

Statement for Medical Expert Website Regarding Updates to Medical Expert Handbook

We updated the Medical Expert (ME) handbook to clarify expectations regarding evidence you provide. Below is a summary of the revisions:

- Updated to remove reference to outdated materials that were referenced in footnotes, such as reference to single decision makers and lack of reconsideration level review in some states, and reference to the mental listings being updated in January of 2017.
- Updated the “What Happens at the ALJ Hearing” section on page 6 of the guide, to include the addition of telephone and online video hearings as hearing modalities that a ME should be prepared for when providing their testimony.
- Consistent with regulatory changes effective June 22, 2024, to how we consider past relevant work (PRW), we updated the section titled “Step 4: Can the claimant do any past relevant work” on page 23 of the guide. Revisions include revising the PRW history period from 15 years to 5 years, and adding the 30-day minimum threshold requirement for work to be considered PRW.
- Updated the guide to remove references to rescinded SSRs and add citations to current SSRs.