



The following topics were discussed on the January 20, 2015 conference call with law firms representing VCF claimants.

- **Denials for lack of Information:** Starting in February, we will begin denying claims. This will include claims for which the VCF has requested information multiple times and the information necessary to complete our review has still not been received. The claims can be re-opened simply by amending the claim to provide the requested information. You can also amend the claim if the claimant's situation changes. The reason(s) for denial will be explained in the letter along with the options for re-opening the claim. If we identify one reason for denial, we do not continue to review the claim to determine whether the claimant meets other statutory requirements. We will also post information to our website explaining these denials and steps claimants can take to re-open the claim.
- **Process for filing an Amendment:** Before the functionality was in place to file an amendment online, we asked that you submit a letter to initiate an amendment for a claim. Now that amendments can be filed online, you must use that process and we can no longer accept a letter as a means of initiating an amendment. Using the online process is much more efficient as certain triggers and alerts are used in the system to allow for faster processing of the request. Please call our Helpline for support if you have problems filing your amendment online.
- **Missing Information/Loss Calculation Letters:** When the Special Master renders a decision on a compensation claim, we send a Loss Calculation letter with details of the loss amount and information on how to appeal the calculation. If a compensation decision is rendered on a claim and we are still missing documents that are needed in order to make payment, we send a "Missing Information/Loss Calculation" letter that provides the total loss calculation amount (without a breakdown of the components) and lists the documents we still need before the detailed Loss Calculation letter can be sent. If you get one of these Missing Information/Loss Calculation letters, we need the requested documents in order to finalize and pay the claim. The claim is not yet a candidate for an appeal. You can only appeal based on the Loss Calculation letter, which includes an appeal form. Please read these letters carefully and do not create an appeal form for any letter where one was not included in the letter.
- **Monthly meetings with Law Firms:** Pat Houser, our Director of Operations, continues to hold "office hours" in our NYC office 2 days each month. These are generally the second or third Tuesday and Wednesday of the month after the law firm spreadsheets have been posted to the Drop Point site. These meetings are the best way to get questions answered about individual claims. The meetings have proven to be very productive, particularly if you consolidate the list of claims and specific questions you want to discuss and provide it in advance of the meeting. The VCF sends an email each month to alert you to the scheduled meeting dates for the month along with information on how to schedule an appointment. Please call our Helpline if you are not receiving these emails and would like to be added to the list.
- **NYPD Claims:** The VCF gets data directly from NYPD and we sometimes need to clarify the information with NYPD. If you have a NYPD claimant and the claim is taking longer than anticipated, we are actively working it and communicating with NYPD about any missing or unclear information. If you have NYPD pension information for a claimant and you have not yet submitted it, please provide it to us and we will verify it with NYPD.

As you know, it can take NYPD a long time to finalize pensions. We are hopeful they will conclude the outstanding pension decisions quickly for the claims for which we are awaiting that information. As we get closer to the end of the VCF, if NYPD is not rendering their decisions as quickly as we need, we may make assumptions and estimates for these claims in order to finish them in a timely manner.

- **Placeholder Appeals:** We have a large number of appeal forms that appear to have been filed as placeholders while you and your clients evaluated the loss calculation. We ask that you either call our Helpline to schedule a hearing or notify us that you withdraw the request. This is important as it helps us estimate the number of upcoming hearings and plan for the resources needed to schedule and conduct them. Please review the claims for which you have filed an appeal and not yet schedule a hearing and let us know if any of the appeals can be "closed out" in our records. If a hearing has not been scheduled within 6 months of the appeal form being filed, we will view the appeal as waived.



- **Additional Settlement Payments:** The VCF has information on the amounts each individual received from the different lawsuit settlements. We know that some additional payments have been received by claimants after the information was provided to the VCF. If you are aware that one of your clients recently received a new settlement payment, you must notify us of the change.
- **Claims with Multiple Personal Representatives (“PRs”):** When multiple PRs have been appointed for a claim, all of the PRs must sign the various forms, attestations, certifications, and exhibits. We need to see that all PRs have agreed to submit the claim, and we need authorization from all of them in order to process the claim and request information from other entities.
- **Submission of intentionally Incomplete Claims:** Several firms have submitted claims that lack any supporting documents and have indicated they are filing the claims as placeholders until they can gather the documentation needed to support the claim. It is better if you wait to submit the claim and supporting documents all at the same time. If you submit the claim in parts, it requires the VCF to review the claim more than once. We can speed the processing of the claim if you wait and submit everything at the same time.
- **Update on NIOSH Disability Evaluation Program:** The pilot program has officially started with 7 claimants being treated at Mt. Sinai. Several of the claimants have made their appointments, and we expect an update in February from Mt. Sinai. We will then finalize the process and publish the guidelines.

Information in response to questions asked during the call:

- **Timing of Missing Information Requests for Private Physician claims.** We realize it takes time to request and collect the information needed for the Private Physician process. Our system is set up to send a reminder Missing Information request if no documents have been received and 30 days have passed since the first letter. If you receive a reminder letter and you know the process is underway, you can disregard the second request. For claims in the Private Physician process, the reminder is sent 60 days after the original request.