions on one spreadsheet rather than send individual e-mails. Submission of monthly or weekly compiled denial questions on a spreadsheet is very helpful. If you have one particular issue, it is fine to send an individual e-mail.

- Upload Errors
  When you complete your claim uploads, be sure to check for upload errors. If you e-mail later saying that you can't find the claims, you will be asked to review your initial upload for errors. If there are upload errors that you did not attend to on the initial upload, you will not get an untimely submission waiver.

- VRENs
    Raquel read an email from Cara Caplan in which she reminds VRENs that when a Ticket is assigned initially for Cost Reimbursement and the case is closed by VR, the VR agency cannot assign that same Ticket in the future for VREN Ticket payments. There is regulatory language that speaks to this prohibition. If you have a question regarding this, email the VR Helpdesk.

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
https://yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/events-archive

The next All VR State Agency Call will be held on
Tuesday, July 9, 2019 at 3 p.m. ET.