



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Regional Office
1240 East Ninth Street
Cleveland OH 44199

June 6, 2001

In Reply Refer To: 325/262

Information Letter 26-01-12

TO: All Ohio VA Fee Appraisers

SUBJ: E-Mail Transmission of Appraisal Reports (Appraisal E-Commerce)

1. **PURPOSE:** VA continues to make progress in the re-design of our Construction and Valuation (C&V) function. The next major step in this regard is the implementation of Appraisal E-Commerce, or the transmission of appraisal reports by e-mail. Many appraisers are already e-mailing their appraisal reports to VA, finding it saves them time and postage, and provides them with a simple record of delivery. Therefore,

Effective August 1, 2001, VA is requiring that all VA Fee Appraisers submit appraisal reports to VA by e-mail, and also to those lenders that agree to accept appraisals via e-mail.

2. **DOCUMENT FORMAT AND TRANSMISSION FORMAT:** The appraisal package must be in a Portable Document Format (PDF) and attached to your e-mail message. Only send one appraisal report per e-mail message. When appraisers address their e-mail messages, they **MUST** put the VA case number in the SUBJECT block as XX-XX-6-0123456, not 0123456. If possible, please name or rename the PDF file with the VA case number XX-XX-6-0123456.pdf, not 0123456.pdf

3. **REQUIRED TEST DOCUMENT:** Please send a complete **test** appraisal report PDF file to 325c&vtest@vba.va.gov (not an active VA file unless sent through regular channels as well). Upon approval of the test file we will advise you that you may start sending active VA appraisal report PDF files to our office and to the participating Lender Appraisal Processing Program (LAPP) lenders. We will provide you with the e-mail address at VA to send reports for Existing, Proposed and Liquidation appraisals, and copies of LAPP appraisals, upon approval.

4. **REQUEST FOR DETERMINATION OF REASONABLE VALUE:** When an appraisal package is transmitted by e-mail, submission of a copy of the Request for Determination of Reasonable Value (VA Form 26-1805) with the appraisal report is no longer required. Appraisers may still provide the VA Form 26-1805 by including it as a part of the PDF file by scanning the document into each VA appraisal file. Even though routine submission of this document is no longer required when submitting an e-mailed appraisal report, appraisers should be sure the VA Form 26-1805 is available for submission to VA upon request.

5. **FILE SIZE**: Limiting file size is important when monitoring storage of files on our system, and it should be an important item to consider for your system storage also. As a rule of thumb, an existing .PDF appraisal file should not exceed 2000 KB and a proposed .PDF appraisal file should not exceed 3000KB. The following information is to assist you in reducing your file size:

a. Camera Settings

- 1) If your camera has good, **better**, best options for picture quality and **standard**, fine options for resolution, settings need to be **better** and **standard**.
- 2) If your camera has other options for quality and resolution, select the medium or low setting.
- 3) Contact the hardware vendor for any assistance.

b. Scanner Settings

- 1) Be sure that the scanner you own or purchase has the capability of 100DPI. This is necessary to ensure your file size remains within specified limits
- 2) Most scanners default to Color Photo as the type of scan. This is not a viable choice for our purposes. Therefore, a different setting will need to be selected. Typically, black and white is the best setting.
- 3) Turn off any automatic features of the scanner.
- 4) Contact the hardware vendor for assistance in selecting appropriate settings and changing default settings to reflect the settings best for you.
- 5) Most scanned items are acceptable at 100 DPI, maps are the main exception. In order to ensure that maps are of an acceptable quality, the resolution may need to be higher than 100 DPI. This will depend largely on the quality of the original map used in the scan.

6. **MANDATORY IMPLEMENTATION**: After August 1, 2001, all Ohio VA Fee Appraisers will be required to electronically transmit all of their appraisals to VA and to E-Commerce participating lenders. **Exception**: Those Fee Appraisers who do a yearly average of fewer than 12 appraisals for VA will not be required to (but are encouraged to) use e-mail to transmit their appraisal reports. Appraisers who are granted this exception will use an overnight service provider to deliver their appraisal reports to VA or to the E-Commerce Participating LAPP lender.

7. **CONSTRUCTION EXHIBITS**: If reduced size plans and specs are available, only the following proposed construction required exhibits will be electronically transmitted with the Fee Appraiser's appraisal package:

Description of Materials (VA Form 26-1852)

Plot Plan

Foundation Plan

Floor Plan

Exterior Elevations

Typical Wall Section

If reduced size plans and specs are not available, appraisers are to still transmit the appraisal report to VA electronically, then forward the plans and specs to VA as an exhibit by mail.

8. **TRANSMITTAL TO LAPP LENDERS**: Participation by LAPP lenders is **optional**. Lenders may download a free copy of the "Acrobat Reader" from the Adobe web-site (www.adobe.com) to view and print the EDI appraisal package. If a lender wants a Fee Appraiser to electronically transmit an appraisal package to their office, the lender must indicate their e-mail address under their mailing address on the Request for Determination of Reasonable Value (VA Form 26-1805, Block 5). This will be the authorization for the Fee Appraiser to electronically transmit the appraisal directly to the lender (no original hard copy required).

9. **TRANSMITTAL OF LAPP APPRAISALS TO VA**: E-mail VA a copy of your appraisal to **325c&vlapp@vba.va.gov** at the same time you mail or e-mail your appraisal to the LAPP lender.

10. If you are an appraiser that plans on scanning your entire appraisal report and creating a Portable Document Format (.PDF) file, please contact the Ohio C&V Section as detailed below. We have developed a .PDF template to make it easier for you.

11. If you experience problems in setting up your system we suggest that you contact your hardware or software providers for assistance. If your hardware or software providers are unable to assist you in setting up your system, we suggest you hire a professional to assist you.

12. Attached is a copy of the release we sent to the lenders regarding this program. Although you can expect future minor changes to this initiative as the process develops, these changes should not affect the basic requirements described in this release. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Joe Print, Chief, Construction & Valuation Section, at 1-800-729-5772 x3974 or Mr. Jack Hanley, Assistant Loan Guaranty Officer at 1-800-729-5772 x3967.

13. Thank you for your continuing participation in our VA Loan Guaranty program.

/s/

JAMES L. BRUBAKER, JR.
Loan Guaranty Officer

Attachment