

IRM PROCEDURAL UPDATE

DATE: 11/29/2023

NUMBER: wi-21-1123-1127

SUBJECT: Commitment to Quality; Communication Skills; Default Screener; Bad Line Calls

AFFECTED IRM(s)/SUBSECTION(s): 21.1.1

CHANGE(s):

IRM 21.1.1.2(5) - Updated to provide procedures for representatives to allow constructive feedback when receiving evaluative and non evaluative reviews.

(5) Managers, or qualified designees, will share evaluative and non-evaluative reviews with CSRs. While sharing the review, managers will provide feedback to identify successes and opportunities for improvement:

- a. The feedback must be clear, specific and provide examples or resources that support corrective actions to eliminate a future error, mistake or defect.
- b. CSRs must be open to receiving and applying feedback to improving quality and performance.
- c. To ensure understanding of the feedback, the CSR will be given the opportunity to:
 - discuss the feedback and review the resources provided,
 - request additional support or technical advice if further clarification is needed and
 - confirm an understanding of corrective actions that must be taken to eliminate future errors.

IRM 21.1.1.4(2) - Advised to review display window on Finesse application to prepare for the next call type. This makes preparation for the next type of work to be performed.

(2) In preparation for the next call, review the Call Data Display window on the Finesse application. You **must** provide, in a professional and courteous manner, the following information to **each** taxpayer, authorized representative, or caller with whom you speak or send correspondence. **DO NOT** use IRS jargon when communicating (either speaking or corresponding) with the taxpayer.

- a. **By telephone or face-to-face contact**, identify yourself using any variation below:
 - Title (e.g., Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss), and last name, **OR**

- First name and last initial, **OR**
- First and last name, **OR**
- First initial and last name, **AND**

Note: For hyphenated or two last names on your ID, use as stated on your federally issued identification badge.

- identification (ID) badge number **or** if Homeland Security Presidential Directive-12 (HSPD-12/SmartID Card) is issued, use the 10-digit Personal Identification (PID) number.

Note: Speak in a clear tone and control the conversation. Avoid extraneous dialogue. **DO NOT** comment, discuss, endorse or provide an opinion to topics unrelated to the issue at hand (e.g., topics such as current events, third party tax preparation services, politics, etc.) It is imperative you remain professional and courteous throughout the call. **Do not accept collect calls.**

- b. **By written correspondence**, provide your generated Integrated Data Retrieval System (IDRS) or other unique letter system number. If an IDRS/unique number is not generated, use your ID/badge number or all 10 digits of your PID if the IRS HSPD-12 (SmartID card) as issued. For more information, follow IRM 21.3.3.3.4, Quality and Timely Responses.

IRM 21.1.1.4(7)(a) - Updated procedures for providing accurate and complete information due to increase in incomplete responses to the taxpayer.

(7) Provide accurate and complete information.

- a. Conduct research before providing an accurate response, using supporting documentation, i.e., IRMs, TCDs, IRS publications, IRS forms, etc. Cover any open issues (for which you are trained). If unable to perform research, refer question following proper referral procedures. See IRM 21.3.5, Taxpayer Inquiry Referrals Form 4442, for more information.
- b. Explain any procedures and order necessary forms and publications.

IRM 21.1.1.6.1(5)(d) - Updated searches for languages other than English and Spanish in the Telephone Transfer Guide (TTG) for clarity.

(5) To determine the topic of the call, ask the caller if they have a question that requires research on his/her personal or business tax account.

- a. If yes, probe to determine to which TTG account application to transfer. Actively listen to the caller.

- b. If no, ask if the caller has a general tax law or procedural question. Probe to determine the specific question. Continue to probe until you determine the issue. Then, using the TTG, transfer to the correct procedural application.
- c. If the caller is inquiring about an OOS topic, transfer the caller to **Extension 3013 (English)** or **Extension 3014 (Spanish)** and advise the caller that they are being transferred to an automated line which provides available resources for finding answers to their questions. If the caller says they were previously transferred to the automated line and does not want to be transferred again, provide the following explanation or similar statement: "We apologize that live help is not available on this topic. Please visit our website at IRS.gov. Our Help tab (at the top of the page) is a great place to begin your search. It has a host of good information that is sure to address your concerns. I'm transferring you now to the automated line to provide the resources available to help you. **Thank you for calling.**" Transfer the call.
- d. If you cannot understand a Spanish speaking or Limited English Proficient (LEP) taxpayer, use the TTG Search bar and search for the topic instead of the language, or click on the **Other Languages** link which contains instructions on how to identify topics that can use OPI.

IRM 21.1.1.6.1(7)(a) - Added transfer numbers to IF/THEN chart for convenience.

(7) When the topic is a **refund inquiry (current year only)**:

- a. Probe to determine if the caller e-filed their return more than 21 days before today's date or mailed a return more than six weeks before today's date.

IF	AND	THEN
The time frame is not met	The caller has not stated there is another issue requiring account access	<p>Advise of the normal processing time and to utilize one of our self-help methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Where's My Refund on IRS.gov, b. IRS2Go (English or Spanish) smart phone application c. Refund Hotline 1-800-829-1954 <p>Where's My Refund can inform the individual taxpayer if the IRS received the original return, and the projected date of the refund, if available. Transfer the caller to the automated application, 3158 for English, 3258 for Spanish.</p>

The time frame is met	The caller has used the self-help methods or has another issue requiring account access	Transfer the caller to the proper account application, Extension 1017 (English) or 1021 (Spanish).
The time frame is met	The caller has not used the self-help methods and has not stated there is another issue requiring account access	Transfer the caller directly to the automated application 3158 (English), 3258 (Spanish) or advise of the online services for faster resolution.

IRM 21.1.1.8.2 - Updated to reflect new procedures to follow for the Finesse Telephone System. Procedures were coordinated to account for other systems available to both managers and employees.

(1) Bad line calls are defined as calls where the taxpayers cannot be helped due to audio transmission difficulties in the phone line. Some examples of bad line calls are:

- **Static:** A call where static or noise interferes with effective communication.
- **Echo:** When the CSR hears their speech or the caller's speech in a delayed repeat.
- **Cross-Talk:** When the CSR hear parties on the line other than the caller.
- **Can't hear Caller:** When the CSR is unable to hear the caller any time after the caller responded during the opening of the call.
- **Caller Can't Hear:** When the caller is unable to hear the CSR.
- **Low Volume:** When the caller or CSR are having difficulty hearing the other due to low volume.
- **No Response:** When the caller does not respond at the beginning of the call.

(2) The CSR must take the following steps on the Finesse desktop application to report a bad line if any audio transmission difficulties are experienced while talking to a taxpayer:

- a. Navigate the mouse cursor to the top-right of the Cisco Finesse Desktop.
- b. Select the down arrow next to the Report Bad Line to expand the list of options.
- c. Select the correct Bad Line Description.
- d. A confirmation dialog box will open to confirm the call was marked as a bad line call. Click OK to close the dialog box.
- e. If more than two consecutive calls are reported as bad line issues, see paragraph 5 below to determine if additional actions are needed.

Note: The Report Bad Line option only appears while in an active call.

Note: If the user decides to change the reason for the bad line, they may do so by selecting the appropriate option. Another dialog box will appear confirming the previous selection was overwritten

1. Click the Report Bad Line icon on the Cisco Finesse Desktop
2. Select the correct Bad Line Description
3. Click OK

Note: If this issue results in an incomplete call, the CSR must notify the manager immediately. Managers will refer to IRM 1.4.16.3.5.1(2), Bad Line/Dropped Calls.

(3) Dropped Calls are defined as calls that start normally but disconnect unexpectedly during the conversation. If a dropped call occurs, take the following steps while in Wrap **after** the next call:

- a. Click the **Report a Dropped Call** tab on the Cisco Finesse Desktop.
- b. Select **A Previous Call** from the drop-down menu. The following fields will populate:
 - SEID
 - Extension
 - Date
 - Time
 - Taxpayer Number Dialed (if available)
 - Taxpayer Number (if available)
 - Call Key
- c. (Required) Select a Drop Call reason using the drop-down menu.
- d. (Required) Add comments to support the dropped call reason.
- e. Click the **Generate Report** button to submit the report.

Note: If the dropped call is not available in the Previous Call drop-down menu, manually enter the call details listed above, if available.

(4) When the report is submitted from the Cisco Finesse desktop, it will be available for telephone support staff and managers through Aceyus reports. Cisco Finesse desktop will also generate an Excel copy of the report in the Downloads folder.

(5) See the table below to determine if additional actions are needed:

IF	Then
More than two consecutive calls have bad line issues, see paragraph 1 above, AND the manager designee has not addressed the bad line issue previously,	Notify your manager or manager designee of the telephone issues via email or Teams while in Wrap. The email should identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The type of bad line issues reported. • The number of consecutive calls impacted. • The phone application being worked.
More than two consecutive calls dropped/disconnected unexpectedly	Notify your manager or manager designee of the dropped calls via email or Teams while in

	<p>Wrap.</p> <p>The email should identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of consecutive calls dropped/disconnected. • The phone application being worked. • Dropped call reports were submitted.
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(6) Managers will refer to IRM 1.4.16.3.5.1, Bad Line/Dropped Calls, for additional information.