August and September Veteran Directed Care Office Hour Sessions Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The August and September Veteran Directed Care (VDC) Office Hour Sessions were facilitated by the Administration for Community Living (ACL) and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) with support from the Lewin Group to respond to questions from VDC providers. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions through the Zoom chat feature. **Table 1** provides a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) that were unanswered during the question-and-answer portions of the sessions. For answered questions, please refer to the Office Hour recordings posted on the ACL No Wrong Door (NWD) website.

Table 1. August and September VDC Office Hour FAQs

Questions	Responses
Does VDC program funding count as income for the Veteran?	No, VDC funding does not count as income for the Veteran.
Is there a specific place on the Veteran's monthly spending plan report to include the full assessment fee?	The VDC spending plan template can be modified to include a row for the assessment fee under "Estimated One-Time and Monthly Expenses."
Is there a formal training on the VDC Budget Calculator for VDC Providers? Where can we access this training?	No, however, the first tab includes detailed instructions on how to use the VDC Budget Calculator.
In regard to Standard Episode Of Care (SEOC) start date and SEOC end date, which is on the Budget Calculator, would this date change for any reason? For example, does SEOC start date change when provider does the initial assessment?	The SEOC start and end dates are determined by the VA VDC Coordinator when they send the Veteran authorization.
Is the Fiscal Management Service (FMS) supposed to know benefits (sick time, health benefits) for the state they are contracting with?	Yes. If you are working with an FMS that does not, or an FMS that otherwise presents concerns, please contact us at veterandirected@acl.hhs.gov. We can provide you with additional details about the typical responsibilities of an FMS agency.
Should we be updating all the spending plans with the new admin rates and billing the new admin rates for all new and existing Veterans as of 10/1/24? Or are we updating the admin rates at the reauthorization?	Admin rates should be updated at reauthorization as opposed to on 10/1, as should rates for assessments and monthly budgets.
Should goods like walk-in showers be implemented into the spending plan because they are accruing money for 3 or 4 months?	Since the 365-day global budget includes the total funds available to the Veteran for VDC services during the authorization period, it eliminates the need to account for "planned savings." Veteran spending in a month may exceed the average monthly case-mix rate reported in the spending plan if all spending is documented in the approved spending plan and does not exceed the Veteran's total 365-day global case mix budget authorization.

Questions	Responses
Are we looking to spend all of the Veteran's monthly budget in developing the spending plan (i.e., $2000 / $1000 spent)?	The VDC spending plan is a key part of arranging VDC services based upon the needs and preferences of the Veteran, and it is developed using a person-centered approach. The spending plan includes information on the workers hired by the Veteran, as well as other goods and services the Veteran plans to purchase to meet their needs. It also delineates the amount the Veteran is estimated to spend in each month and one-time and ongoing purchases of goods and services. The VDC provider compares this amount against the Veteran's total 365-day global budget authorization that is available to the Veteran for the authorization period to ensure Veterans do not exceed their budget authorization.
Regarding background checks, what does a risk mitigation process look like?	The VDC provider specifies the requirements and procedure for conducting background checks with Veterans' workers in accordance with state policies, including the process for developing a risk mitigation strategy to address any findings from the background check that are of concern but not an automatic disqualifying event. However, an example risk management plan can be found on the ACL Technical Assistance Community Website Forms Library. In addition to this document, the Forms Library contains an array of example forms for VDC providers, including an emergency backup plan and a direct care worker agreement, among others.
Is there a way to get the EFTs for when Change Healthcare was down? We cannot track the payments made from January through April.	For questions regarding Change Healthcare, please contact the Change Healthcare Customer Service line at 866-371-9066.
Where can we locate the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 VDC Budget Calculator?	The FY2025 VDC Budget Calculator was distributed over email to the VDC Email Distribution list. Given current delays with updating the ACL NWD website, please email veterandirected@acl.hhs.gov if you did not receive it. Please also fill out the following form if you or a colleague needs to be added to the email list: VDC Email Distribution List Form.