

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Washington, D.C. 20420

February 12, 2008

Director (00/21)
All VA Regional Offices and Centers

In Reply Refer To: 214

Fast Letter 08-02

SUBJ: TRIP Procedures Update

Background

Fast Letter 00-24 introduced the Training, Responsibility, Involvement and Preparation of Claims (TRIP) program. The TRIP program is designed to help improve both our service to veterans and the timeliness of claims processing through a nationwide partnership between VA and all accredited Veterans Service Officers (VSOs). The related training instructs VSOs on the essential requirements for a successful claim and familiarizes them with VBA computer systems.

Successful completion of the program allows an accredited VSO to have read-only access to a number of pertinent claims processing-related applications.

Purpose

This letter revises the TRIP procedures enclosed with Fast Letter 07-18. It also introduces the release of the web-based TRIP training. The enclosed document, "TRIP Procedures," provides the current guidance. The outlined instructions for processing requests for web-based TRIP access are effective immediately.

Web-based TRIP

A demonstration of the web-based TRIP course was provided to service organizations on November 29, 2007. Twenty-three individuals then participated in a successful validation study that was completed on December 14, 2007. The web-based TRIP course is now available. *Therefore, regional offices are no longer required to conduct training during the first and third quarters of the fiscal year.*

The web-based course offers multiple video lesson presentations and review questions. The course is designed to help participants easily learn the information needed to pass the multiple-choice final examination. Participants have 45 days from the starting date to complete the course, which is accessible at any time. All review material normally distributed at the beginning of the course by the TRIP coordinator is now available on-line. Participants may view their course status throughout the training and track their progress as chapters are completed.

TRIP Coordinator Responsibilities

The C&P Training Staff provided training to all TRIP coordinators. The regional office TRIP coordinators are the administrators for the web-based TRIP program. They are responsible for registering all service officers within their jurisdiction interested in completing the web-based training, as well as addressing questions regarding the program.

Questions

Questions concerning information contained in this fast letter may be e-mailed to VAVBAWAS/CO/TRIP.

/S/

Bradley G. Mayes
Director
Compensation and Pension Service

Enclosure: TRIP Procedures

Rescinds Fast Letter 07-18 dated July 20, 2007

TRIP Procedures

Administrative Procedures

- ROs are required to submit the names of TRIP coordinators to the **VAVBAWAS/CO/TRIP** mailbox. Changes in personnel should also be reported to this mailbox.
- The C&P Service Training Staff will maintain a master database of all participants receiving TRIP certification.

TRIP Training and Certification Procedures

- Privacy and Cyber Security Training must be completed prior to receiving access to VBA computer systems.
- Accredited VSOs request training at the RO of jurisdiction. A request must be submitted to the RO TRIP Coordinator and the Information Security Officer (ISO).
- Individuals must score 70% or higher on the final examination to successfully complete training. An official certificate is issued upon successful completion of the training. Individuals who score below 70% will have two more chances to pass the final examination. After three failed attempts, the participant is required to re-register and must complete the training again in its entirety.

Certification Test-out Option

- Privacy and Cyber Security Training must be completed prior to receiving access to VBA computer systems.
- VSOs previously employed at an RO as a journeyman Veteran Service Representative or higher position may apply for certification within 12 months from last employment and request to test-out of the standard training.
- The VSO must submit a written statement from current management at the RO where last employed. This statement should include verification of the prior position held by the requesting VSO and state the employee left in good standing. A copy of this letter must be submitted to Central Office through the **VAVBAWAS/CO/TRIP** mailbox.
- The certification exam consists of the same test material given during the standard training, and a minimum score of 70% is required for successful completion. An official certificate is issued upon successful passing of the test.

Individuals who score below 70% are required to complete the web-based TRIP program.

Relocated TRIP Certified VSOs

- A VSO's previous certification, once verified by the C&P Service Training Staff, will be honored by other ROs. However, certification will not be honored when there is a break in employment as a VSO for more than 6 months. After 6 months, the VSO must follow the certification test-out option or standard TRIP procedures.

VSO Administrative and Clerical Support Staff (non-accredited) Employees

- Privacy and Cyber Security Training must be completed prior to receiving access to VBA computer systems.
- Veteran Service Organization's administrative and clerical support staff working under the supervision of an accredited representative may be given access to the inquiry commands of BDN/SHARE and COVERS only upon formal request from the supervising VSO.
- The requestor will certify that such access by approved support personnel will be under the supervision of an accredited representative.
- VSOs will be responsible for training their administrative and clerical support employees. Administrative and clerical support employees will be allowed to participate in the standard web-based TRIP training but will **not** be issued a certificate.

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