



PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

**UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE**  
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

July 30, 2018  
Incorporating Change 3, April 19, 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
DEFENSE

SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS  
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE  
CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU  
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
DIRECTOR, COST ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM  
EVALUATION  
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
DIRECTOR, OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION  
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
DEFENSE  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR LEGISLATIVE  
AFFAIRS  
ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PUBLIC  
AFFAIRS  
DIRECTOR, NET ASSESSMENT  
DIRECTORS OF DEFENSE AGENCIES  
DIRECTORS OF DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Directive-Type Memorandum (DTM)-18-004 – “Revised Timeliness Goals for the  
Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES)”

References: See Attachment 1.

Purpose. This DTM:

- In accordance with the authority in DoD Directive 5124.02, establishes new timeliness goals for each phase and stage of the IDES process to increase total force deployability and lethality by expediting the processing of referred Service members through the IDES.
- Is effective July 30, 2018. It will be incorporated into DoD Instruction 1332.18 and Volumes 1 and 2 of DoD Manual 1332.18. This DTM will expire effective July 30, 2022.

Applicability. This DTM applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the Department of Defense.

Definitions. See Glossary.

Policy. It is DoD policy that:

- The goal is for the DoD and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to complete 80 percent of all active duty (AD) and non-active duty (NAD) Service member cases in no more than 180 days starting from the date of referral to the IDES and ending on the date of return to duty, retirement, or separation. The calculation of processing time excludes any amount of administrative absences or accrued leave the Service member is authorized to take during transition, or any amount of time in a deferment status. Attachment 2 of this issuance contains additional guidance on IDES timeliness goals. This processing time goal is effective the date of this DTM and will be fully achieved by October 1, 2019.
- This DTM does not affect the process for non-duty related determinations as described in DoD Instruction 1332.18.

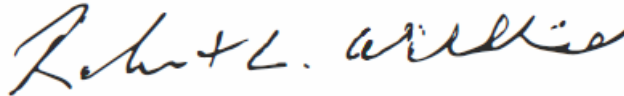
#### Responsibilities

- Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs. Under the authority, direction, and control of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs:
  - Oversees the implementation of the policies and procedures for the IDES, in accordance with DoD Instruction 1332.18; Volumes 1 and 2 of DoD Manual 1332.18; Title 10, United States Code; and this DTM.
  - In accordance with DoD Directive 5136.01, oversees the Director, Defense Health Agency, in the execution of programmatic and operational responsibilities and reporting of the Disability Evaluation System (DES), to include implementing the revised timeliness goals presented in this DTM.
  - Through the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Services Policy and Oversight and the Secretaries of the Military Departments, oversees and assesses the policy performance of the DES.
- Secretaries of the Military Departments. The Secretaries of the Military Departments:

- Establish for their respective Departments, policies, procedures, and manning requirements to ensure that the appropriate manpower positions and corresponding personnel are trained to execute and achieve the requirements of this DTM.
- Establish procedures to provide, with consent of the Service member, notification of the hospitalization of a Service member under their respective jurisdictions evacuated from a theater of combat and admitted to any military treatment facility to the senators representing the State, and the member, delegate, or resident commissioner of the House of Representatives representing the district, that includes the Service member's home of record or a different location as provided by the Service member.

Summary of Change 3. This change extends the expiration date for the DTM to July 30, 2022 and corrects the citation of VA Form 21-0819 and minor grammatical errors.

Releasability. **Cleared for public release.** This DTM is available on the Directives Division Website at <https://www.esd.whs.mil/DD/>.



Robert L. Wilkie

Attachments:  
As stated

ATTACHMENT 1

REFERENCES

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Memorandum, "Implementation of an Integrated Disability Evaluation System Case Deferment Capability," October 23, 2014  
Code of Federal Regulations, Title 38, Part 3  
Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Disability Evaluation Processing to Enhance Readiness and Lethality," December 13, 2018  
DoD Directive 5124.02, "Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R))," June 23, 2008  
DoD Directive 5136.01, "Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs (ASD(HA))," September 30, 2013, as amended  
DoD Instruction 1332.18, "Disability Evaluation System (DES)," August 5, 2014, as amended  
DoD Manual 1332.18, Volume 1, "Disability Evaluation System (DES) Manual: General Information and Legacy Disability Evaluation System (LDES) Time Standards," August 5, 2014  
DoD Manual 1332.18, Volume 2, "Disability Evaluation System (DES) Manual: Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES)," August 5, 2014  
United States Code, Title 10

ATTACHMENT 2

IDES TIMELINESS GOALS

1. GENERAL. Unless otherwise noted, all actions that specify timeliness requirements are measured in calendar days. Case processing timeliness goals for major portions of the IDES are described in this attachment. The goals are stated as numeric averages.

2. OVERALL IDES PROCESS GOAL. The goal is for the DoD and the VA to complete 80 percent of all Service member cases in no more than 180 days starting from the date of referral to the IDES and ending on the date of return to duty retirement, or separation. The calculation of processing time excludes any amount of administrative absences or accrued leave the Service member is authorized to take during transition, or any amount of time in a deferment status.

3. IDES PHASE AND STAGE GOALS.

a. Medical Evaluation Board (MEB) Phase. Complete the MEB phase of the IDES in no more than 72 days. The MEB phase starts on the date of referral to an MEB by a DoD medical care provider and ends on the date the MEB returns the Service member to duty without referring them to an informal physical evaluation board (IPEB), or forwards the DES case file to the physical evaluation board (PEB). The IDES stages within the MEB phase are:

(1) Referral Stage. Complete the referral stage in no more than 7 days. The referral stage starts on the date of referral to the IDES by a DoD medical care provider and ends on the date the physical evaluation board liaison officer (PEBLO) provides the Service member's complete service treatment record, including the Service member's entrance physical and VA Form 21-0819, "DoD Referral to Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES)" to the VA Military Service Coordinator (MSC). VA Form 21-0819 is available at <https://www.va.gov/vaforms/>.

(2) Claim Development Stage. Complete the claim development stage in no more than 7 days. The claim development stage starts on the date the PEBLO provides the Service member's complete service treatment record and VA Form 21-0819 to the VA MSC and ends on the date the VA MSC requests the Service member's medical examination(s).

(3) VA Disability Examination Stage. Complete the disability examination stage in no more than 31 days starting on the date the VA MSC requests the Service member's disability examination appointment(s) and ending on the date the VA MSC provides the completed disability examination results to the PEBLO.

(4) MEB Stage. Complete the MEB stage in no more than 20 days starting on the date the VA MSC provides the completed disability examination results and ending on the date

the Military Department's MEB returns the Service member to duty without referring them to an IPEB, or forwards the DES case file to PEB administration to begin processing for an IPEB.

(5) MEB rebuttal and/or impartial medical review. Complete these Service member initiated actions in no more than 7 days from the date the PEBLO receives the Service member's request.

b. PEB Phase. Complete the PEB phase in no more than 82 days starting on the date the MEB forwards the complete MEB case file and ending on the date the Military Department approves the final results of the disposition decision. The IDES stages within the PEB phase are:

(1) IPEB Stage. Complete the IPEB stage in no more than 11 days starting on the date the PEB receives the complete MEB case file and ending on the date the PEB forwards the initial fitness decision to either the PEBLO, if found fit, or to the VA Disability Rating Activity Site (D-RAS), for a proposed rating, if found unfit.

(2) Proposed Ratings Stage. Complete the proposed disability ratings in no more than 19 days starting on the date the PEB forwards the service treatment record and the request for rating to the D-RAS and ending on the date the D-RAS sends the proposed rating to PEB administration.

(3) Proposed Disposition. Complete the proposed disposition stage in no more than 5 days starting on the date the D-RAS sends proposed ratings to the PEB and ending on the date the PEB sends the assembled case file to the PEBLO for counseling the Service member.

(4) Elections. Complete the elections stage in no more than 6 days starting on the date the PEB sends the case file to the PEBLO for counseling the Service member and ending on the date the PEBLO returns the case file to the PEB with the Service member's election to accept the IPEB findings or to request a formal PEB.

(5) Formal PEB (FPEB) Stage. Complete the Service member initiated FPEB stage in no more than 24 days starting on the date the Service member's case file is sent to the PEB with the Service member's request for an FPEB and ending on the date of the Service member's decision to accept or appeal the FPEB findings.

(6) FPEB Appeal Stage. Complete the Service member initiated appeal of FPEB findings in no more than 10 days starting on the date the Service member's decision to appeal the FPEB findings is sent to the Secretary of the Military Department concerned, and ending on the date the Service member's decision to accept the FPEB appeal findings or request a VA rating reconsideration, is sent to the military treatment facility or the VA.

(7) Rating Reconsideration Stage. Complete the Service member initiated VA rating reconsideration stage in no more than 2 days starting on the date the PEB forwards the rating reconsideration request to the D-RAS and ending on the date the D-RAS sends the rating reconsideration result to the PEB.

(8) Final Disposition. Complete the final disposition stage in no more than 5 days starting on the date the Service member accepts their disposition decision and ending on the date the Secretary of the Military Department concerned approves the Service member's final disposition.

c. Service Member Transition Phase. The Service member transition phase of the IDES includes processing the Service member for separation or retirement. The IDES goal is to complete the Service member transition phase of the IDES process for Service members in 26 days excluding any amount of administrative absences or accrued leave the Service member is authorized to take, starting from the date the Secretary of the Military Department concerned approves the final disposition and ending on the date of the Service member's separation or retirement from military service.

d. VA Disability Compensation Delivery Phase.

(1) The IDES goal is to complete the VA disability compensation delivery phase of the IDES process of former AD Service members in no more than 30 days starting on the date of the Service member's separation or retirement from military service and ending on the date VA issues the disability benefits decision letter.

(2) This VA phase of the IDES process does not apply to NAD Service members who are not receiving AD pay if the ratings provided during the proposed rating stage were complete and final. However, eligibility for disability compensation begins immediately upon separation for NAD Service members.

(3) For NAD Service members who meet the definition of a veteran in accordance with Part 3 of Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, the proposed rating provided to DoD for the unfitting condition(s) will also serve as the actual rating, and VA will notify the veteran of the VA decision at that time.

GLOSSARY

PART I. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AD	active duty
DES	Disability Evaluation System
D-RAS	Disability Evaluation System Rating Activity Site
DTM	directive-type memorandum
FPEB	formal physical evaluation board
IDES	Integrated Disability Evaluation System
IPEB	informal physical evaluation board
MEB	medical evaluation board
MSC	Military Service Coordinator
NAD	non-active duty
PEB	physical evaluation board
PEBLO	physical evaluation board liaison officer
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs

PART II. DEFINITIONS

Unless otherwise noted, these terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this issuance.

DES. The DoD mechanism for determining fitness for duty, separation, or retirement of Service members because of disability in accordance with Chapter 61 of Title 10, United States Code.

disability. Any condition due to disease or injury, regardless of degree, that reduces or prevents an individual's actual or presumed ability to engage in gainful employment or normal activity.

The term "disability" or "physical disability" includes mental disease, but not such inherent defects as developmental or behavioral disorders. A medical condition, mental disease, or physical defect standing alone does not constitute a disability. To constitute a disability, the medical condition, mental disease, or physical defect must be severe enough to interfere with the Service member's ability to adequately perform his or her duties.

election. The Service member's decision to accept or appeal the MEB or PEB findings.

IDES. The joint DoD/VA process by which the DoD determines whether wounded, ill, or injured Service members are fit for continued military service and the DoD and VA determine



appropriate benefits for Service members who are separated or retired for disability.

MEB process. For Service members entering the DES, the MEB conducts the medical evaluation on conditions that potentially affect the Service member's fitness for duty. The MEB documents the Service member's medical condition(s) and history with an MEB narrative summary as part of an MEB packet.

NAD. Service members not on AD orders, to include Service members on AD for 30 days or less or on inactive-duty training.

PEB findings. The PEB's fitness decision; if the Service member is found unfit, includes VA proposed ratings for unfitting condition(s).

PEBLO. The non-medical case manager who provides information, assistance, and case status updates to the affected Service member throughout the DES process.