

501 General

Information needed for determination on a claim may be obtained from the claimant, or other party, as appropriate, by

- a. Interview
- b. Correspondence
- c. Telephone call

In choosing the method of obtaining information, the initiating office - field office, or Sickness and Unemployment Benefits Section (SUBS) - should be guided by any specific instructions or guides in other articles of this manual and in the FOM. In the absence of specific instructions or guides, the choice depends, generally, on the type and amount of information needed, and the location or accessibility of the person from whom the information would be requested. Most routine requests for information should be through correspondence. When time is especially important, and the nature of the situation permits it, the telephone should be used. Interviews should be conducted when an in-depth investigation is needed, a lengthy discussion of the situation would be helpful, or when the importance of the matter under investigation requires personal contact.

502 Field investigation

502.01 General

Information needed for a determination on a claim may be obtained from the claimant or other party by field investigation, which would normally require a personal contact with the claimant and/or such party. A field office may initiate an investigation or may conduct an investigation at the request of another office of the Railroad Retirement Board.

502.02 Request for investigation

A request for investigation shall ordinarily be made on Form UI-49. Two copies of Form UI-49 shall be sent to the field office which is to make the investigation.

a. Selecting field office

In order to determine which field office is responsible for the investigation, enter the claimant's zip code in Zipco. This will provide the name, address, and phone number for the local field office.

b. Preparation of Form UI-49

The main portion of Form UI-49 shall include a statement of the facts of the case already known. This statement shall be sufficiently complete that the investigator will have all necessary specific information, such as dates of claimed days, names, addresses, etc. Some of the information may be provided, when appropriate, by attaching either Macro screens or a TPO to the Form UI-49. The requesting office shall mark the Macro screens and/or TPO to indicate information considered important to the request for investigation. Below the statement of facts, the requesting office shall enter a statement of the information to be obtained in the investigation. The statement may be in general terms, but, if necessary, specific questions may be included.

502.03 Notification to claimant

When a request for field investigation delays a determination on a claim, the claimant shall be sent Form Letter ID-5c.

503 Investigation by correspondence

503.01 General

The following form letters, as well as special letters may be used to obtain information from claimants.

503.02 Letters prescribed for SUBS

Form Letter ID-5d may be used to request from a claimant information which is needed in order to determine whether benefits should be paid. Such form letters will ordinarily be sent to claimants who do not live within the commuting area of a field office city.

Form Letter ID-5f may be used to obtain information about a claim on which benefits have already been paid. Such form letters will ordinarily be sent to claimants who do not live within the commuting area of a field office city.

Form Letter ID-5d Special may be used to get information from a claimant living within a field office commuting area. The letter directs him to call the field office and furnish answers to stated questions, or, if he is working or for some other good reason cannot report, to answer the questions in writing and return the letter to SUBS. A copy of the form letter should be sent to the field office together with any information that might help the field office in getting answers to the questions when the claimant calls.

Form Letter ID-5g is a form letter following up an earlier request for information that the claimant has not furnished.

Form Letter ID-5e is a notice to the claimant that benefits cannot be allowed on his current claim because of his failure to answer an earlier request for information.

Form Letter ID-5c is a notice to the claimant that determination on his claim will be held up, pending receipt of additional information.

503.03 Letters prescribed for field offices

Letters prescribed for use of field offices in getting information include Form Letters ID-5, ID-5d-F, and ID-5i. Instructions concerning those letters are in the [DPOM/FOM-II](#).

504 Obtaining information by telephone

Telephone requests for information from claimants or other individuals should normally be restricted to questions that can be answered by a simple "yes" or "no" response or by furnishing clarifying information, such as: date last worked, date returned to work, dates the claimant wishes to claim.

