

Transmittal Sheet

Changes Included in This Revision The table below describes the changes included in this revision of Benefits Assistance Service Procedures (BAS) M27-1, Part I, Chapter 5 “Correspondence.”

Notes:

- The term regional office (RO) also includes pension management center, where appropriate.
- Minor editorial changes have also been made to
 - update incorrect or obsolete hyperlink references
 - update obsolete terminology, where appropriate
 - reassign alphabetical designations to individual blocks and repaginate, where necessary, to account for new and/or deleted blocks within a topic
 - correct grammatical and spelling errors
 - reorganize content within sections for better readability
 - clarify block labels and/or block text, and
 - bring the document into conformance with M27-1 standards.

Reason(s) for the Change	Citation	Page(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated name for Special Mail to Special Controlled Correspondence throughout chapter 	I.5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated name for Routine Mail to Routine Non-Controlled Correspondence throughout chapter 	I.5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated VA Form number from VA Form 21-0820 (series) to VA Form 27-0820 (series) throughout chapter and table of content 	I.5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed information related to letter types pattern letters, form letters, Benefits Delivery Network (BDN) letters, Veterans Service Network (VETSNET) letters, Personal Computer Generated (PCGL) Letters, Broome Closet (BC) letters, and locally prepared letters that was either out-of-date, addressed in another manual reference, or system user guide. 	I.5.1	I-5-3 to I-5-5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated to include examples of written communication types for clarity. 	I.5.1.a	I-5-3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated General Rules for Effective Correspondence to include requirement that prepared correspondence must have the proper grammar, tone, and sentence structure. 	I.5.1.b	I-5-3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Block title changed from “Types of Letters Used by VBA” to “Systems Used to Create Correspondence.” 	I.5.1.c	I-5-4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Block updated with the following changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Removed information on pattern letters, VA form letters, BDN letters, PCGL, BC letters, VETSNET 	I.5.1.c	I-5-4

<p>letters, and locally prepared letters as information is out of date and no longer applicable or is covered in other manuals or user guides. Specific information on each section is provided below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Added content to identify the systems utilized to create correspondence. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removed block on Pattern Letters 	I.5.1.d	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removed block on VA Form Letters 	I.5.1.e	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removed block on BDN Letters 	I.5.1.f	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removed block on Letters Generated via PCGL 	I.5.1.g	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removed block on Letters Generated via BC. 	I.5.1.h	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removed block on VETSNET Letters 	I.5.1.i	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removed block on Locally Prepared Letters 	I.5.1.j	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Block on Amount Letters to Estranged Spouses (for Social Security Purposes) reorganized to I.5.1.d 	I.5.1.k	I-5-4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Block on Disability Percent Letters or Civil Service Preference Letters Requested by Veterans Returned to Active Duty reorganized to I.5.1.e 	I.5.1.l	I-5-5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Added correspondence signature authority information for the RO Public Contact Teams (PCT) 	I.5.2	I-5-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updated name from Inquiry Routing and Information System (IRIS) Response Center (IRC) to National IRIS Response Center (NIRC) 	I.5.2	I-5-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Block updated to change signature requirements from the signature of the National Call Center Manager (NCCM) to the standard RO header and signature block. 	I.5.2.a	I-5-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Block outlining the requirements for signing documents created by the National Call Centers (NCC), the National IRIS Response Center (NIRC), and the National Pension Call Center (NPCC) removed as NCC, NIRC, and NPCC is now required to use the standard RO header and signature block. 	I.5.2.b	I-5-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Block updated to clarify when the standard RO header and signature block can be replaced with the signature of the NCCM or the NIRC Manager (NIRCM). Updates to section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identified examples of when the alternate signature block may be needed. ○ Removed information on threats to management team. ○ Clarified the NCCM and NIRCM can receive authorization from the Director to include an alternate signature block. 	I.5.2.b	I-5-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Added block to define Non-Controlled Correspondence 	I.5.3.c	I-5-8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updated End Product (EP) reference from M21-4, Appendix C to M21-4, Appendix B 	I.5.3.e	I-5-8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Changed block title from “Reader-Focused Writing (RFW)” to “Providing Quality Correspondence” as RFW training is no longer available or supported. RFW information has been removed from entire chapter. 	I.5.4	I-5-9

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated introduction block to remove RFW reference and include information on what is available in the section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General information on providing quality correspondence ○ Formatting of correspondence ○ Context of correspondence ○ Grammar and tone of correspondence 	I.5.4.Introduction	I-5-9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated title from “Description of RFW” to “General Information on Providing Quality Correspondence” • Removed RFW information • Added content on the general requirements for quality correspondence 	I.5.4.a	I-5-9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added new block, “Formatting of Written Correspondence,” which outlines the basic requirements for components of written correspondence. 	I.5.4.b	I-5-9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added new block, “Formatting of Electronic Correspondence,” which outlines the basic requirements for components of electronic correspondence. 	I.5.4.c	I-5-10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added topic item, “Taking Credit for Correspondence Not Related to a Claim Number or for General Information.” 	I.5.5.Introduction	I-5-11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added that mail may be received by the Intake Processing Center. 	I.5.5.a	I-5-11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added table with specific processing instructions for processing special controlled correspondence. 	I.5.5.b	I-5-12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed block I.5.5.c, “Following Up on Correspondence,” and incorporated the information into the processing instructions table in I.5.5.b 	I.5.5.b	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added block to provide instructions for identifying special controlled correspondence in the eFolder 	I.5.5.c	I-5-13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added block to provide instructions for processing Non-Controlled Correspondence 	I.5.5.e	I-5-15 to I-5-16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added uploading a copy of redundant correspondence into eFolder, if available, as requirement. 	I.5.5.f	I-5-17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated block to require documentation of contact in the system of records and removed specific reference to documentation requirements in MAPD PCT notes. • Incorporated information from block I.5.6.h • Acceptable font type changed from Arial or Verdana to Times New Roman or Arial • Removed hyperlink to <i>Large Print: Guidelines for Optimal Readability</i> published by the American Printing House for the Blind that is no longer available • Added hyperlink to <i>Tips for Making Print More Readable</i>, published by the American Foundation for the Blind 	I.5.5.h	I-5-18
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added block, “Taking Credit for Correspondence Not Related to a Claim Number or for General Information,” to 	I.5.5.j	I-5-19

identify DOOR WIDS that should be used to document work credit for these correspondence types.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed “general guidelines” from section and incorporated information in I.5.1.b 	I.5.6	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added note that verification of Veteran’s service through the system of records is required prior to issuing the service verification letters 	I.5.6.b	I-5-20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed block on “Types of Letters” pertaining to Quality Client Services as this information is no longer applicable 	I.5.6.e	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed content from block I.5.6.h and incorporated into I.5.5.g 	I.5.6.h	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed block on FOIA/PA processing as information only referred user to Part I, Chapter 7. All FOIA/PA processing information is contained within Part I, Chapter 7. 	I.5.7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated block to include requirement to add information received from the claimant or beneficiary to the electronic folder, if available. 	I.5.8.b	I-5-24
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated block to include requirement to add information received from the claimant or beneficiary to the electronic folder, if available. 	I.5.8.d	I-5-25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated block to clarify the purpose of VA Form 27-0820 (series). Updates include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of identification of recorded information as this is duplicative of the information outlining each version of the VA Form 27-0820 (series) outlined in I.5.9.e 	I.5.9.a	I-5-26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated block to include additional information required for each VA Form 27-0820. Updates include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include a complete and accurate reflection of the information brought out during the contact Reflect that the notification of action statement was read to the caller Reflect that the proper Identification Protocol requirements were met (if applicable) Include the designated representative information (if applicable) Include the appropriate employee identification and signature 	I.5.9.b	I-5-26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed block on Determining Work Credit for Special Controlled/Non-Controlled Correspondence as requirements are included in I.5.5.b, I.5.5.e, and I.5.5.j 	I.5.11	

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