

FISCAL YEAR 2022

Independent Office of Appeals Focus Guide

A Message From the Chief and Deputy Chief

We're pleased to share our fiscal year (FY) 2022 organizational priorities and objectives. Most importantly, the Independent Office of Appeals (Appeals) will continue to perform our critical role in tax administration as the IRS continues to implement agency-wide strategies for improving the taxpayer experience, employee training, and restructuring pursuant to the Taxpayer First Act. Although pandemic uncertainty remains, we anticipate being able to fully reopen our offices and resume more normal operations this fiscal year. This transition will require patience and present challenges – two things we've all grown accustomed to over the past few years. Appeals will move forward by building on our past accomplishments (including applying lessons learned from COVID to identify best practices) to deliver our mission of fair and impartial case resolution. We'll also continue to invest in the resilience of our greatest asset - the Appeals workforce.

In the following section, you'll see how this year's key focus areas align with the IRS's Strategic Plan and reflect Appeals' core values.

Please review and discuss our FY 2022 organizational priorities within your work group. We welcome your feedback about how to best fulfill our mission of providing the nation's taxpayers with access to a high-quality, administrative appeals process.

INDEPENDENT OFFICE OF APPEALS FY 2022 FOCUS AREAS

Taxpayer Experience: Appeals will improve and expand communications with external stakeholders to promote transparency and taxpayer rights by:

- Continuing to increase stakeholder outreach – including to historically marginalized and limited English proficient communities – about the appeals process.
- Creating a practitioner feedback panel to periodically share insights with Appeals employees.
- Revising external letters and notices to improve clarity and tone.
- Appointing a Chief Taxpayer Experience Officer and an internal steering committee to develop a multi-year taxpayer experience strategy for Appeals.
- Expanding Taxpayer Digital Communications (TDC) Secure Messaging (SM) to all Appeals Officers to provide a secure, accessible service to meet taxpayer's communications needs.

Quality Case Resolution: Appeals will strengthen our foundation of impartial, quality decision-making by:

- Ensuring taxpayers have full access to Appeals in appropriate cases by developing, in partnership with Chief Counsel, regulations that identify the scope of the right to appeal under I.R.C. Section 7803(e).
- Continuing to expand available conferencing techniques for all taxpayers, including by increasing the use of remote and virtual conferences across Appeals and resuming the pilot test of in-person conferences for campus cases when the IRS evacuation order is lifted.
- Incorporating the results from our newly expanded Customer Satisfaction Survey into our Appeals Quality Measurement System (AQMS) so it better reflects key drivers of the taxpayer experience.

Engaged and Highly-Skilled Workforce: Appeals will enhance skills and employee engagement by:

- Continuing to identify, attract, and retain highly-qualified candidates for Appeals positions, particularly in locations with no current Appeals' presence.
- Continuing to deliver high-quality training and continuing professional education to Appeals' workforce, including best-in-class training courses for our new hires.
- Reimagining our approach to Knowledge Management.
- Continuing to review leadership programs and bench strength to ensure diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Continuing to safeguard the health and safety of Appeals employees while delivering mission-critical functions.

Effective Business Processes: Appeals will continue to improve processes, reduce managerial and employee burden, and support teleworking employees by:

- Continuing to expand our paperless and electronic case work processes.
- Maintaining our focus on quality case actions, including uploading Appeals Case Memoranda consistently.
- Supporting the migration of SharePoint and other Microsoft applications (e.g., Teams and email) to the Microsoft 365 platform.
- Continuing to promote Enterprise Case Management (ECM) efforts to move viable workstreams and processes on to the new platform.
- Continuing to identify, assess, mitigate, and manage organizational risks.



Andy Keyso, Chief
Independent Office of Appeals



Lia Colbert, Deputy Chief
Independent Office of Appeals

FY 2022 APPEALS ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

- Engage stakeholders to enrich the taxpayer experience.
- Resolve tax controversies fairly and impartially.
- Sustain/support an engaged highly-skilled workforce.
- Promote effective business processes essential to Appeals.

