

AR-1

Accountability Review Findings

Dates of Review: June 1, 2020 – June 5, 2020

Office Reviewed: Seattle District Office

Review Period: April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020

Standard:	Category 1: Payment Processing Element 1: Form EN-20 and AOP Receipt Date
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Number of Cases Reviewed:	51
Acceptable Rating:	90%
Rating for review:	99%

Describe Findings:

The Payment Processing category identifies a random sampling of compensation payments processed within the review period and evaluates whether the district offices processed those payments in accordance with established policy and procedures.

With respect to the Seattle District Office, the reviewers found only one error in the Payment Processing category. The error consisted a discrepancy in the date on which a payment was authorized, as OIS showed the payment was authorized on 12/26/19 and ECS reflects an authorization date of 12/23/19.

REVIEWER(s):	DATE:
David Evans, Amy Derocher, Amrene Smith, Steven Smith, Carrie Heavrin, William Pridy, Daniel Divittorio, Paula Heidel, Raymond Murphy, Katina Johnson, Elvin Santiago	June 5, 2020

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Accountability Review Findings

Dates of Review: June 1, 2020 – June 5, 2020

Office Reviewed: Seattle District Office

Review Period: April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020

Standard:	Category 2: Part B Recommended Decisions Element 1: Outcome and Written Quality
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Number of Cases Reviewed	49
Rating for Element 1:	97%
Acceptable Rating:	90%
Overall Category Rating:	97%

Summarize Category (or Element) Findings:

The results of our review revealed that the Seattle District Office is performing above the acceptable rating in this category, which judges the outcome and written quality of a sample of Part B Recommended Decisions (RDs). Of the 49 cases reviewed, the review team identified 14 total deficiencies.

With regard to whether the factual information was correct and consistent throughout the RD, the team identified three errors. These included two RDs that included an incorrect address, and one case in which the CE did not bronze either a cover letter or address sheet into OIS to document that the RD had been issued.

Within the indicator questions looking at the sufficiency of the Statement of the Case (SOC), one RD was identified in which the SOC was not in chronological order.

The largest number of deficiencies in this category were identified within the indicator questions that pertained to the sufficiency of the Explanation of Findings (EOF.) A total of seven errors were found. All seven of the errors were a result of either an insufficient description of Part B statutory requirements, or a lack of the CE's analysis of case evidence used to either accept or deny the claim.

In regard to the Conclusions of Law (COL), one case was identified in which the CE incorrectly calculated the amount of survivor benefits, potentially resulting in an overpayment of benefits.

Finally, the team found two RDs to be deficient in that they were judged to have not communicated information in an understandable manner and/or contained substantial grammatical or typographical errors.

AR TEAM REVIEWER(s):	DATE:
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Dates of Review: June 1, 2020 – June 5, 2020

Office Reviewed: Seattle District Office

Review Period: April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020



Standard:	Category 3: Part E Causation Claims Element 1: Development and Causation Assessment Element 2: Outcome and Written Quality
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Number of Cases Reviewed	43
Rating for Element 1:	97%
Rating for Element 2:	96%
Acceptable Rating:	90%
Overall Category Rating:	96%

Summarize Category (or Element) Findings:

This category focuses on the development, causation assessment, and Recommended Decisions (RDs) issued during the rating period in a sample of Part E claims. The Seattle District Office did an excellent job in this category with an overall score of 96%.

With regard to Element 1: Development and Causation Assessment, a total of 6 errors were identified. There were no significant trends noted within in this element. However, the review team identified two cases where causation development was not properly explained in development letters; and one case which accounted for the majority of errors under this element, in which silica exposure and/or causation were not appropriately developed with the IH or treating physician.

For Element 2: Outcome and Written Quality, the review team identified 10 deficiencies. Two trends accounted for the majority of errors within this element. First, several RDs were noted in which the Statement of the Case (SOC) were found to be incomplete. Specifically, the review team noted several instances in which the CE did not discuss significant development actions taken in connection with the decision or did not include the evidentiary background for establishing claimed employment. The second trend noted pertained to the Explanation of Findings (EOF) portion of decisions, which did not discuss all pertinent evidence or include sufficient written narrative to clearly explain their interpretation of case evidence in justifying the decision outcome.

Overall, the Seattle District Office performed extremely well under this category.

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Amy Derocher, Amrene Smith, Steven Smith, Carrie Heavrin, William Pridy, Daniel Divittorio, Paula Heidel, Raymond Murphy, Katina Johnson, Elvin Santiago	June 5, 2020

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Dates of Review: June 1, 2020 – June 5, 2020

Office Reviewed: Seattle District Office

Review Period: April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020

Standard:	Category 4: OIS Indexing Element 1: Incoming Correspondence Element 2: Outgoing Correspondence
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Number of Cases Reviewed	49
Rating for Element 1:	95%
Rating for Element 2:	100%
Acceptable Rating:	90%
Overall Category Rating:	96%

Summarize Category (or Element) Findings:

In this category, the review team evaluated imaged correspondence received and created by the district office for clarity and appropriate classification based on pre-determined categories and subjects. The review also ensured that the imaged document reviewed was associated with the correct case file. The Seattle District Office performed exceptionally well in this category.

A total of seven (7) errors were identified in this category, all within Element #1. Five of the errors involved incorrect category/subject classification with no specific trends. One error involved a document which required separation to allow for classification into its distinct category/subject combination. The final error involved an illegible document which was not annotated in the OIS description field as “best possible” scan per OIS guidance. No errors were identified within Element #2.

AR TEAM REVIEWER(s):	DATE:
Curtis Johnson, Angela Eaddy	June 5, 2020

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Dates of Review: June 15, 2020 - June 19, 2020

Office Reviewed: Seattle District Office

Review Period: April 1, 2019 — March 31, 2020

Standard:	Category 5: Post Remand/Reopening Adjudication Element 1: Post Remand/ Reopening Development Element 2: Recommended Decisions – Outcome and Written Quality
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Number of cases reviewed	43
Rating for Element 1:	90%
Rating for Element 2:	95%
Acceptable rating:	90%
Overall Category Rating:	94%

Summarize Category (or Element) Findings:

This Category assesses whether the claims examiner (CE) conducted appropriate actions following a Remand Order or a Director’s Order that reopened a claim. Overall, the Seattle District Office performed well in this category. The team reviewed two elements in this category, development and recommended decision outcome and quality.

With respect to development, the review team identified 22 deficiencies. The deficiencies related to incomplete or incorrect development following a remand. Some examples of incomplete or incorrect development included sending a case to a CMC without first consulting a treating physician, not reporting all skin cancers identified in a remand to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), and performing a SEM search incorrectly. The reviewers also noted a wage-loss claim that was not developed for medical evidence related to the claimed wage-loss, which resulted in multiple errors. The team identified no deficiencies in this element related to development and adjudication following a reopening.

As to the outcome and quality of recommended decisions, the review team identified 13 deficiencies. In four of the cases reviewed, the RD omitted development steps or relevant case history from the statement of the case section of the RD. There were also two cases with incorrect information such as a zip code and an incorrect date of filing. These both appeared to be proofreading errors.

Summarize Other Significant Findings:
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The review team identified no other significant findings.

AR TEAM REVIEWER(s):	DATE:
Karoline Anders, Kristina Green, Carrie Turjan, Deb Howard, Valarie Whittaker, Daniel Divittorio, William Pridy, Bernadette DeHerrera, Betty Gambill, Patricia Padgett, Tammy Evanchik, Angie Welborn, Susan Kellner	June 19, 2020

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Accountability Review Findings**

Dates of Review: Jun 15, 2020 – June 19, 2020

Office Reviewed: Seattle District Office

Review Period: April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020

Standard:	Category 6: ECS Coding Element 1: Recommended Decision Coding Element 2: Accepted Medical Condition Coding Element 3: Causation Path Coding
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Number of cases reviewed	52
Rating for Element 1:	94%
Rating for Element 2:	98%
Rating for Element 3:	85%
Acceptable rating:	90%
Overall Category Rating:	92%

Summarize Category (or Element) Findings:

The results of this review revealed that the Seattle District Office is performing above the acceptable rating in this category, which judges the accuracy of Energy Compensation System (ECS) coding as it relates to Division of Energy Employee Occupational Illness Compensation (DEEOIC) District Office ECS actions.

With respect to recommended decision coding, the team found only one error, in a case in which a claims examiner coded the incorrect denial reason for the Part B condition.

The most notable trend identified with respect to element number two in this category – accepted medical condition coding, employment dates noted in the Recommended Decision did not match the employment dates entered into the employment pane for ECS. Periods of intermittent employment were noted in the decisions as one period rather than intermittent but entered as intermittent in ECS or noted as intermittent in the decision and entered as a whole period in ECS. Breaks in employment were not noted in the recommended decisions.

For causation path coding, the most notable trends were the use of incorrect eligibility dates for medical conditions. The causation paths in ECS were incomplete, especially the Evidence Source

Section of the Causation Development Component. The most frequent trend for the Causation Path was not checking the SEM search box or entering the SEM search date. Some other notable trends were the selection of Part B for a Part E causation or Part E for Part B causation -- or simply not coding a causation path at all for a specific condition. The team also noted that there was the selection of an incorrect path, such as a positive causation path for Part E instead of using E based on B as specified in the recommended decision.

Summarize Other Significant Findings:
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AR TEAM REVIEWER(s):	DATE:
Karoline Anders, Kristina Green, Carrie Turjan, Debra Howard, Valerie Whittaker, Daniel Divittorio, William Pridy, Bernadette DeHerrera, Betty Gambill, Patricia Padgett, Tammy Evanchik, Dante Silveri, Edith Adekoya, Towanda Tunsil, Susan Kellner, Angela Wellborn	June 19, 2020

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Accountability Review Findings

Dates of Review: June 15, 2020 - June 19, 2020

Office Reviewed: Seattle District Office

Review Period: April 1, 2019 — March 31, 2020

Standard:	Category 7: Consequential Illness Acceptances Element 1: Development Element 2: Consequential Illness Letter/RD – Outcome and Written Quality
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Number of cases reviewed	44
Rating for Element 1:	97%
Rating for Element 2:	96%
Acceptable rating:	90%
Overall Category Rating:	97%

Summarize Category (or Element) Findings:

This category reviews the development undertaken and the outcome and written quality of letter decisions issued with respect to medical conditions claimed to be as a result of a previously accepted condition. Overall, the Seattle District Office performed exceedingly well in this category with very few errors. The team reviewed two elements in this category.

In the element assessing development, there were no errors associated with obtaining the appropriate claim form. The team noted only two errors in the development of cases of consequential letter acceptances, and both of these errors occurred in the same case. The letter of acceptance in the case states that the district office received sufficient medical evidence, but the letter does not identify that evidence or explain it. The summary letter references medical documentation from November 2011, but the case only dates to 2019.

The team identified only five errors across three additional cases with respect to claim outcome and written quality of recommended decisions. One letter decision did not have a signature. One letter, which based consequential acceptances on a primary condition of asbestoses, later says “silicosis.” Another case included an incorrect ICD-10 code. Additionally, the case with the two errors in Element 1 also received two more errors in Element 2, because it incorrectly spelled the physician’s name, and switched between the use of “you” and “employee.”

Summarize Other Significant Findings:
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No other significant findings.

AR TEAM REVIEWER(s):	DATE:
Karoline Anders, Debra Howard, Carrie Turjan, Valerie Whittaker, Bernadette DeHerrera, Daniel Divittorio, William Pridy, Tammy Evanchik, Betty Gambill, Patricia Padgett, Kristina Green, Susan Kellner, Angie Wellborn	June 19, 2020