

## Pension and Fiduciary (P&F) Service



### FAST - Frequently Asked Questions

This document is to provide information on frequently asked questions regarding FAST.

| Question  | Answer   |
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| <b>What internet browser should I be using, or works best for the FAST application?</b>   | Google Chrome is recommended for the best experience.  |
| <b>What is the web address to log on to the Fiduciary Accountings Submission Tool (FAST)?</b>   | For Fiduciaries: <a href="https://www.my.va.gov/FAST">https://www.my.va.gov/FAST</a>   |
| <b>Will there be training resources for fiduciaries using FAST?</b>   | FAST training resources for fiduciaries will be available at the following website: <a href="https://www.benefits.va.gov/fiduciary/">https://www.benefits.va.gov/fiduciary/</a>  |
| <b>How should I log into the FAST application?</b>  | You will sign in using either your existing ID.me username and password or sign up for an account. Either way will begin your registration process to use FAST.  |
| <b>How do I self-register to utilize FAST?</b>  | <p>The self-registration process is the first step in accessing and navigating FAST. To Self-register please enter <a href="https://www.my.va.gov/FAST">https://www.my.va.gov/FAST</a></p> <p><b>*Please use the self-register job aid to assist you</b></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Self-Register for FAST Job Aid.pdf</p> </div>  |
| <b>What if I forgot my ID.me password?</b>  | You can use the "I Forgot My Password" link if you forget your password. You can also contact the AccessVA Helpdesk at 1-800-983-0937. Hours of operation: 7:00am to 7:00pm (Central) Monday to Friday.  |
| <b>I had to enter my personal info when I registered through ID.me. Can I update this contact information to my professional fiduciary or fiduciary organization information?</b> | Yes. You can update your contact information two ways. The first is through the FAST Registration Landing page, which you will see after you completed the ID.me registration process. You can also update your contact information during your accounting acknowledgement process. Your contact info can be updated whenever you submit a new accounting in FAST. Please note that your primary fiduciary information will still be maintained within our VA systems outside of FAST. |

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| <p><b>Who should I contact if I experience issues registering as a fiduciary?</b></p>  | <p><b>Fiduciaries – Need Help?</b><br/>                 If you are experiencing issues with AccessVA or ID.me Contact the AccessVA Helpdesk at 1-800-983-0937. Hours of operation: 7:00am to 7:00pm (Central) Monday to Friday.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAQ link for further information<br/> <a href="https://eauth.va.gov/accessva/about/contact">https://eauth.va.gov/accessva/about/contact</a></li> </ul> <p>If you are experiencing issues with accessing FAST, your registration, or need assistance with your accounting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call 1-888-407-0144. Hours of operation: 8:00am to 4:00pm (local time) Monday to Friday. Please note technical issues with your account access may take between 1-3 days on average to resolve.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>When I register as a professional fiduciary for my organization should I indicate I am a POC, or leave the "I am the POC for this entity" box unchecked?</b></p> | <p>Only check the "I am the POC for this entity" box during registration if you will be approving other users for FAST within your fiduciary firm (organization, company, agency, etc.).</p>  |
| <p><b>What should I indicate if the registration page lets me know I could not be automatically validated by the system as a fiduciary user?</b></p>                   | <p>Select the option to be manually approved by VA, and we will review your information to validate if you are an approved fiduciary, and grant you access. Please allow up to 1-2 business days.</p>   |
| <p><b>I was informed that I would receive an email once I completed my account registration. Who should I call if I don't see the email?</b></p>                       | <p>In many instances, the email from our Salesforce application is sent out, and may have been flagged as spam. Please check your spam or junk email for the registration verification email. In most instances, you can still access the FAST application without the email as long as you have been verified as a valid fiduciary. Please allow up to 1-2 business days.</p>  |
| <p><b>What if I have concerns over my name and address information being shared with a beneficiary?</b></p>  | <p>You can enter the name and address you wish to be displayed on the VA Form 21P4706b during the accounting submission process. This info will be shared with beneficiaries when you provide the form to your beneficiary following the approval of your accounting.</p>   |
| <p><b>What is the file size limit for uploading accounting documents in FAST?</b></p>  | <p>The maximum attachment file size for each attachment in Salesforce is 2GB. Please see the following website for more details:<br/> <a href="https://help.salesforce.com/articleView?id=collab_files_size_limits.htm&amp;type=5">https://help.salesforce.com/articleView?id=collab_files_size_limits.htm&amp;type=5</a></p>   |
| <p><b>Will there be any instructions on how to complete my accounting through the Fiduciary Accountings Submission Tool (FAST)?</b></p>                                | <p>The website will help guide you through the submission process, streamline data entry, and enter all applicable information for your accounting.</p>   |
| <p><b>Can I provide my accounting documents electronically through FAST?</b></p>   | <p>The system allows you to upload all applicable bank statements, receipts, and supporting documentation during the accounting submission process, as well as provides confirmation of document attachments so that accountings can be approved efficiently and reduce mistakes.</p>   |
| <p><b>How will the information and documents I upload be protected?</b></p>  | <p>The system encrypts the data entered and documents uploaded through FAST.</p>  |

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| <p><b>How do I contact VA if I have a question regarding my accounting?</b></p>                    | <p>Click on the “Contact Us” link found on the FAST homepage to find out the various ways you can get in contact with VA.</p>  |
| <p><b>Can I create a draft accounting if my accounting is not currently due?</b></p>               | <p>Yes. You can create a new draft accounting at any time. You will be informed of next steps once a draft accounting has been created, in order to avoid confusion in the accounting creation process.</p>  |
| <p><b>Can I provide my contact information and preferred method of contact through FAST?</b></p>   | <p>Yes. The FAST website allows you to provide your most up-to-date contact information whenever you submit your accounting.</p>   |
| <p><b>How will I know if my accounting is correct?</b></p>   | <p>FAST is designed to inform you when you attempt to submit incorrect or unbalanced information so that you can resolve any issues and decrease time for approval. The system also validates fiduciary fees when applicable, in order to address issues early on and avoid confusion of what is expected of you during the process.</p>   |
| <p><b>How does FAST help me during the accounting process?</b></p>                                 | <p>The FAST system allows you to review, enter, and edit line items so that you can quickly identify and make applicable accounting entries on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accounting start and end dates,</li> <li>• income received,</li> <li>• lump sum retroactive VA payments,</li> <li>• expenses paid, fiduciary fees, and</li> <li>• identification of assets belonging to the beneficiary.</li> </ul> <p>The ability to edit line items helps validate your accounting to prevent making common</p> |
| <p><b>How will I know if I collected excessive fiduciary fees?</b></p>                             | <p>As a fiduciary, you may be authorized a certain percentage from the beneficiary’s monthly VA benefits payments. Your original appointment letter will identify whether you may take a fee from VA benefits. FAST will notify you if you are required to reimburse the beneficiary if you unknowingly exceed any authorized fiduciary fee amount, so that you can address any issues that may prevent approval prior to submission.</p>  |
| <p><b>Do I have to submit anything through mail if I completed my accounting through FAST?</b></p> | <p>FAST automatically captures the date of your submission and signing, in order to reduce inaccuracies and prevent submission of information by mail. It allows you to certify and submit your accounting, so that you can review and confirm the completeness of the accounting prior to submission.</p>   |
| <p><b>How will I know the status of my accounting?</b></p>   | <p>The system will provide you with updates to the status of your accounting through e-mail, and guide you through the submission process, so that you can understand what is required of you and accurately submit your accounting.</p>   |

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| <p><b>Can I modify an accounting once it's been submitted?</b></p> | <p>Yes. Once you submit your accounting through FAST, it will undergo an audit by a VA fiduciary hub representative. You can continue to upload any supporting documents you may have forgotten, but you will not be able to make changes unless it's been returned to you for corrections or disapproved. FAST provides additional instructions on any required corrections needed in order to modify and resubmit your accounting. You will also receive an e-mail notification at each stage of the accounting review process.</p>   |
| <p><b>How will FAST display my accountings?</b></p>                | <p>The system allows for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organization into lists of your accountings,</li> <li>• categorization by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ beneficiary name,</li> <li>○ accounting dates, and</li> <li>○ status, and</li> </ul> </li> <li>• performance on pending accountings.</li> </ul> <p>It also provides an easy way to identify the status and accountings that require further action.</p>  |
| <p><b>Why is an accounting required?</b></p>                       | <p>Fiduciary's are required to account if any of the situations listed below exist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount of VA funds under management for the beneficiary exceeds \$10,000</li> <li>• you are collecting a VA-authorized fee for fiduciary services from the beneficiary's monthly benefits</li> <li>• the beneficiary is in receipt of VA benefits at a rate equal to or exceeding the 100 percent disability rating</li> <li>• you are, or were appointed as a temporary fiduciary,</li> <li>• the beneficiary dies without a valid will and without heirs, or</li> <li>• fiduciary hub management determines an accounting is necessary.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>What is my accounting period start and end dates?</b></p>    | <p>If this is your first accounting, the accounting start date is the date VA appointed you as fiduciary and ends one year from that date. Your appointment date will be listed on the Fiduciary Appointment Letter you receive upon confirmation of your selection by VA. If you've previously submitted an accounting to VA, and received approval, you will receive instructions on the next start and end dates within the Accounting Approval Letter. Generally, accountings will be requested annually thereafter. You will receive a letter from the VA with specific instructions prior to your accounting being due.</p>   |
| <p><b>How long do I have to submit my accounting?</b></p>          | <p>You must submit your accounting within 30 calendar days of the accounting period end date, as noted in the VA <i>Accounting Due Letter</i> sent to you. Failure to submit the requested accounting will result in the fiduciary hub:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• beginning to take actions to determine if a misuse investigation is required,</li> <li>• ensuring you are held responsible for the misuse of funds,</li> </ul>   |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establishing a debt for any funds VA finds you misused,</li> <li>• performing other administrative measures, to include criminal investigation and referral to the Office of Inspector General,</li> <li>• removing you as a VA-appointed fiduciary for all beneficiaries you serve, and</li> <li>• suspending the beneficiary's benefits to prevent misuse of funds.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>What documents do I need to submit for an accounting if I use the FAST website?</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial statements covering all accounts for the entire accounting period. Financial statement(s) must include detailed account transactions for each complete month of the accounting period.</li> <li>• If the accounting period ends during the middle of a bank statement, be sure to include that bank statement in which the period ends, even if it is longer than the accounting period. VA can adjust the accounting period to match the bank statements, as long as the period is not longer than annual.</li> <li>• Include copies of cancelled checks, copies of receipts or invoices for large purchases that do not occur on a regular basis, check ledger or spreadsheet, or written explanation of purchases.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>What type of financial documents are accepted through FAST?</b></p>  | <p>Financial institution statements that are originals, photocopied, computer-generated or online bank statements. Computer generated financial statements (transaction summaries) must include the institution's internet address.</p>   |
| <p><b>I received an Accounting Approval Letter from VA but did not receive instructions on how to obtain a surety bond. Do I need to adjust the surety bond?</b></p> | <p>You will receive notice from the VA if you are legally required to obtain a corporate surety bond or make changes to a surety bond currently in place. If you did not receive notice, then the amount of the surety bond does not require a change. Please renew the surety bond for the current amount.</p>   |
| <p><b>Should I keep track of my expenses?</b></p>  | <p>Yes. VA recommends that you retain receipts for large purchases and invoices for services such as auto repairs, home renovations and repairs, etc. It is also recommended that you keep a digital or paper copy of billing statements.</p>   |
| <p><b>How do I set up a properly titled VA fiduciary account?</b></p>  | <p>Take a copy of your VA Form 21P-4703, <i>Fiduciary Agreement</i>, to a federally-insured financial institution of your choice. Federally-insured financial institutions include those insured under:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), and</li> <li>• National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund (NCUA)</li> </ul> <p>You are required to establish a properly titled account with the beneficiary's and fiduciary's names and note the existence of the fiduciary relationship, for example (Beneficiary's Name), by (Fiduciary's Name, Federal Fiduciary).</p>  |

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| <p><b>Is FDIC or NCUA protection on the VA fiduciary account required?</b></p>   | <p>Yes. Your fiduciary account must be established in a financial institution insured under FDIC or NCUA. Funds may not exceed FDIC or NCUA limits of \$250,000.00 per depositor or per bank. Fiduciary's should invest funds to a different financial institution, as needed, to ensure they are protected.</p>   |
| <p><b>Do I need to establish a separate account for each type of income the beneficiary receives?</b></p>  | <p>No. A financial account containing multiple sources of funds (e.g., VA and SSA) belonging to the same beneficiary is acceptable. Please note: Fiduciaries are required to provide an accounting of all income, expenses, and assets regardless of the income source for funds not being managed by the beneficiary.</p>   |
| <p><b>Can I put my personal funds in the fiduciary account?</b></p>  | <p>No. The fiduciary account should only contain funds belonging to the beneficiary they are appointed to serve. The fiduciary must not commingle a beneficiary's funds with anyone else's.</p>  |
| <p><b>Can I use the beneficiary's funds for my personal use?</b></p>   | <p>No. The fiduciary account should never be used for the personal benefit of the fiduciary. The fiduciary must not pay expenses or distribute funds for a purpose other than the care or services for the beneficiary and his or her dependents. Fiduciaries are not authorized to pay towards expenses on improvements to any structure or other property not owned by the beneficiary, loan funds to themselves or others, or take fees when not authorized by VA or a court of jurisdiction.</p> |
| <p><b>Can I withdrawal cash from the fiduciary account?</b></p>  | <p>No. The fiduciary should not withdrawal cash from the beneficiary's account by counter check or ATM withdrawal.</p>   |
| <p><b>How can I to give the beneficiary their personal spending if I am not allowed to withdraw cash?</b></p>  | <p>The fiduciary should evaluate the special circumstances of the beneficiary and use the most appropriate method to provide them their personal spending. Options may include writing a check to the beneficiary, direct transfer to their personal account, pre-paid debit cards, gift cards, deposits into their resident trust account (nursing/care homes), or wire transfers.</p>  |
| <p><b>Do I need to receive authorization prior to paying expenses that belong to the beneficiary or his or her dependents? Am I only permitted to pay expenses listed on the VA Budget Letter?</b></p> | <p>No. Verify the bill is a valid and just debt. As fiduciary you may address any expenses that meet the needs of the beneficiary and his or her dependents without prior approval from the fiduciary hub. You should use VA benefits generously for the current needs and comforts of the beneficiary, to the extent that the funds can be used.</p>  |