
1. DCMWC Manual System. This Introduction to the BLBA PM tells some of the basic things you need to know about the Procedure Manual of the Division of Coal Mine Workers' Compensation, i.e., its structure, composition, and relationship to other written instructions. The Introduction also contains a description of the organization and structure of the Division of Coal Mine Workers' Compensation (DCMWC), and the coverage of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (the Black Lung Benefits Act).

a. BLBA PM, 0-000 provides you with directions on how to use the Procedure Manual.

b. BLBA PM 0-001 and PM 0-002 describe the background and structure of the DCMWC, its organization, delegations of authority, and relationship to other offices of the Department of Labor. They also provide you with a general description of the benefits and services provided under the DCMWC. Detailed instructions on determining eligibility for benefits and for the evaluation/adjudication of compensation claims are contained in BLBA PM Part 2.

2. Other Volumes and References.

a. Selective Distribution. The PM has been structured and designed to avoid having all employees maintain the paper manual in its entirety at every work station. Because the PM is available in electronic format, however, it is easily accessible to all employees and contractors. For example, Part 1 -Mail and Records, contains operating instructions and exhibits that need be issued only to personnel involved in mail, file, and other front-end processing operations. Similarly, Part 5 - Finance, has been designed as a stand-alone set of instructions for the Branch of Program Finances. Part 2 - Claims, has been designed as a stand-alone guide to claims determination to permit publication and distribution of extra copies of Part 2 to individual claims examiners.

b. Overview Volume (BLBA OV). The Introduction to the BLBA PM has been designed to serve as a separate overview volume to be issued to all employees to provide them with a quick look at all operations and procedures.

3. Structure of the BLBA PM. The basic Procedure Manual (PM) is the principal element of the BLBA manual system. It consists of an Introduction and several major subdivisions or Parts. The Parts, in turn, are further divided into chapters which are identified by decimal identifiers, e.g., 2-200, 2-300, etc. Chapters are divided into paragraphs and other necessary subdivisions as illustrated below:

a. Subdivisions.

Part	0
Chapter: Arabic Number	-200
Subchapter: Arabic Number	-201
Paragraph: Arabic Number	5
Subparagraph: Lower Case Alpha	b
Second Subparagraph: Arabic Number	(3)
Third Subparagraph: Lower Case Alpha	(f)

b. References and Citations.

Volume	Part	Chapter
Overview (OV)	2	2-202
Procedure Manual (PM)	2	2-202

Citation to a Part of the BLBA PM: (Part 3)	BLBA PM 3
Citation to Chapter:	BLBA PM 3-205
Citation to Paragraph:	BLBA PM 3-205.3
Citation to Subparagraph:	BLBA PM 3-205.3b

c. The BLBA Procedure Manual has been available to DCMWC personnel electronically for a number of years. Because all future versions of the Manual and its component parts will be readily accessible and because of increased research capabilities on the DCMWC intranet and elsewhere, the checklist, glossary, and index from the original PM have been discontinued.

d. Detailed instruction for the preparation, review, clearance, publication and distribution of DCMWC directives are contained in the BLBA PM 0-003. (Also see OWCP PM 1-100.)

4. General Instructions for Use. Through selective distribution, the Parts of the PM needed for your guidance and instruction will always be located at your work station. Also, the entire PM is available on the DCMWC network in electronic format to all employees and appropriate contract staff. To locate material not covered in your Parts of the PM, consult the OV or the networked edition. It will provide you with a quick look at the overall compensation process and refer you to the chapter in which the subject is covered. Each Part of the PM has a Table of Contents immediately in front of its introductory chapter.

5. Maintenance and Revision.

a. New Issues. New and revised chapters and pages of all PM material are distributed by numbered PM Transmittals. The Transmittals contain an explanation of the material transmitted, provide filing instructions for the new material, and directions on the disposition of any superseded or obsolete material.

b. Filing Instructions. Detailed filing instructions are contained in BLBA PM 0-003. With routine changes or additions, observe the following procedure:

(1) File new material in accordance with the instructions contained in the PM Transmittals which transmit them.

(2) Remove and destroy any material identified as superseded or obsolete.

(3) File the Transmittal at the front of the PM.