

# US Healthcare VA Starter Checklist

Healthcare VA Learning Hub | Learn US Healthcare Admin One Workflow at a Time.

Resource type	Checklist
Who it is for	Aspiring Medical VAs, healthcare admin beginners, new Medical Billers, and learners choosing a first role path.
When to use it	Use before studying deeper topics or before building a resume, portfolio, or direct-client offer.
How to use it	Check only what you can explain in your own words. For any unchecked item, write a next study action in the 30-Day Study Plan Tracker.
Last reviewed	July 2026

Core learning rule: Where does this happen? Why does it matter? What happens if it is wrong?

## Purpose

Use this checklist as your start-here map before jumping into scheduling, billing, prior authorization, AR, or direct-client work. It turns the RCM learning rule into practical checkpoints.

## Starter checklist

- I can explain what a Medical VA does without claiming clinical duties or coding authority.
- I can define patient, provider, payer, claim, RCM, HIPAA, PHI, eligibility, benefits, authorization, denial, and AR in plain English.
- I can describe the front-end, middle, and back-end RCM stages.
- I can explain why a clean claim starts before claim submission.
- I know that scheduling, registration, insurance intake, eligibility, referrals, and authorization can affect payment later.
- I know that coding, charge entry, claim scrubbing, and submission happen after documentation and service details are available.
- I know that payment posting, denial management, AR follow-up, and patient billing need documented next actions.
- I can ask: Where does this happen? Why does it matter? What happens if it is wrong?
- I know not to guess payer rules, coding decisions, patient responsibility, or authorization status.
- I can create practice samples using fictional data only.
- I can write a simple account note with action taken, result, reference/source, and next step.
- I know when to escalate instead of making unsupported decisions.

## Mini workflow map

Stage	Where this happens	Why it matters	If wrong
Front-End RCM	Scheduling, registration, insurance intake, eligibility, benefits, referral, prior authorization	Prevents avoidable claim problems before service	Wrong payer, missing authorization, patient billing confusion

Stage	Where this happens	Why it matters	If wrong
Middle RCM	Coding awareness, charge entry, claim scrubbing, claim submission	Turns documentation and service details into a claim	Rejected claim, coding-related denial, delayed payment
Back-End RCM	Payment posting, denial management, AR follow-up, patient billing	Resolves the account after payer processing	Old AR, missed appeal deadlines, unresolved balances

## Common beginner mistakes

- Trying to memorize terms without placing them in the claim lifecycle.
- Calling yourself experienced before you can explain the workflow safely.
- Using real patient, payer, employer, or client information in practice files.
- Skipping documentation and leaving no clear next action.
- Guessing payer rules, authorization status, coding meaning, or patient responsibility.

## Safe practice reminder

Practice with fictional examples only. Do not copy real work queues, payer portals, clinic notes, employer SOPs, screenshots, patient accounts, or client information into any practice file.

## No-PHI reminder

Do not use or enter real patient names, dates of birth, insurance IDs, member IDs, claim numbers, medical record numbers, addresses, phone numbers, diagnoses, treatment details, login details, or protected health information. Use fictional data only when practicing.

## Educational disclaimer

This resource is for beginner-friendly healthcare admin education only. It is not medical advice, legal advice, coding certification, payer-specific billing authority, a replacement for employer training, or a guarantee of employment. Always verify current requirements with official sources, employer policy, payer rules, client instructions, and updated guidance.

## Source/review note

This beginner resource explains general healthcare admin workflow concepts. Verify current requirements with official sources, employer policy, payer rules, client instructions, and updated guidance.

## Recommended next step

Next: complete the Beginner Learning Checklist, then use the 30-Day Study Plan Tracker to study one workflow at a time.