

2013

# Department of Veterans Affairs

Functional Organization Manual – Version 1.0

Description of Organization Structure,  
Missions, Functions, Tasks, and Authorities

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The Functional Organization Manual (FOM) is the authoritative source that documents the current organization structure, missions, functions and tasks of the Department of Veterans Affairs and its organizations. It is a core reference document for the Department to describe what gets done by whom, for whom, and under what authorities. It is a “living document” that, over time, will reflect key changes that lead to refined organizational processes and procedures, and further enhance synchronized and coordinated actions across the Department to ensure optimal execution of the VA mission and strategy.

The FOM is available on the VA intranet in a searchable repository. The Office of Policy, within the Office of Policy and Planning, is responsible for the maintenance and updating of the FOM.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) was established as an independent agency under the President by E.O. 5398 on July 21, 1930, and was elevated to Cabinet level on March 15, 1989, (P.L. No. 100-527).

The Department’s mission is to serve America’s Veterans and their families with dignity and compassion, and to be their principal advocate in ensuring that they receive medical care, benefits, social support, and lasting memorials promoting the health, welfare, and dignity of all Veterans in recognition of their service to this Nation.

VA is the second largest Federal department and has over 312,000 employees. Among the many professions represented in the vast VA workforce are physicians, nurses, counselors, statisticians, architects, computer specialists, and attorneys. As advocates for Veterans and their families, the VA community is committed to providing the very best services with an attitude of caring and courtesy.

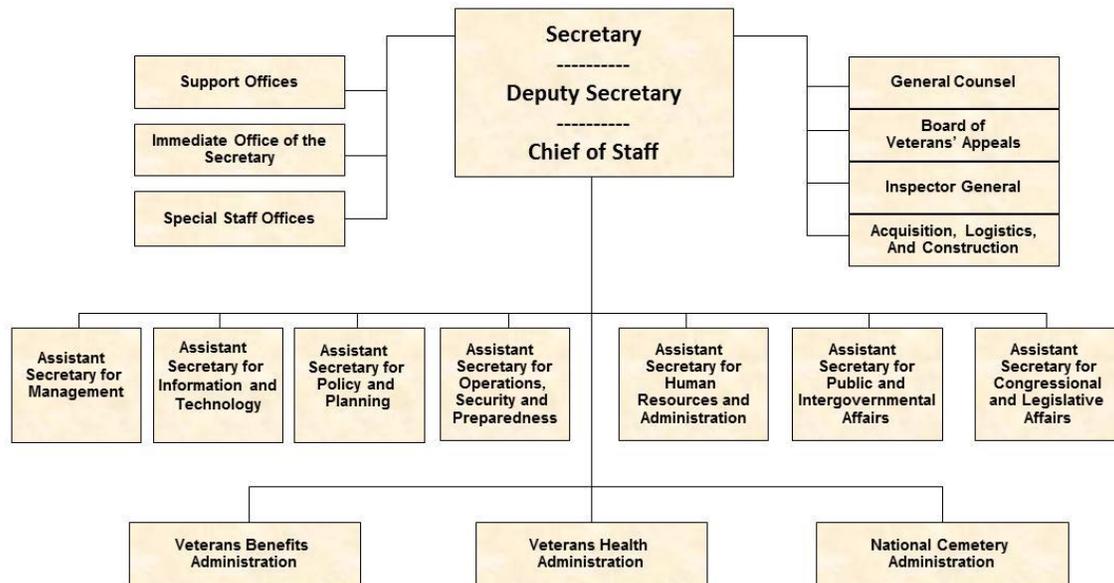
VA comprises a Central Office (VACO), which is located in Washington, DC, and field facilities throughout the Nation administered by its three major line organizations: Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration, and National Cemetery Administration. Services and benefits are provided through a nationwide network of 152 hospitals, 798 community-based outpatient clinics, 278 Veteran Centers, 57 Veterans Benefits Regional Offices, and 131 National Cemeteries. (*Statistics current as of June 1, 2012*)

The Secretary of the VA (SECVA) identified four broad strategic goals for VA to focus on as the means to improve services to Veterans and their families and to improve management in the Department. These goals are the components of the VA Strategic Plan:

- Improve the quality and accessibility of healthcare, benefits and memorial services while optimizing value.
- Increase Veteran client satisfaction with health, education, training, counseling, financial, and burial benefits and services.
- Raise readiness to provide services and protect people and assets, continuously, and in time of crisis.
- Improve internal customer satisfaction with management systems and support services to achieve mission performance, and make VA an employer of choice by investing in human capital.

## Organization

# DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



March 2013

The **Secretary of Veterans Affairs (SECVA)** is the head of VA and is appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The SECVA is responsible for the proper execution and administration of all laws administered by the Department and for the control, direction, and management of the Department.

The **Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs (DEPSECVA)** serves as the Department's Chief Operating Officer. The DEPSECVA directs the policy and operations of the Department and provides broad direction to the Department's employees through the Administrations and Staff Offices, ensuring coordinated action and conformance with the SECVA's directives. The DEPSECVA chairs the Department's governance process through the Strategic Management Council and leads the Business Oversight Board and Capital Investment Board.

The **Chief of Staff for Veterans Affairs (COSVA)** oversees the day-to-day operations of the VA staff, and ensures effective and efficient functioning to support the SECVA, DEPSECVA, and

other Departmental leadership. The chief synchronizes and coordinates policy guidance and direction of the SECVA with the administration, Staff Offices, and other key officials.

**Administrations and Staff Offices:** The Department has three Administrations that provide for the delivery of services and benefits, seven Assistant Secretaries who advise and support the SECVA and the Administrations, and Staff Offices that provide specific assistance to the SECVA.

The three Administrations are **Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration and National Cemetery Administration**. The head of each Administration reports to the SECVA through the DEPSECVA. These Administrations give centralized program direction to field facilities that provide diverse program services to Veterans and their families. Further, each Administration has Central Office components that support the Administration's operations. This organizational structure reflects a basic management approach of centralized policy direction, complemented by consistent decentralized execution.

The seven Assistant Secretaries serve as the principal staff advisors to the SECVA and DEPSECVA, and oversee or administer programs in their respective areas of responsibility.

- The **Assistant Secretary for Management** serves as the Department's Chief Budget Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and Senior Real Property Officer. The Assistant Secretary is responsible for financial management, budget administration, resources planning, business oversight activities, and monitoring the development and implementation of VA's performance measures. The Assistant Secretary serves as the Department's principal advisor for budget, fiscal, capital and green program management (energy, environment, transportation/fleet, and sustainability) policy, and supports the VA governance bodies with regard to capital-asset portfolio management and implementing the strategic capital-asset planning process.
- The **Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology** serves as the Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the Department. As the CIO, the Assistant Secretary is the principal advisor to the SECVA on matters relating to information and technology management in the Department as delineated in P.L. No. 104-106, the Clinger-Cohen Act, the Paperwork Reduction Act, Chapter 35 of Title 44 U.S.C.; and any other associated legislated or regulatory media.
- The **Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning** is responsible for the SECVA's policy analysis and planning processes, and their integration into the Department's Strategic Management Process. The Assistant Secretary's functions entail responsibility for performing Department-level policy analyses and development, program evaluations, strategic planning, quality improvement, actuarial studies and assessments, Veterans' demographics, VA/Department of Defense (DoD) coordination services, and statistical analyses. The Assistant Secretary is responsible for the Nation's official estimates and

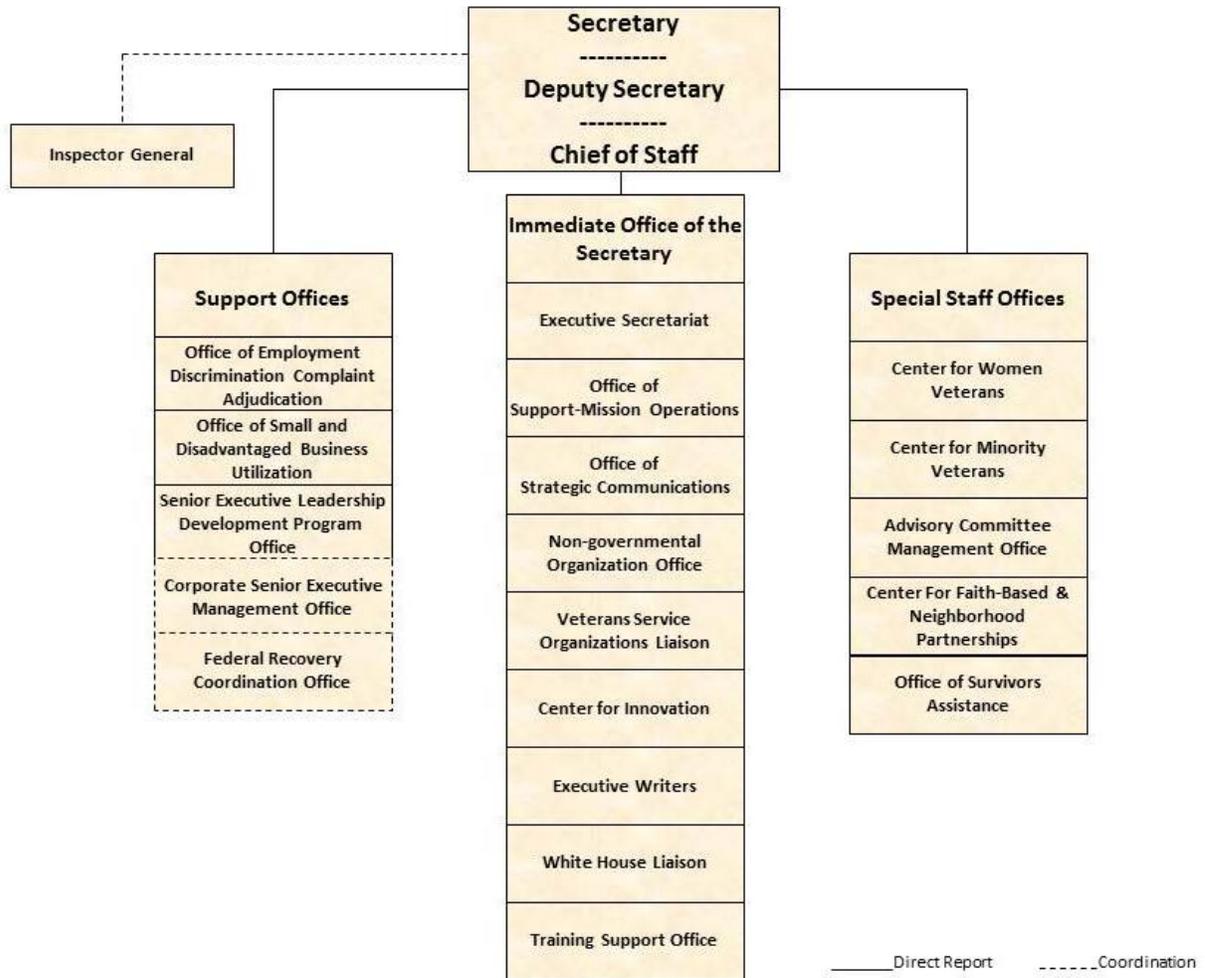
projections of the Veteran population and the National Survey of Veterans, Active-Duty Servicemembers, activated National Guard and Reserve members, family members, and survivors.

- The **Assistant Secretary for Operations, Security and Preparedness** is the principal advisor to the SECVA and DEPSECVA on VA's capability and readiness to continue services to Veterans and their families, respond to contingency support missions to the DoD and other Federal agencies engaged in emergency-response activities and respond effectively during national emergencies.
- The **Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration** is responsible for providing VA-wide responsibilities to such programs as human resources management, diversity and inclusion, discrimination complaint resolution, labor-management relations, VA's Learning University, corporate senior executive management, and general administrative support (primarily services to VA Central Office). The Assistant Secretary serves as the Department's designated Agency Safety and Health Official and is responsible for administering the Occupational Safety and Health and Workers' Compensation programs. The Assistant Secretary also serves as the Department's Chief Human Capital Officer, advising and assisting the SECVA in carrying out VA's responsibilities for selecting, developing, training, and managing a high-quality workforce in accordance with merit systems principles.
- The **Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs** develops, maintains, and communicates the Department's message through media relations and public, intergovernmental and Veteran engagement to empower Veterans and their families. The Assistant Secretary oversees the Department's communications with Veterans, the general public, VA employees, and the news media. The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs works to build confidence in VA and its readiness to serve America's Veterans of all generations.
- The **Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs** serves as the principal advisor to the SECVA and DEPSECVA concerning all legislative and congressional liaison matters and has overall responsibility for the plans, policies, goals, and direction of the Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs (OCLA). The Assistant Secretary is the principal coordinator of VA's legislative program development, ensures Departmental compliances with congressionally mandated reports and serves as the point-of-contact with the Government Accountability Office (GAO).

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapter 3

**2 OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (OSVA)**



**Mission Statement**

The Department of Veterans Affairs serves America’s Veterans and their families with dignity and compassion, and is their principal advocate to ensure that they receive medical care, benefits, social support, and lasting memorials, promoting the health, welfare, and the dignity of all Veterans in recognition of their service to this Nation.

**Office of the Secretary**

The Office of the Secretary (OSVA) is headed by the SECVA and includes the DEPSECVA, Chief of Staff, Deputy Chief of Staff-Administration, Deputy Chief of Staff-Strategy, Assistant Chief of Staff for Support-Mission Operations, the Executive Secretariat, senior advisors and several special focus centers and offices. Legal authority is vested, by Title 38 U.S.C., in the SECVA, who generally may delegate it to other VA officials in order to carry out the Department’s missions.

The **Deputy Secretary for Veterans Affairs (DEPSECVA)** serves as the SECVA's principal advisor and Chief Operating Officer for the Department. The DEPSECVA carries out responsibilities and functions specifically delegated by the SECVA including:

- Overseeing the activities of the Executive Director of the Office of Acquisition, Logistics and Construction (OALC).
- Managing the Department's governance process and chairing the VA Strategic Management Council, Business Oversight Board, and Capital Investment Board.

The **Chief of Staff for Veterans Affairs (COSVA)** oversees the OSVA staff and ensures effective and efficient functioning to support the SECVA, DEPSECVA, and other Departmental leadership. The Chief synchronizes and coordinates policy guidance and direction of the SECVA with the Administrations, Staff Offices and other key officials. COSVA is assisted by the Deputy Chief of Staff-Administration, the Deputy Chief of Staff-Strategy, the Assistant Chief of Staff for Support-Mission Operations, and several senior advisors and special assistants. COSVA participates in the Department's governance process and chairs the VA Strategic Review Group. As delegated by SECVA, COSVA has oversight of Department career senior executives and equivalents.

## **Staff and Support Offices within the Office of the Secretary for Veterans Affairs**

### **2.1 OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL (OIG)**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Office of the Inspector General conducts various audits, investigations, and inspections of VA programs and makes recommendations for adjustments and changes as required by law.

- Conducts audits, investigations, and inspections of VA programs, operations, and other activities performed or financed by VA.
- Compiles and presents findings and makes recommendations to adjust or change policies and/or practices to ensure conformity with law and guidance, promotes economy, efficiency and effectiveness, and prevents/detects criminal activity, waste, abuse, or mismanagement in the Department.
- Provides formal semiannual reports required by the Inspector General Act to the SECVA, Congress, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and published on the VA OIG Internet site.

#### **Authorities**

P.L. 95-452

P.L. 100-322

P.L. 100-504

P.L. 110-409

## **2.2 IMMEDIATE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

### **2.2.1 Executive Secretariat**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Executive Secretariat is VA's central coordinating point for all staff actions addressed to and emanating from the SECVA and DEPSECVA.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

- Serves as the principal staff-action control point for the Department on internal and external items, and directs/assigns all administrative taskings on behalf of the SECVA.
- Prepares and presents executive staff actions (documents, briefs, testimony, questions for the record, memoranda for record/understanding/agreements between VA and outside entities, etc.) for review and signature, and is VA's repository for same.
- Is solely authorized to authenticate documents transmitting policy, procedure, or information to the Department "by order of the Secretary."
- Provides correspondence policy for the Department.
- Provides records management as the Office of Record for all documents signed by the SECVA, DEPSECVA, and COSVA.
- Receives and processes all Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Privacy Act requests for the Office of the Secretary.

### **2.2.2 Office of Support-Mission Operations**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Support-Missions Operations provides administrative, logistical, budget, and operational support for the Office of the Secretary and its subsidiary offices.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Executive mission support:

- Collects, collates, coordinates analysis, and delivers read-aheads for SECVA, DEPSECVA, and COSVA for all events, meetings, and briefings that require them.
  - Arranges official travel for SECVA, DEPSECVA, COSVA and principals. Coordinates transportation, security, equipment and capabilities, including travel arrangements for personnel support staff; processes and maintains official travel accounts.
  - Travels with principals when travel coincides with domain responsibilities and coordinates equipment, capabilities, and personnel to accompany primaries on trips when necessary.
  - Coordinates processes and oversees initiatives and processes for clients seeking assistance at the executive level, and integrates processes into staff procedures for tracking and resolution.
-

- Serves as SECVA, DEPSECVA liaison with White House Advance Staff.
- Plans, coordinates, and executes events for SECVA, DEPSECVA, and COSVA.

Administration and logistics support:

- Develops and manages OSVA budget to include authority to expend funds as delegated by the COSVA.
- Manages and maintains OSVA property and expendable supplies.
- Provides Human Resources guidance and, through coordination with Veterans Affairs Central Office (VACO) Human Resources Services, provides personnel classification and staffing.

### **2.2.3 Office of Strategic Communications**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Strategic Communications coordinates and monitors all integrated communications activities across the Department and engages key audiences to achieve effects consistent with VA's interests, policies, and objectives.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

The Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Strategic Communications serves as primary advisor on all matters related to coordinated internal and external communications.

- Leads the Strategic Communications Council.
- Synchronizes and coordinates Department communication plans.
- Provides guidance on messaging and overall communications activities and priorities.
- Synchronizes and coordinates crisis communications actions.
- Works closely with Chief of Staff and OSDDBU to facilitate and coordinate the National Veteran Small Business Open House and provides support for the overall conference.
- Advises VA leadership on communication and engagement strategy.

### **2.2.4 Non-governmental Organization Office (NGO)**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Non-governmental Organization (NGO) Office promotes, facilitates, and advances relationships between VA and NGOs through consultation, data sharing, and collaborative opportunities that benefit VA, Veterans, their families, and survivors.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Serves as advisor to the Secretary and other executive leadership on matters related to NGO programs, issues, and initiatives.

- Represents OSVA in meetings with key leaders of business, civic, philanthropic, and other key stakeholder organizations.
- Encourages and facilitates public-private collaborative opportunities through VA initiatives, pilot programs, and service programs to supplement VA's mission.
- Identifies NGO barriers to access of Department programs and services, and provides engagement strategies and solutions.
- Cultivates and stewards relationships between VA and NGOs.

Serves as NGOs' primary access point to VA resources, office contacts, and VA needs.

- Provides consultation to NGOs to better understand the Department, services provided, the Veteran community and effective strategies to work with VA.
- Provides internal and external referrals to key leadership and subject matter experts.
- Responds to NGO requests for VA and Veteran-related information, data, and statistics.
- Provides advice to NGOs to better plan, execute, and improve their programs for Veterans, their families, and survivors.
- Encourages feedback from NGOs on issues such as physical, mental, and social well-being, employment, and satisfaction with Veteran services and benefits.

Conducts strategic outreach and education.

- Represents OSVA at NGO events to promote VA's mission and services.
- Educates NGOs about VA services, support, and Veteran community issues.
- Engages NGOs, Veterans and their families to understand gaps in public and private sector services.
- Provides advice and consultation on the coordination of community-based NGOs seeking to implement or expand services to the Veterans community to help minimize duplication of effort and confusion.
- Increases VA staff awareness of National and community-based NGO resources programs, and services.
- Conducts joint public outreach with other VA offices and Administrations.
- Maintains an information network of NGOs and other relevant stakeholders.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. 523

## **2.2.5 Veterans Service Organizations Liaison (VSO)**

### **Mission Statement**

The Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) Liaison is the SECVA's primary advisor on matters affecting VSOs and is responsible for the Department's day-to-day liaison with those organizations.

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**Functions and Tasks**

Communicates regularly with VSO officials to ensure VA responds effectively to the needs of the organizations and their members.

- Attends VSO midwinter conferences and national conventions.
- Communicates with Veterans concerning issues they feel strongly about, including health care.
- Attends all National Commanders' Testimony on Veteran's issues to the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees.

Articulates the Department's positions on issues affecting America's Veterans.

- Advises the SECVA and DEPSECVA regarding VSO policy statements or specific positions on Veterans' issues.
- Assists VSOs in their dealings with other Federal agencies.

**2.2.6 Center for Innovation****Mission Statement**

The Center for Innovation identifies, prioritizes, funds, tests, and evaluates the most promising solutions to VA's most important challenges with the goal of increasing Veterans' access to VA services, improving the quality of services delivered, enhancing the performance of VA operations, and reducing or controlling the cost of delivering those services that Veterans and their families receive.

**Functions and Tasks**

- Advises SECVA and VA senior leadership on proven and promising innovations to address strategic challenges to VA transformation.
  - Executes all aspects of the annual Industry Innovation Competitions, including marshaling VA leadership to identify top priorities, selecting innovations for funding and implementation, overseeing development and/or pilot implementation, and evaluating outcomes of the projects undertaken.
  - Manages, in partnership with VHA and VBA, the annual Employee Innovation Competitions, including marshaling VA leadership to identify top priorities, advising the selection of innovations, overseeing development and/or pilot implementation, and evaluating outcomes of the projects undertaken.
  - Executes prize challenges under the America COMPETES Act of 2011 and, when appropriate, Special Projects focused on near-term, high-impact opportunities.
  - Administers the Center's Innovation Fellows program and Entrepreneur-in-Residence program.
  - Provides guidance and sponsorship of the VA Innovators' Network.
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- Serves as the sponsor and manager of independent innovation relationships with the private sector through use of Cooperative Research and Development Agreements.

### **2.2.7 Executive Writers**

#### **Mission Statement**

Supports OSVA by preparing, reviewing, revising, and editing executive communications, including speeches, congressional testimony, select personal correspondence, communications posted on Web sites and messages for publication in myriad forums for the SECVA, DEPSECVA, and COSVA.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

- Advises senior leaders on subject and content of written communications.
- Tracks all speaking engagements and ensures products are provided to senior leaders well in advance of events.
- Conducts in-depth research on myriad topics related to all written products. Ensures data and facts are updated, correct and synchronized/coordinated in products provided to senior leaders.
- Demonstrates a high level of initiative, creativity and professional competence in creating original written products and editing others' written products.
- Maintains current knowledge of VA programs, organization, public affairs, and current events related to VA, as well as current and emerging issues of relevance and historical facts regarding VA that could have an impact on the Department, in order to better inform written products.
- Attends and contributes to preparation sessions for senior leader events when a speech or written product is involved.
- Builds positive relationships and maintains close contact with writers and leaders in all three Administrations.
- Travels with and supports SECVA, DEPSECVA, and COSVA when speaking requirements demand such support.

### **2.2.8 White House Liaison**

#### **Mission Statement**

The White House Liaison oversees and coordinates the political appointment process and serves as liaison to the White House.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

- Serves as liaison between VA and the White House Presidential Personnel Office coordinating the political appointment process.
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- Works closely with political appointees to coordinate White House activities and events.
- Works closely with the White House on special projects.
- Serves as member of the Strategic Communications Council.

### **2.2.9 Training Support Office (TSO)**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Training Support Office (TSO) supports and facilitates review and approval of conference and training event proposals by the Secretary and Deputy Secretary; provides guidance and assistance to Administrations and Staff Offices for implementation of VA policies and procedures for conference and training event execution to ensure compliance with Congressional and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) directives and public laws for conference and training event execution.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

- Develops and delivers Congressionally mandated reports per Public Law 112-154, Section 707.
- Develops and delivers annual reports as prescribed by OMB Memorandum M-12-12 and OMB Memorandum 11-35.
- Ensures Conference Certifying Officials (CCO) and Responsible Conference Executives (RCE) are appointed to execute duties prescribed by VA Chief of Staff Memorandum dated September 26, 2012.
- Responds to queries from Administrations and Staff Offices in the development of conference and training event proposals.
- Coordinates the Quarterly Conference Planning and Execution Briefing Cycle, and manages modifications for approval levels as required.
- Tracks RCE post-conference certifications and After-Action Reviews (AAR) conducted by Administrations and Staff Offices.
- Liaises with Office of Information and Technology (OIT) to update and manage the Conference Oversight and Reporting Knowledgebase (CORK).
- Examines data in CORK and the VA Conference Web site to ensure accuracy.
- Monitors VA conference policies, procedures, and update as required.
- Assists with responses to Congressional, OMB, Office of the Inspector General (OIG), and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) inquiries as required.

#### **Authorities**

OMB Memorandum 11-35, dated September 21, 2011

OMB Memorandum 12-12, dated May 11, 2012

Public Law 112-154, Section 707

VA Chief of Staff Memorandum dated September 26, 2012

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## **2.3 SUPPORT OFFICES**

### **2.3.1 Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication (OEDCA)**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication (OEDCA), an independent adjudicatory authority created by Congress in 1998, is responsible for issuing timely and high-quality final agency decisions and orders on the substantive merits of employment discrimination complaints filed by employees and applicants for employment.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Issues final Department decisions and orders on the substantive merits of employment discrimination complaints filed by employees, former employees, or applicants for employment with the Department.

- Receives requests from the Office of Resolution Management (ORM) to issue final Department decisions without a hearing or from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to issue final Department orders where there has been a hearing.
- Conducts initial procedural review of a complaint file to determine if it is properly before OEDCA for final agency action, and if not, remands it to ORM for further processing.
- Prepares and issues Department final decisions and final orders on the substantive merits of individual and class complaints of employment discrimination, and determines a prevailing party's entitlement to compensatory damages, equitable relief, and attorney fees.
- Processes ORM's internal complaints (i.e., complaints filed by ORM).
- Reports findings of intentional discrimination or retaliation to the SECVA or DEPSECVA for appropriate follow-up action.
- Prepares correspondence from the COSVA to an appropriate VA official summarizing the findings and the legal rationale for the decision.
- Refers the case to the Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and requests appropriate follow-up regarding disciplinary action.
- Conducts outreach across the Department and with principal Department stakeholders.
- Publishes a quarterly digest to explain findings of discrimination and offer best practices to avoid these types of instances.
- Trains Office of Human Resources EEO investigators.
- Provides EEO and diversity training to Department senior leaders, supervisors, and managers.

#### **Authorities**

P.L. 105-114

### **2.3.2 Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)**

#### **Mission Statement**

OSDBU is the Department's principal liaison to the Small Business Administration, Department of Commerce, General Services Administration (GSA), and the Office of Federal Procurement Policy for matters dealing with small and disadvantaged business activities. OSDBU enables small businesses and Veteran-owned businesses to add value to the mission of this and other Federal agencies, and promote Veteran employment. OSDBU consists of the Center for Small Business Programs (CSBP) and the Center for Veterans Enterprises (CVE).

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Provides verification of eligibility.

- Ensures businesses meet 38 CFR 74 requirements and are eligible for designation.
- Maintains vendor information pages to support the Veterans First Procurement program.

Provides acquisition support.

- Negotiates and establishes small business goals with VA Administrations.
- Offers access to acquisition opportunities to small businesses through procurement reviews/electronic reviews/Small Business Administration (SBA) coordination.
- Supports access of small businesses to acquisition opportunities by maintaining the Forecast of Contracting Opportunities database.
- Assists VA small business vendors in resolving payment or other contracting issues.
- Reviews subcontracting plans on behalf of the SECVA to meet the Department's small business goals.

Provides strategic outreach.

- Plans and implements the National Veterans Conference Plans, coordinates and implements major departmental vendor events at the Technology Acquisition Center (TAC) and National Acquisition Center.
- Develops and conducts the VA Small Business Roundtable Program with senior Department leaders.
- Develops and manages the Veteran-Owned Small Business Mentor-Protégé Program.
- Provides Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses Federal contracting information and assistance.

#### **Authorities**

P.L. 95-507

P.L. 106-50

P.L. 108-183

P.L. 109-461

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P.L. 110-389  
P.L. 111-275  
E.O. 13360  
38 U.S.C. § 74

### **2.3.3 Senior Executive Leadership Development Program Office (SELDP)**

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Senior Executive Leadership Development Program (SELDP) is to provide Federal Government senior executives training that has the most positive effect on their leadership effectiveness, prepares them for the considerable changes on the horizon, and inspires a shared Governmentwide identity/vision.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

- Serves as Program Management Office to design, develop, and deliver senior executive leadership training in collaboration with a cross-agency working group.
- Designs a solution-focused curriculum that is delivered through workshops, coaching, cross-agency portal and assessments to improve senior executive leadership.
- Incorporates successful leaders in the public, private, nonprofit, and academic sectors and provides role models in the program to enhance the interagency networks of senior executives and knowledge of cutting-edge leadership enablers.
- Leads program communications and marketing efforts.
- Leads program Return On Investment measurement.
- Archives program benefits to the taxpayer in terms of savings and cost avoidance.
- Documents interagency connectedness improvements, new problem-solving methods, and noteworthy mission performance vignettes.

#### **Authorities**

5 U.S.C. Chapter 41 § 2

31 U.S.C. 1535/FAR 17.5

Interagency Agreements between VA and Federal Government agencies

Senior Executive Leadership Development Program Charter

President's Management Council Decision FY11

### **2.3.4 Corporate Senior Executive Management Office (CSEMO)**

#### **Mission Statement**

Corporate Senior Executive Management Office is an element within the Office of Human Resource Administration but is under the operational control of and reports directly to the Office of the Secretary. It provides life-cycle management and full employment services for VA's senior

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leaders (Personnel Accountability System (PAS), Senior Executive Services (SES) noncareer, career, limited term, and limited emergency), senior-level and Schedule C employees, as well as employment services for Title 38 SES-equivalent appointees, members of the Board of Veterans' Appeals, and consultants and experts.

### **Functions and Tasks**

- Provides advice and counsel to the VA senior leadership on all matters regarding the Department's executive workforce and its management.
- Develops and establishes VA policies and processes needed to support full life-cycle management of the executive workforce.
- Provides all personnel services for executives and other service employees.
- Provides advisory services to supervisors and managers regarding conduct, performance, and related matters.
- Plans for the transition to a new Presidential Administration, including preparation of the "Plum Book."
- Manages a proactive recruitment program and effectively manages SES and SL allocations to ensure resources are aligned with VA's priorities.
- Implements and maintains a senior executive pay-for-performance appraisal system that meets Office of Personnel Management (OPM) certification requirements.
- Administers an effective senior executive recognition program.
- Administers an executive talent-management program for the Department.
- Supports Governmentwide initiatives and collaborates with others across Government to develop and deliver new senior executive programs.

### **Authorities**

Title 5 U.S.C.

Title 5 CFR

Title 38 U.S.C.

### **2.3.5 Federal Recovery Coordination Program (FRCP)**

The Office provides leadership regarding the direction of interagency complex care coordination within Department of Veterans Affairs, including leading collaborative efforts and support of the Interagency Care Coordination Committee (IC3) and the Federal Recovery Coordination Program (FRCP). FRCP was established to assist severely wounded, ill, and injured post-9/11 Service members, Veterans, and their families with access to care, services, and benefits. The program is funded through VHA as the only VA Administration with Title 38 pay authority.

### **Functions and Tasks**

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Creates comprehensive patient-centered recovery plans for severely wounded, ill, and injured post-9/11 Servicemembers and Veterans enrolled in FRCP.

- Federal Recovery Coordinators (FRCs) are responsible for initiating and establishing the Federal Individual Recovery Plan (FIRP) in collaboration with the Servicemember or Veteran, their family, and members of their multidisciplinary treatment team.
- FRCs identify the benefits and services required to meet the Servicemember or Veterans personal and professional goals, track progress towards goal completion, and over time, modify the FIRP to reflect needed changes in services.

Coordinates among multiple staffs and elements engaged in the program, to include:

- VHA and VBA leaders and staff.
- OSD Personnel and Readiness leaders and staff.
- DoD Recovery Coordination Program.
- Military Treatment Facility Command, multidisciplinary staff and case managers.
- Military Service's Wounded Warrior programs.
- VHA OEF/OIF/OND teams.
- VHA Polytrauma multidisciplinary staff and case managers.
- VHA medical teams, case managers, and care giver support coordinators.
- VBA OEF/OIF Support Team.
- Various other federal, state, and private entities.

Administratively supports the joint VA-DoD Interagency Care Coordination Program.

- Administrative support for the DoD-VA Joint Executive Committee's chartered Interagency Care Coordination Committee (IC3) and the VA co-chair for the IC3.
- Supports and coordinates actions of the IC3 working groups.
- Supports Federal Recovery Coordinators stationed at select locations, such as Military Treatment Facilities, Military Service Wounded Warrior Headquarters, and VA Medical Centers.
- VA leader in managing the Tri-agency National Resource Directory and Veterans Job Bank along with DoD and DOL.
- VA co-leader spearheading the Information Sharing for Improved Coordination initiative with DoD and SSA.

## 2.4 SPECIAL STAFF OFFICES

### 2.4.1 Center for Women Veterans (CWV)

#### **Mission Statement**

The Center for Women Veterans (CWV) monitors and coordinates VA's health care, benefits services and programs for women Veterans; advocates a cultural transformation within VA and the general public to recognize the service and contributions of women Veterans and women in the military; and raises awareness of the responsibility to treat women Veterans with dignity and respect.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

The CWV Director serves as the primary advisor to the SECVA on all matters related to policies, legislation, programs, issues, and initiatives affecting women Veterans.

Guarantees that health care, benefits services, and programs for women Veterans are part of VA's institutional consciousness.

- Collaborates with the VA Learning University (VALU) to develop training for employees and contractors, and includes information on women Veterans in existing training courses.
- Convenes representatives from the Department's major organizations (VHA, VBA, NCA, and Staff Offices) to examine women Veterans' issues and synchronize activities to advocate full awareness of health care, benefits services, and programs for women Veterans.
- Presents women Veterans' issues for inclusion in the Department's strategic plan.
- Hosts the VA-sponsored National Training Summit on Women Veterans.

Sustains and enhances VA outreach to women Veterans, advocates, and Federal/state/community partners.

- Uses all means to advocate and advertise available benefits and services for women Veterans, and cites key achievements of women who have served in the military.
  - Briefs Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) on women Veterans' issues.
  - Educates State Women Veterans Coordinators and State Directors of Veterans' Affairs on VA's programs for women Veterans in collaboration with state Veterans agencies and Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs (OPIA).
  - Provides detailed information for women Veterans through participation in conferences, meetings, and outreach events, such as AMSUS (Society of Federal Health Agencies), AUSA National Conference, and other forums that focus on female Servicemembers and women Veterans' issues.
  - Educates other VA outreach staff and academic institutions regarding women Veterans.
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Drafts and recommends effective VA policies, practices, programs, and related activities for women Veterans.

- Hosts series of Advisory Committee on Women Veterans (ACWV) meetings.
- Supports ACWV to craft their biennial report to the Secretary and coordinates VA's response to the report's recommendations.
- Sponsors the National Training Summit on Women Veterans.

Promotes a positive image of women Veterans.

- Briefs all VA employees on women Veterans, their successes and their issues.
- Properly represents women Veterans in the Department's media products and promotes positive recognition by VA field offices and facilities.
- Addresses nontraditional forums (e.g., Girl Scouts, AARP, etc.) to educate them about women Veterans. Represents the Department in roundtable meetings and professional panels sponsored by advocates for women Veterans.
- Collaborates with Special Emphasis Program Office and Office of Diversity and Inclusion to recognize women Veterans during special emphasis events, including Women's History Month, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, etc.

### **Authorities**

P.L. 103-446

## **2.4.2 Center for Minority Veterans (CMV)**

### **Mission Statement**

The Center for Minority Veterans (CMV) promotes increased access to and use of VA services and benefits by minority Veterans.

### **Functions and Tasks**

Serves as the principal advisor to the SECVA on the unique needs of minority Veterans.

- Identifies barriers to benefits and health care access, promotes awareness of minority Veteran-related issues, develops strategies for improving minority Veterans' participation in existing VA programs, conducts outreach activities with minority Veteran stakeholders, and coordinates outreach activities conducted by Minority Veterans Program Coordinators (MVPCs) assigned to the three VA Administrations.
- Manages the activities of the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans (ACMV).
- Conducts the Biennial National Minority Veterans Program Coordinators (MVPCs) Training Conference for individuals from the three VA Administrations.

Conducts outreach to communities with high-minority populations and minority-serving institutions.

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- Selects venues to participate in or attend that will effectively promote the overall mission of the Center and the Department.
- Completes after action reports and conducts follow-up actions.
- Conducts joint outreach with other VA Program Offices/Administrations.
- Sponsors MVPCs outreach activities in VHA, NCA, and VBA.
- Reviews and analyzes MVPCs Quarterly Web-based Outreach Activity Reports.
- Coaches MVPC representatives from each VA Administration by providing best practices and areas for possible improvement.

Establishes new partnerships with minority stakeholders.

- Briefs leadership of minority-serving institutions and organizations on the mission and roles of the Center for Minority Veterans.
- Links external minority stakeholders with VA internal stakeholders.
- Links MVPCs with local affiliates of national-level minority stakeholders.

### **Authorities**

Title 38

P.L. 103-446 § 510

### **2.4.3 Advisory Committee Management Office (ACMO)**

The Advisory Committee Management Office (ACMO) is the coordinating office for VA's 24 Federal Advisory Committees.

### **Functions and Tasks**

- Establishes clear goals, standards, and uniform procedures for Advisory Committee activities.
- Ensures all VA Advisory Committee actions comply with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.
- Ensures VA Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public as appropriate and announced in the Federal Register.

### **2.4.4 Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (CFBNP)**

#### **Mission Statement**

CFBNP develops partnerships with and provides relevant information to faith-based, nonprofit, and community leaders and organizations in order to expand their knowledge of and participation in VA's programs and services to better serve our Nation's Veterans, their families, survivors, and caregivers.

**Functions and Tasks**

Cultivates and develops collaborative partnerships with faith-based, non-profit, and community leaders and organizations.

- Participates in the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships (WHOFBNP) Regional Connecting Communities for the Common Good Conferences.
- Hosts quarterly conference calls for Listserv members to provide information that will assist in their work with Veterans, their families, survivors, and caregivers.
- Convenes and facilitates workshops and break-out sessions at denominational conferences utilizing local and regional VA staff and local VA partners.
- Co-hosts Regional Veterans Roundtables in partnership with VBA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service and the Regional Office of the host city. The Roundtables provide information to attendees, faith-based, nonprofit, and community leaders and organizations about VA's programs and services. The Roundtables also encourage collaboration among attendees.

**Authorities**

E.O. 13342

E.O. 13199

**2.4.5 Office of Survivors Assistance (OSA)****Mission Statement**

Office of Survivors Assistance provides support to survivors of Veterans by identifying and informing them of the benefits and services offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Functions and Tasks**

- Serves as primary advisor to the Secretary for all matters related to VA programs, legislative issues, and other initiatives affecting survivors and dependents of survivors of Veterans and members of the Armed Forces.
  - Ensures that surviving spouses, children, and parents have information and access to all applicable benefits and services under the law.
  - Builds and maintains collaborative partnerships with local, state, and Federal agencies as well as VSOs, faith-based and community organizations, and other stakeholder groups in order to increase awareness of benefits and services available to survivors and their dependents.
  - Develops innovative outreach opportunities to reach survivors who are eligible but are not receiving benefits.
  - Participates in a variety of engagements to inform participants of the available benefits and services available to survivors.
  - Develops and provides communications materials and products for distribution to internal and external partners and organizations.
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- Disseminates communications materials at diverse events and advocates for the needs of survivors in the policy and programmatic decisions of VA.
- Tracks and recommends survivor legislative issues.
- Provides oversight of outreach programs to survivors at OSA events.
- Refers survivors to VA Administrations and Staff Offices to ensure they receive all benefits and services for which they are eligible.

**Authorities**

P.L. 110-389, Title II, § 222



- Oversees the administration of benefits and services to Veterans, Servicemembers, their dependents, and survivors. These benefits and services include compensation, pension, fiduciary services, educational opportunities, vocational rehabilitation and employment services, home ownership and insurance.
- Communicates VBA's vision, principles, policies, goals, expectations, and outcomes to the Office of the Secretary, other VA departmental officials, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Congress and the Government Accountability Office (GAO), Veterans, Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), other Federal agencies, and external stakeholders.
- Coordinates critical policy and program issues throughout the organization and externally.
- Manages and controls communications and fosters greater cooperation and communication both to and from internal and external stakeholders.
- Develops long-range plans and policies that impact VBA's long-term direction and strategy. Provides briefings, speeches, congressional testimony and high-level presentations regarding Veterans benefits programs. These presentations include both program oversight information and recommendations for new program initiatives.
- Establishes committees, advisory groups, and review bodies as necessary to provide information and advice to the USB.

The Office of the USB operates VBA's regional and central offices.

- Establishes and implements clear policies, practices, and management controls for all VBA business lines (Compensation Service, Pension, and Fiduciary Service, Education Service, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service (VRE), Loan Guaranty Service (LGY), Insurance Service, and Benefits Assistance Service).
- Leads, guides, and directs the field offices through VBA's Office of Field Operations and VBA programs through the business line and Staff Offices.
- Establishes standards and policies on national workforce issues.

The Office of the USB collaborates with the Department of Defense (DoD) to expand information sharing and identify improvements in benefits delivery and claims processing:

- Serves as Co-Chairperson of the Benefits Executive Council (BEC) and a member of the Joint Executive Council.
- Works with the Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Office and other DoD entities.
- Coordinates, develops, and recommends milestones for the BEC working groups that are reported in the Joint Executive Council (JEC) Strategic Plan and Annual Report.

### **3.1.1 VBA Office of the Chief of Staff**

#### **Overview**

The VBA Office of the Chief of Staff (COS) works closely with the USB, the Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits (PDUSB), and the Deputy Under Secretaries to manage VBA's day-

to-day operations. The Office of the COS serves as VBA's central coordination point for all high-level negotiations involving the establishment or implementation of policies, procedures, management, and operational activities of the Department and VBA. The COS manages VBA's executive correspondence, corporate communications, congressional and legislative affairs, and development of regulations. The COS provides executive leadership to the following offices: Office of Management, Office of Resource Management, Office of Performance Analysis and Integrity, and Office of Communications and Case Management.

### **Functions and Tasks**

The Office of the COS works closely with the USB to manage the day-to-day operations of the VBA.

- Coordinates the policies, plans, and operational approaches designed to most effectively carry out the mission of VBA.
- Coordinates, disseminates, and responds to all requests for information from VBA by the Department and the White House.
- Coordinates, disseminates, and responds to all requests for information from external stakeholders, such as members of Congress, VSOs, other Governmental agencies, and the general public.
- Ensures that VBA's communications are clear, concise, accurate, and aligned with VA's position and strategic direction.
- Manages VBA's Executive Correspondence Program to provide timely and accurate responses to inquiries by Congress and affiliated offices (Congressional Budget Office, Congressional Research Office, etc.), as well as, Veterans, Veterans' families, and the general public.
- Provides written testimony, prepares briefings, and prepares effective support to witnesses preparing for hearings and briefings that have an impact on the VHA and VA.
- Ensures that VBA works closely and effectively with our partners throughout the Department, including but not limited to the OSVA, Office of Management (fiscal and budget issues), OCLA, OPIA, OGC, and OPP.

The Office of the Chief of Staff develops, coordinates, and conducts corporate communications by expanding VBA's communication processes and efforts, and strengthening VBA's advocacy with Veterans, Servicemembers, and their families.

- Develops and executes an integrated VBA Communications Plan on transformation.
- Supports requirements for VBA senior leaders (speeches, briefing packets, and special graphics projects).
- Provides communications support to transformation activities that include embedded assistance to the VBA Implementation Center.
- Embeds VBA communications planning and processes in future VBA transformation efforts.

- Promotes VBA's transformation and greater public awareness of VBA's mission.

### **3.1.2 VBA/DoD Program Office**

#### **Overview**

The VBA/DoD Program Office provides a single point of oversight and accountability for VBA's collaboration with DoD. This office has operational responsibility for cooperative programs with VA and DoD. These responsibilities include the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES); the Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) program; the Quick Start Program; and the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), which includes implementation of the VOW to Hire Heroes Act (Nov. 21, 2011), and the White House Task Force Veterans Employment Initiative (VEI).

#### **Functions and Tasks**

The VBA/DoD Program Office works closely with the USB, the PDUSB, the COS, the VA/DoD Collaboration Office, and DoD officials to expand information sharing and identify improvements in benefits delivery and claims processing.

- Develops and coordinates VBA/DoD planning guidance.
- Supports and maintains the planning framework to effect implementation of VBA/DoD strategic goals, objectives, and strategies.
- Collaborates with the BEC and Health Executive Council (HEC) to collect and integrate functional capability requirements, define interagency requirements, and produce program roadmaps and architectures.
- Coordinates, develops, and recommends milestones for the BEC working groups that are reported in the JEC Strategic Plan and Annual Report.
- Defines business rules and requirements to develop or modify business processes.
- Develops plans for monitoring, leading, and conducting analysis of VBA/DoD to establish long-term plans, goals, and objectives, including identification of key milestones and constraints.
- Coordinates VBA/DoD responses to various high-level requests for planning information and subsequent achievements through reports.

#### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 306 Chapter 77

38 CFR § 2.6(b)

## **3.2 OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Strategic Planning (OSP) directs and coordinates VBA's transformation and innovation efforts to achieve strategic goals by focusing on re-engineering business processes,

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technology and infrastructure, and creating a culture centered on advocacy for Veterans. This includes leadership of VBA's three major initiatives (MI), Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS), Veterans Relationship Management (VRM), and Chapter 33 Long-Term Solution.

### **Functions and Tasks**

OSP directs VBA's strategic planning efforts.

- VBA's National planning guidance and strategic planning efforts are consistent with the strategic objectives and Department's agency priority goals (APGs) articulated by the Department.
- Maintains and implements VA/VBA strategic goals, objectives, and strategies.
- Drives VBA's transformation, ensures timelines are maintained and deadlines are met by monitoring and measuring progress toward strategic goals.

OSP directs VBA's claims transformation efforts.

- Identifies and recommends strategic initiatives to improve claims process.
- Works with internal and external stakeholders to successfully integrate VA leadership's directives.
- Ensures efficient, effective, and timely execution of assigned programs in accordance with established objectives, schedules, and program funds.
- Provides direction, coordination, and administrative support to the Implementation Center to ensure their success in monitoring and managing VBA's transformation.

OSP manages the strategic coordination efforts for VBA.

- Identifies and recommends issues for the Executive Synchronization Committee (ESC).
- Aligns and integrates VBA's VBMS, VRM, Office of Business Process Integration (OBPI), and Chapter 33 Long-Term Solution.
- Identifies and recommends issues for the Benefits Portfolio Executive Board/Benefits Portfolio Steering Committee.

OSP provides program and project management support for VBA.

- Establishes standard project management processes to ensure integration of major programs and project development for VBA and its stakeholders.
- Coordinates, measures, analyzes, and forecasts results of strategic initiatives by evaluating performance metrics and outcomes.

OSP implements information technology that maximizes efficient processing and payment of education benefit claims through the Chapter 33 Long-Term Solution.

- Assesses system capabilities needed based upon laws, statutes, and existing resources.
  - Composes business requirements and transmits to VA IT for development.
  - Develops automated rules-based technology for certain Post-9/11 GI Bill claims.
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- Provides subject matter expertise to assist VA IT during development efforts.
- Conducts user testing before and after system deployment.

OSP coordinates the Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution (PPBE) process to allocate resources within VBA.

- Provides guidance to Staff Offices and business lines on developing program proposals.
- Documents VBA's multi-year programming of resources.
- Identifies the policies, strategy, and prioritized goals for VBA.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 306 Chapter 77

38 CFR § 2.6(b)

## **3.2.1 Office of Business Process Integration**

### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Business Process Integration (OBPI) ensures that VBA's strategic needs and requirements for business and data systems are properly documented, integrated, and communicated. OBPI works with the OIT to facilitate the design, development, and implementation of business systems and information technology to enhance claims processing within VBA.

### **Functions and Tasks**

OBPI identifies the strategic business needs for VBA's IT systems.

- Develops and maintains a comprehensive VBA strategic vision for business and data systems.
- Manages business resources dedicated to VBA's legacy business IT systems and all other IT systems, and identifies key operational business requirements related to these IT systems.
- Manages VBA business and data systems investments to maximize return on investment.
- Supports "One VA" initiatives.
- Supports VBA Business Governance processes (portfolio reviews).
- Maintains an active list of portfolio initiatives for business systems/business capabilities.
- Identifies opportunities for portfolio integration and improvement.

OBPI facilitates the design, development, and implementation of VBA's business and information technology systems used for claim processing within VBA.

- Identifies and documents cross-cutting business requirements.
- Coordinates and executes large-scale, cross-cutting initiatives.

- Ensures business needs and requirements are properly documented, integrated, and communicated both internally and externally.
- Oversees the implementation of the Veterans Service Network (VETSNET).
- Prepares requests for development and information sharing activities.
- Coordinates with VBA's business lines and external agencies to develop and control business data sharing agreements.
- Develops and executes business application deployment strategies in coordination with the Office of Field Operations.
- Validates that applications meet business requirements through testing.
- Executes the preparation of business applications for production release.

OBPI manages VBA business and data systems to maximize return on investment.

- Identifies and documents cross-cutting processes.
- Collaborates and consults on IT budget execution.
- Represents VBA in the IT governance model.
- Provides oversight and executes the VBA governance plan.
- Executes acquisition management.
- Executes correspondence management and control.

OBPI facilitates the development of data requirements and integrates these elements across key business systems.

- Supports VBA long-term planning of business systems support.
- Identifies data requirements for critical business systems.
- Engages development teams and business sponsors to address the issues of data governance and data integrity across business systems and platforms.

OBPI facilitates the development of business reports and integrates these elements across key VBA IT systems.

- Coordinates VBA's effort to develop key business reports.
- Engages development teams, business sponsors, and VBA leadership to address the issues related to developing reports, information access, and information transparency.

### **Authorities**

Title 38 U.S.C.

Title 38 CFR

### 3.2.2 Veterans Benefits Management System Program Management Office

#### Mission Statement

The Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) Program Management Office (PMO) is developing an end-to-end paperless claims processing system that incorporates improved business processes with technology. VBMS will assist in eliminating the claims backlog and serve as the enabling technology for quicker, more accurate, and integrated claims processing in the future. Once deployed, the core mission of VBMS is to help improve the timeliness and quality of claims decisions and processes, and help our Veterans receive the high degree of service they expect and deserve.

#### Functions and Tasks

The VBMS PMO provides critical cross-program services, skills, and knowledge focused on the detailed business aspects of the integration and delivery of specific projects within the VBMS program.

- Ensures operational environment is established and ready to accept the deployed solution (facilities, infrastructure, trained staff, help desk, etc.). Serves as the primary point of contact to regional offices on matters related to transition management.
- Prepares analyses of alternative deployment strategies and selects or develops deployment strategy, directs the solution delivery schedule, serves as principle VBA representative to regional offices on deployment matters, and coordinates the implementation of VBMS PMO efforts related to deployment in concert with VBA Office of Field Operations.
- Establishes solution performance targets and assesses performance of deployed pilots against performance targets.
- Conducts user-acceptance testing, including acceptance sign-off, and coordinates with Business Process Management in the development of user-acceptance testing procedures.
- Identifies and documents end-user training requirements.

The VBMS PMO manages activities associated with the administration and investments for VBMS program.

- Coordinates the statements of work, independent Government cost estimates, source selection plans and other acquisition package materials.
- Formulates and executes the General Operating Expense (GOE) budget and supports OIT Exhibit 300 budget justification activities associated with the VBMS program.

The VBMS PMO manages program governance and performance management activities, and develops and implements key control processes for the VBMS program.

- Promotes adherence to VA standards and practices.
- Develops and implements key control processes, such as risk, schedule, configuration, and performance management processes.

The VBMS PMO leads strategic planning and tactical efforts for stakeholder engagement, organizational change management to ensure a clear, consistent understanding of the VBMS program.

- Develops and implements training, workforce readiness, and communication strategies to prepare the VBA workforce to successfully transition to new processes and technology.

The VBMS PMO leads the development, definition, and management of business requirements for all VBMS program stakeholders.

- Represents VBA to regional offices on matters related to gathering business requirements for VBMS.
- Formalizes the business process requirements.
- Re-engineers business processes.
- Develops and conducts user testing scenarios.
- Analyzes and recommends business policy and procedure updates to Compensation Service, Pension and Fiduciary Service, and Office of Field Operations resulting from re-engineering decisions.

#### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 306 Chapter 77

38 CFR § 2.6(b)

### **3.2.3 Veterans Relationship Management Program Management Office**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Veterans Relationship Management (VRM) Program Management Office (PMO) engages, empowers, and serves Veterans and other clients with seamless, secure, and on-demand access to benefit information and services.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

The VRM Program Management Office manages the Veterans Relationship Management Initiative's acquisitions and contracts by developing capabilities and enabling systems to drive performance and outcomes.

- Formulates and executes the VRM General Operating Expense (GOE) budget and supports OIT Exhibit 300 budget justification activities associated with the VRM program.
- Coordinates the statements of work, independent Government cost estimates, source selection plans, and other acquisition package materials.

The VRM PMO manages the internal and external communications for this initiative.

- Coordinates the marketing and branding of the initiative with strategic planning and communications for internal and external stakeholders and customers.
- Establishes and develops relationships with media groups to ensure a message of continuity and clarity is communicated to Veterans and their families. Manages and provides support for a seamless organizational transition throughout the initiative.
- Coordinates, facilitates, and supports training prior to system deployment and implementation across the Nation and across all stakeholder initiatives.
- Develops and manages stakeholder relationships to ensure VA is improving quality and accessibility of benefits to Veterans, increasing Veterans' satisfaction, providing services continuously, and improving VA employee satisfaction.

The VRM PMO oversees program planning that follows a strong VA-integrated operating model with a focus on VA's strategic principles of being people centric, results driven, and forward looking.

- Manages the performance reporting system and implementation by enabling convenient and seamless interaction across the initiatives.
- Manages and supports configuration control for the initiative by creating organizational value and driving performance and outcomes.
- Ensures program standards across the initiative to reduce cost, maintain quality, and meet emergent national needs.
- Oversees program scope and schedule to ensure the effective delivery of world-class benefits with financial resources.

The VRM PMO manages the oversight of business processes to establish a strong VA management infrastructure and integrated operating model.

- Oversees the requirements development and traceability process to ensure base-line deliverable documents within scope pursuant to Project Management Accountability System standards.
- Develops business use case scenarios and oversees user acceptance testing results that enable 21st century benefits delivery and services.
- Develops policies and procedures that improve the readiness to provide services as needed in a time of crisis.
- Coordinates the design of Veteran-centric systems and infrastructure with the National Call Centers, VHA, NCA, and other Federal agencies, such as DoD, Department of Health and Human Services, and Social Security Administration to enable 21st century benefits delivery and services.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 306 Chapter 77

38 CFR § 2.6(b)

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### 3.3 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR DISABILITY ASSISTANCE

#### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Disability Assistance (ODA) oversees the administration of benefits and services to Servicemembers, Veterans, their family members, and survivors.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

The Office of Disability Assistance coordinates initiatives, projects, and procedural changes for four of the VBA's seven business lines: Compensation Service, Pension and Fiduciary Service, Insurance Service, and Benefits Assistance Service.

- Coordinates input from the business lines for VBA's Annual Benefits Report that summarizes benefits and services provided by VBA.
- Coordinates and compiles data from the business lines for briefings to VBA leadership on activities and achievements.
- Ensures transformation initiatives are executed and aligned with VBA objectives.
- Directs and oversees new initiatives, objectives, policies, and standards established to improve VBA services and programs.
- Develops and presents solutions to problems that affect day-to-day program management activities.

ODA formulates and promulgates policies, regulations, plans, procedures, guidance, and instructions necessary to implement and maintain effective program operations for all business lines.

- Develops performance measures and conducts performance reviews to assess the functional capabilities of program areas within the business lines.
- Reviews proposed legislation and Executive Orders to conduct long-range planning and evaluate immediate and long-term impacts on the fiscal, manpower and economic resources of the business lines.
- Recommends changes to current laws to make Veterans benefit programs more goal-oriented, equitable, and efficient.
- Provides technical and professional direction to the business lines regarding benefit programs, such as policy statements, program guides, manuals, general operating instruction, and program evaluations.

ODA analyzes Departmentwide programs, functions, and organizations to determine whether current management systems efficiently accomplish objectives sought and whether they provide controls necessary for sound management.

- Maintains an efficient system of internal and external program integrity; coordinates integrity issues with the GAO and OIG, and ensures that the business lines implement appropriate corrective actions.

- Issues directives to the business lines regarding internal management and informs VBA leadership of accomplishments and operational problems within the program areas.

ODA formulates, executes, and analyzes budgets and resources.

- Reviews business-line needs and budget submissions for execution and formulation of their programs.
- Analyzes efficiencies and reassigns resources as needed to support the achievement of major VA initiatives.
- Evaluates budgetary compliance and develops planning mechanisms to forecast needs of the business lines.
- Participates in congressional hearings, conferences, and meetings to gain compliance, address and resolve issues, and concerns relating to program activities.

ODA supports VBA governance plan/portfolio for implementation and design of information technology systems.

- Advises and represents business lines at the Benefits Portfolio Executive Board and Benefits Portfolio Steering Committee meetings on various IT projects aimed to maximize the efficient delivery of benefits and services to Veterans.
- Identifies resource requirements to develop the policies and procedures of VBA systems, to achieve results and safeguard the integrity of VBA programs and data.
- Ensures business line compliance with developing VBA systems to maintain accountability in processes and sustain the strategic goals and objectives of the organization.

ODA conducts, plans, and organizes special or confidential projects, and/or management-directed studies.

ODA facilitates VBA's collaborative relationships with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

- Coordinates the USB's collaboration with VSOs, the BEC, the Senior Oversight Committee, the Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Office, and other DoD entities to expand information sharing and identify improvements in benefits delivery and claims processing.
- Communicates program objectives to OMB, OIG, GAO, state, and local government agencies, and congressional officials.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 306 Chapter 77

38 CFR § 2.6(b)

### 3.3.1 Compensation Service

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Compensation Service is to provide monthly payments to Veterans in recognition of the effects of disabilities, diseases, or injuries incurred or aggravated, during active military service.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Compensation Service develops rulemaking and policy requirements, and conducts advisory reviews in support of compensation benefit programs:

- Drafts proposed and final rules and develops Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs).
- Determines operational and policy requirements.
- Conducts advisory reviews, participates in special case reviews and prepares decision assessment documents to analyze the effects of decisions by the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.
- Represents the Advisory/Judicial Review Staff as a member of assigned project teams.
- Represents Compensation Service on legislative and policy matters and special projects.

Compensation Service develops and disseminates procedures for the administration of compensation benefit programs.

- Establishes and maintains computer-matching agreements between VBA and other Government agencies.
- Issues and administers procedural guidance implementing the laws governing VA benefits. This includes guidance for the pre-discharge programs: Benefits Delivery at Discharge, Quick Start, and Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES).
- Maintains and organizes the forms, publications, and letter templates for Compensation Service.
- Rewrites and organizes the M21-1MR Adjudication Procedures.

Compensation Service develops and facilitates oversees training and implementation of the skill-certification tests for VA employees involved in claims and appeals processing.

- Develops and facilitates training for new, intermediate-level, and journey-level employees.
  - Develops and monitors the National Training Plan for claims processors.
  - Collaborates with the Office of Field Operations and regional offices to ensure that all training products are accurate and consistent with Compensation Service directives and meet the needs of claims processors to produce accurate and timely completed claims and appeals.
  - Collaborates with contractors to develop new training products and methods of training delivery that utilize cutting-edge technology and allow desktop delivery to remote locations.
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- Develops and facilitates specialized training for Military Service Coordinators (MSC).
  - Collaborates with the Office of Field Operations to ensure training is accurate and relevant to the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for the MSC positions.

Compensation Service facilitates and monitors several multi-million dollar contracts to obtain medical disability examinations and support Compensation Service initiatives.

- Works with the contractors, regional offices, and VBA leadership to ensure all contracts are being utilized to the fullest extent to improve the timeliness and accuracy of claims processing.
- Develops and monitors contracts to audit the invoices received from the medical disability examination contractors and to report customer satisfaction scores for the medical disability examination contractors.
- Leads a team of contractors and field subject matter experts in developing and revising skill certification tests for employees and managers involved in claims processing.
- Monitors the performance of the contractor in facilitating and management of the skill-certification tests.
- Collaborates with the Office of Field Operations, regional office representatives, and Compensation Service staff to monitor the relevance and accuracy of the skill certification test content.
  - Works with the contractor to ensure that the test content is relevant to the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for employees and supervisors directly involved with claims processing.

Compensation Service assesses claims processing accuracy nationwide for rating and authorization workload.

- Controls and oversees the Systematic Technical Accuracy Review (STAR) program, which conducts rating consistency and special focus reviews with regular, random samples from each station.
  - Conducts monthly rating quality calls to disseminate STAR results/information to regional office personnel.
  - Posts monthly STAR reports for current and previous fiscal year to STAR Web page.
  - Publishes quarterly “QA Times” with articles on site visits, rating and authorization accuracy, rating consistency, and VHA exam reviews to support efforts to improve quality at the regional office level.
  - Analyzes quarterly rating data (grant rate and evaluation assignments) for most common diagnostic codes to identify inconsistencies in regional office rating determinations.
  - Conducts focused, audit-style reviews of samples of rating decisions based on results of data analysis described above.
  - Administers Inter-Rater Reliability Studies to assess nationwide consistency in eligibility determinations.
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- Collaborates with VHA's Disability Examination Management Office (DEMO) on VBA's compensation and pension examination requests process. This includes monitoring the accuracy of compensation and pension examination requests nationwide, maintaining the DEMO Collaboration Database (DEMO Web site) and Disability Benefits Questionnaires Switchboard.
- Conducts online rater satisfaction surveys of disability examination reports.
- Conducts regional office site visits to ensure that VBA policies and procedures pertaining to the compensation business line are followed consistently nationwide.
- Oversees rewrites and updates to VBA manual, M21-4, Appendix C, and Chapters 2 and 4.

Compensation Service enables the responsive and timely delivery of compensation and pension benefits through the development and maintenance of business line software applications, systems, and data.

- Develops VETSNET claims processing functionality to include business process analysis, requirements, testing and training, and help desk support.
- Develops new claims processing functionality to include business process analysis, requirements, testing, training, and help desk support, as well as business-side management of most critical compensation non-VETSNET/non-Virtual VA applications.
- Develops and maintains the Virtual VA Suite of Applications, a key enabling technology for paperless claims processing, which increases responses to Veterans' inquiries and claims needs by eliminating the boundaries associated with physical records.
- Provides critical support for any initiative aimed at reducing the use of paper in compensation claim processing including interagency partnerships.
- Leads the Private Medical Records program that utilizes private vendor claims development assistance to obtain Veterans' medical records from non-VA physicians.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapters 1, 11, 18, 51, 53, 61, 77

38 CFR Parts 34

Federal Advisory Committee Act (1972),

5 U.S.C. Appendix 2

### **3.3.2 Pension and Fiduciary Service**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Pension and Fiduciary (P&F) Service administers VA's needs-based pension program for wartime Veterans and their survivors, the parents' dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) program for dependent parents, DIC program for the survivors of Veterans who die as a result of a service-connected disability, and burial benefits program for survivors and other individuals who

paid for a deceased Veteran's burial or funeral. P&F Service also administers VA's fiduciary program for beneficiaries who cannot manage their VA benefits.

### **Functions and Tasks**

The P&F Service manages and oversees the Department's fiduciary program.

- Develops, maintains, coordinates, and implements the regulations, policies, and procedures governing the fiduciary program.
- Provides technical, program-specific advice regarding existing and proposed legislation affecting the fiduciary programs.
- Develops, maintains, and implements national training standards for VA employees adjudicating fiduciary requirements. Develops, validates, maintains, and deploys printed and electronic materials supporting classroom and online training for the fiduciary programs.
- Conducts national quality reviews of regional offices and fiduciary hub decisions.
- Develops protocols for and conducts site assistance visits for the purposes of (1) assisting the regional offices and fiduciary hubs in complying with published policies and procedures, (2) identifying areas for improvement, and (3) establishing best practices.
- Addresses the concerns of external and internal stakeholders in matters related to the fiduciary program.
- Conducts outreach to educate individuals, train current fiduciaries, and recruit potential fiduciaries willing to serve beneficiaries in their best interest as payees.
- Works with VA business lines to improve current information technology applications and create new applications to enhance the timeliness, quality, and transparency of fiduciary decisions.

In administering the pension, DIC, parents' DIC, and burial benefit programs, P&F Service:

- Develops, maintains, coordinates, and implements the regulations, policies, and procedures.
  - Provides technical, program-specific advice regarding existing and proposed legislation. Develops, maintains, and implements national training standards for VA employees who adjudicate claims.
  - Develops, validates, maintains, and deploys printed and electronic materials supporting classroom and online training.
  - Conducts national quality reviews of adjudication decisions performed at the VA Pension Management Centers (PMCs).
  - Develops protocols for and conducts site visits for the purposes of assisting the PMCs in complying with policies and procedures, identifying areas for improvement, and establishing best practices.
  - Addresses the concerns of external and internal stakeholders in matters related to programs administered by P&F service.
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- Coordinates with the Benefits Assistance Service to improve the outreach efforts to Veterans and survivors.
- Works with various business lines to improve current information technology applications and create new applications to improve the timeliness and transparency of benefit decisions.

**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 1315 Chapters 1, 13, 15, 23, 51, 53, 55, 61

38 CFR Parts 3, 13

**3.3.3 Insurance Service****Mission Statement**

The Insurance Service provides Veterans with life insurance benefits that may not be available from the commercial insurance industry due to loss or impaired insurability resulting from military service, and provides universally available life insurance benefits to Servicemembers and their families, as well as traumatic injury protection insurance for Servicemembers. All benefits and services will be provided in an accurate, timely, and courteous manner and at the lowest achievable administrative cost. Insurance coverage will be provided in reasonable amounts at competitive premium rates. A competitive, secure rate of return will be ensured on investments held on behalf of the insured.

**Functions and Tasks**

Insurance Service provides the same or better life insurance benefits than those available to private citizens when these programs were established. These include the National Service Life Insurance (NSLI), United States Government Life Insurance (USGLI), Veterans' Special Life Insurance (VSLI) and Veterans' Reopened Insurance (VRI) programs.

- Pays insurance disbursements, including death claims, loans, and cash-surrender requests.
- Maintains current policies by handling policyholders' requests, including processing dividend distributions, change-of-plan, and reinstatement requests.
- Offers a variety of options for policyholders to pay their USGLI premiums, including deduction from compensation or pension benefits, deduction from annual dividend distribution, deduction from retired service pay, electronic funds transfer, and waiver of premiums or payment by check.
- Sets policy reserves and formulates dividend scales for each USGLI program based on the mortality experience and investment earnings of the funds.

Insurance coverage and services will be provided to Veterans who have lost their ability to purchase commercial insurance at standard (healthy) rates because of their service-connected

disabilities. These include the Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance (S-DVI) and the Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI) programs.

- Underwrites and issues USGLI policies to eligible disabled service-connected Veterans.
- Reviews and recommends VBA's position on legislation related to the insurance programs.
- Drafts legislative proposals.
- Prepares regulatory changes to implement new legislation and otherwise affect change.
- Develops, plans, and oversees implementation of new products designed to improve benefits and enhance Veterans' financial security.

Insurance coverage and services will be provided to Active-Duty and Reserve members of the uniformed services that are commonly provided by large-scale civilian employers. These include the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) and the Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) programs, Family Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (FSGLI) and Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection (TSGLI).

- Provides supervision, guidance, and direction to the Government-sponsored, commercially administered SGLI, VGLI, FSGLI, and TSGLI programs.
- Reviews and recommends VBA's position on legislation related to the insurance programs. Drafts legislative proposals.
- Develops, plans, and oversees implementation of new products designed to improve benefits and enhance Servicemembers', Veterans', and their beneficiaries' financial security.
- Determines appropriate premium rates for the SGLI and VGLI programs based on actual and projected program experience.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapters 19, 21, 77

38 CFR Parts 6-9

## **3.3.4 Benefits Assistance Service**

### **Mission Statement**

The Benefits Assistance Service (BAS) serves as advocates for Servicemembers, Veterans, eligible beneficiaries and other stakeholders, to ensure they are knowledgeable and informed about accessing and receiving VA benefits and services.

### **Functions and Tasks**

BAS facilitates and oversees outreach for VBA.

- Assists regional offices, regional processing offices and Regional Loan Centers in actively engaging Servicemembers, Veterans, and their families to inform them about VA benefits and services.

- Assists local, state, and National partners with outreach activities targeted at specific groups, such as minority Veterans, women Veterans, elderly Veterans, homeless Veterans, former prisoners of war, incarcerated Veterans, faith-based organizations, and tribal affairs.
- Coordinates with other Federal agencies to provide benefits assistance and casualty assistance, the Overseas Military Service Program, the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), National Guard Transition Assistance Advisors Program, Wounded Warrior Regiments, and the Yellow Ribbon Program.

BAS ensures quality by overseeing and training the eight National Call Centers for the VBA toll-free number, the National Pension Call Center, the National Inquiry Routing and Information System Response Center, and the Regional Office Public Contact Teams.

- Develops and updates training materials for public contact representatives (PCRs).
- Develops procedures and provides tools to respond to inquiries, including those made through the Inquiry Routing and Information System (IRIS), with accurate and current information relating to policies and procedures pertaining to benefits and services.
- Oversees and manages customer satisfaction surveys to help VBA identify and develop process improvements.
- Facilitates call monitoring to ensure the dissemination of accurate information and compliance to policies and procedures during telephone contact with VBA customers and their dependents.
- Facilitates call center site visits to ensure that VBA policies and procedures are followed to promote efficiencies.
- Provides training to call center managers and coaches to ensure they are knowledgeable of operations, benefits, services, policies, and procedures, and can effectively manage, coach and mentor PCRs.

BAS governs and oversees VBA Web communications.

- Oversees and manages all VBA Internet and intranet content, to include the creation of new Web sites, application approvals, and maintain VBA's social media presence.
  - Ensures all VBA Web pages are in compliance with VA and VBA policies and procedures for establishing and maintaining Web sites per VA Directive/Handbook 6102.
  - Identifies potential training topics and conducts training as necessary.
  - Analyzes VBA Web content and user needs, and evaluates other organizations' best practices and technologies to improve VBA Web services.
  - Participates in VA committees and boards regarding implementing VA and Federal Web standards and maximizing VA's effectiveness on the Web.
  - Supports the development of content and self-service business requirements for the eBenefits portal and assists regional offices in promoting and issuing DoD self-service logons for the use with the eBenefits portal.
  - Serves as Department lead for Benefits.gov.
-

- Manages and represents VBA on the administration of the IRIS.
- Provides primary administrator oversight of the Veterans Tracking Application and assists in identifying appropriate business requirements for the required modifications.

BAS serves as VBA's liaison with our VSOs and DoD partners.

- Facilitates partnerships with VSOs/stakeholders through recurring meetings and relationships to keep them apprised of VBA activities.
- Collaborates and partners with the DoD on numerous initiatives, task forces, and work groups to enhance benefits delivery and customer service.
- Collaborates with numerous Federal and state partners to assist in the delivery of benefits and services, which may include critical and sensitive missions.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. §§ 306, 320 Chapters 20, 63, 77

38 CFR § 2.6(b)

## **3.4 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) aligns policies, procedures, and strategic priorities, and develops partnerships (i.e., schools, states, lenders, prospective employers) and interagency agreements (i.e., Department of Education, Department of Labor, and DoD) to promote economic opportunities for Veterans by providing access to education, vocational rehabilitation, employment and affordable home ownership.

### **Functions and Tasks**

OEO coordinates initiatives, projects, and procedural changes for three business lines: Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VRE), Education, and Loan Guaranty (LGY).

- Develops and maintains tracking mechanisms to manage business line activities.
- Facilitates and monitors the implementation of new legislation and delivers results to VBA leadership.
- Compiles data and presents briefings to VBA leadership on activities and achievements of OEO business lines.
- Manages input from OEO business lines and coordinates with VBA leadership to implement policy and procedural changes.
- Works collaboratively with business lines to ensure transformation initiatives are executed in sync with VBA objectives.

OEO provides direction and input on policies that govern the OEO business lines.

- Collaborates with VBA leadership in the development of new policies to ensure alignment with economic opportunity objectives.
- Communicates with OEO business lines and delivers strategic feedback to VBA leadership on proposed policy and procedural changes.
- Delivers guidance to business lines to ensure compliance with the objectives of VBA leadership.

OEO ensures that budgets and resources for the OEO business lines are aligned to maximize outcomes.

- Identifies interconnecting OEO business line needs and allocates resources to improve service delivery to Veterans.
- Analyzes efficiencies and reassigns resources of OEO business lines to support achievement of major VA initiatives.
- Evaluates budgetary performance and develops planning mechanisms to forecast needs of OEO business lines.

OEO develops and implements strategy plans that create synergies and cross-collaboration among OEO business lines.

- Collects, interprets, and analyzes qualitative and quantitative data pertaining to business line activities and benefit administration.
- Identifies areas where synergies already exist or could be developed to maximize economic outcomes for Veterans.
- Creates and manages cross-functional work groups among OEO business lines to coordinate activities and enhance overall benefit delivery to Veterans.
- Ensures OEO business line resources are properly aligned to meet interconnected needs.

OEO leads activities with agencies that influence economic opportunity outcomes for Veterans.

- Coordinates with external governmental and nongovernmental agencies to produce better outcomes in the delivery of benefit services to Veterans.
  - Leads VBA's efforts and provides staff support for multiple joint governing bodies, including the VA/DoD/Department of Labor Task Force on employment issues.
  - Coordinates VBA responses to external requirements and mandates, such as those created by Congress.
  - Represents VBA at National events and perform outreach activities to increase visibility and awareness of benefits available to Veterans, such as VA career fairs, small business conferences, VSO events, etc.
  - Facilitates targeted outreach campaigns to disseminate information about OEO business line benefit programs and the services they provide.
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**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 306 Chapter 77

38 CFR § 2.6(b)

**3.4.1 Education Service****Mission Statement**

The mission of Education Service is to provide educational assistance to Veterans and support all beneficiaries to achieve their educational, vocational and/or professional goals. Educational Assistance assists with the readjustment to civilian life; restores opportunities lost because of military service; extends higher education benefits to qualified persons who may not otherwise be able to afford it; aids military recruitment and retention of highly qualified personnel; and enhances the National workforce.

**Functions and Tasks**

Education Service develops and implements regulations, other policy guidance and procedures needed to translate legislation into the effective delivery of education benefits.

- Drafts proposed, interim final and final regulations to govern new or modified education benefit programs.
- Develops and disseminates procedural guidance for processing, payment, and oversight of all VA education benefit programs.
- Proposes and maintains VA information collection requests with the Office of Management and Budget to facilitate processing of benefits and data collection from beneficiaries.

Education Service supports the Regional Processing Office and Central Office staffs and some external stakeholders on VA education benefits and other relevant competencies.

- Analyzes training needs of staff and external stakeholders, such as School Certifying Officials and State Approving Agencies (SAA).
- Designs and develops training materials and manuals, including online training.
- Delivers training using appropriate methodology, such as train-the-trainer and Web-based training.
- Evaluates and reports training outcomes.

Education Service manages quality assurance, payment accuracy, program appraisal, internal control management, and equitable relief determinations.

- Conducts annual site visits at Regional Processing Offices and reviews a subset of education cases to determine accuracy.
- Monitors and reports field office workload and productivity for Education Service purposes in conjunction with the Office of Field Operations.

- Provides direct customer service to beneficiaries on an ad hoc basis, and addresses congressional inquiries submitted to VA on behalf of claimants.

Education Service provides education and outreach on VA education benefits to internal and external stakeholders and beneficiaries.

- Conducts workshops and presentations at various outreach events to disseminate information and build relationships with stakeholders.
- Updates education benefit pamphlets, GI Bill Web site, GI Bill Facebook page, and other media.
- Disseminates information about VA education benefit programs and services.

Education Service develops effective education business line procedures and IT systems to support claims processing, and effectively implement statutes and regulations governing VA education benefits.

- Composes business requirements for Chapter 33 Long-Term Solution and other systems required for education benefit processing.
- Conducts user-acceptance testing and associated processes to ensure acceptable system performance before deployment.
- Updates M22-4 procedural manual as needed to support claims processing activities.

Education Service maintains, and enhances legacy systems to facilitate education benefit processing.

- Assesses existing legacy systems regularly and in response to program changes to ensure necessary functionality and identify any required modifications.
- Develops and submits project initiation requests to implement modifications or develop data reports for use by Education Service.
- Monitors system performance to ensure no interruption of claims processing.
- Serves as Education Service liaison on corporate IT initiatives.

Education Service maintains and enforces SAA contracts and Yellow Ribbon Program agreements and serves as approval authority for education programs.

- Revises, issues, and processes SAA contracts annually to ensure maximum value to VA.
- Provides relevant training to and oversight of SAAs.
- Issues guidance and monitors performance of education compliance survey specialists.
- Supports the administration of the Yellow Ribbon component of the Post-9/11 GI Bill, which allows VA to enter into voluntary agreements with schools to cover beneficiaries' unmet educational expenses.

Collaborates with the OEO and aligns activities with LGY and VRE Service.

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**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapters 30, 32-36

38 CFR Part 21, Subparts B, C, D, G, H, K, P

P.L. No. 112-56

10 U.S.C. § 510

10 U.S.C. Chapters 1606-1607

**3.4.2 Loan Guaranty Service****Mission Statement**

The Loan Guaranty (LGY) Service maximizes the opportunity for Veterans and Servicemembers to obtain, retain, and adapt homes by providing a viable and fiscally responsible benefit program in recognition of their service to the Nation.

**Functions and Tasks**

LGY provides a viable and progressive loan program as a benefit for eligible Veterans and Servicemembers to obtain homes.

- Increases the participation of private-sector program stakeholders and participants (i.e., lenders, builders, real estate agents, and appraisers) through varied communication/outreach activities and training sessions.
- Builds and enhances cross-cutting partnerships with private-sector trade groups (e.g., Mortgage Bankers Association), mortgage banks, and other Government agencies (e.g., the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the DoD, and the Department of Treasury).
- Increases Veteran and Servicemember awareness of their home loan guaranty benefit through varied communication/outreach activities.
- Ensures that the collateral securing VA guaranteed home loans meets VA's minimum property requirements.

LGY maximizes fiscally responsible opportunities for Veterans and Servicemembers to retain their homes or avoid foreclosure during times of financial hardship.

- Ensures VA has seamless access to life-of-loan information so that VA loan servicing staff can advocate for Veterans who are facing loan default.
  - Forges partnerships across Government agencies to ensure unified Government response to VA borrowers in times of national emergency or economic crisis to ensure borrowers have maximized opportunity to retain their homes and avoid foreclosure.
  - Works with private sector loan servicers to ensure that borrowers are offered a comprehensive set of financial options that could help them retain their home or avoid foreclosure (e.g., loan modifications, repayment plans, and deeds-in-lieu of foreclosure or short sales).
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- Conducts outreach to Veterans, private-sector loan servicers and other industry stakeholders to ensure that VA remains at the forefront of the industry in offering home retention options and alternatives to foreclosure.

LGY adapts delivery of industry best practices and makes timely changes as necessary when technology or the marketplace generates improvements in the home loan process.

- In keeping with mortgage industry trends, LGY will undertake and support initiatives to ensure Veterans and other program stakeholders have secure, easy access to program information and benefit process information, and that they have the ability to interact with VA for benefits and services at a time and place that is convenient to them.

LGY effectively and efficiently administers the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant program to enable eligible severely disabled Veterans and Servicemembers to live as independently as possible.

- Conducts initial interviews with Veterans and their families to explain the SAH grant benefit process and how it may be of assistance in meeting their disability-related housing needs.
- Conducts a feasibility inspection to determine if an existing home can be adapted to meet a Veteran's housing needs and SAH benefit requirements.
- Assists Veterans with locating and educating contractors/builders regarding SAH minimum property requirements and other accessible features.
- Conducts cost analysis and program oversight with desk and field reviews to minimize potential fraud, waste, and abuse due to misinterpretation of construction plans and contracts.
- Acts as a mediator to resolve complaints between Veterans and third parties involved with SAH program administration.

LGY provides direct-loan mortgage financing to Native American Veterans who desire to live on Federal Trust land.

- Conducts outreach to Native American tribes and their members to increase awareness of the program.
- Enters into memorandums of understanding that outline the rights and responsibilities of the respective Governmental entities.
- Funds direct loans to qualified Native American Veterans living on Federal Trust land.
- Conducts construction compliance inspections on new homes that secure Native American direct loans.

LGY ensures internal oversight of the home loan program is systematic and forward-looking, and ensures that program risks and internal controls are adequately assessed and monitored.

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- Conducts audits/reviews of private-sector lenders, servicers, appraisers, and general contractors/builders to ensure they adhere to VA's laws, regulations, and policies for delivering the VA home loan guaranty benefit and program services.
- Conducts regular reviews of the work being done by Regional Loan Center staff (LoanSTAR, site visits, ad hoc analysis, etc.) to ensure field stations are in compliance with VA's laws, regulations, and policies for delivering the VA home loan guaranty benefit and program services.
- Conducts thorough oversight/reviews of LGY contracts to ensure compliance with key contract provisions and to ensure that payments made to contractors are appropriate.
- Conducts regular and iterative internal control reviews and assessments of all LGY business processes so that all potential risks are identified, evaluated, and mitigated as appropriate.

LGY markets VA-acquired properties for sale in a manner which maximizes return on investment to the Government and minimizes the time properties are held in inventory.

- Prepares properties for sale by inspecting, winterizing, and performing necessary repairs.
- Posts properties for market in a public manner.
- Manages properties that are in inventory to minimize potential damage and resultant cost to taxpayers.
- Offers VA-backed financing to qualified purchasers of VA-acquired properties.

LGY collaborates with the OEO and aligns activities with Education Service and VRE Service as appropriate.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapters 30, 32-36

38 CFR Part 21, Subparts B, C, D, G, H, K, P

P.L. 112-56

10 U.S.C. § 510

10 U.S.C. Chapters 1606-1607

### **3.4.3 Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VRE) program provides services and assistance necessary to enable Veterans with service-connected disabilities to become employable and obtain and maintain suitable employment, and to the maximum extent possible, achieve independence in daily living.

**Functions and Tasks**

VRE develops and implements strategic and tactical plans to accomplish the mission as a component of VA's overall mission.

VRE provides guidance and counsel to regional offices on a variety of issues impacting the VRE program.

- Conducts monthly calls and provides corresponding newsletters to regional offices in order to ensure information is documented to ensure consistency.
- Maintains the Knowledge Management Portal (KMP), which centralizes all VRE documents, to include the M28 Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Procedures Manual, circulars, letters, and training materials. The KMP enables the VRE regional office staff to operate within standardized guidelines.
- Develops and expands the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Electronic Performance Support System (EPSS), an online reference, and information tool designed to enhance performance of VRCs by providing just-in-time work aids.
- Develops and deploys Training Performance Support Systems (TPSS) to ensure training is available and to ensure high performance and consistency in all job positions.

VRE develops regulations and policies that drive effective and efficient processes.

- Conducts ongoing review of regulations to ensure that they result in the most effective delivery of vocational rehabilitation benefits.
- Develops and controls regulations to incorporate new laws or policies that impact the VRE program.
- Develops legislative proposals for changes and improvements to the VRE program.
- Reviews, analyzes, and prepares views and costing for legislative proposals initiated by other VA or other Federal organizational elements that may impact VRE service delivery operations.
- Increases program awareness by establishing strategies to rebrand the public face of VRE; builds appropriate message to reach today's Veteran population; determines multiple forms of marketing and associated materials appropriate to increase program awareness; and monitors effectiveness to revise future efforts.
- Continues VRE's Business Process Re-engineering (BPR), which will maximize Veteran self service, counselor and Veteran tools, and simplify end-to-end processes for Veterans and professional staff. Updates corresponding metrics, quality assurance, and policy and procedures to support BPR changes.
- Simplifies access for Veterans to find employment by redesigning VRE's Veteran-centric online job portal, VetSuccess.gov. Continues to enhance Veteran tools, expands online job opportunities, and upgrades content.

VFE formulates and executes the budget for the program.

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- Formulates the budget for upcoming years based on current and future policies, legislation, and changing Veteran needs and demographics.
- Ensures budget focuses on core tactical and strategic goals. Coordinates with ORM to finalize budgetary needs and assist in preparing the President's Budget.
- Monitors budget execution and adjusts budget as needed to meet emerging VRE or VBA mission.
- Monitors and reports on the status of the general operating budget, funding of program, interagency agreements and service contracts.
- Administers national allocations to the Revolving Fund Loan (RFL) Program and the Educational Vocational (EdVoc) Fund.
- Reviews and processes all service contracts through the acquisitions' review staff.
- Ensures all acquisitions are in compliance with the acquisition process and support the Department's socioeconomic goals for small and disadvantaged businesses.

VRE oversees regional outreach and service provision to Veterans.

- Provides quantifiable measures of the accuracy of decisions, procedures, and service provision in order to evaluate regional office performance.
- Conducts site visits to evaluate each VRE division's program management and operational processes for accuracy, consistency in service delivery, program integrity, and vulnerabilities to waste, fraud, and abuse of benefits.
- Develops and provides training based on identified trends.
- Conducts case reviews of a random sample of cases from each regional office on a monthly basis to evaluate for accuracy of decisions and provision of services.
- Identifies required actions for correction of errors and provides them to the Office of Field Operations and the appropriate regional office for action.
- Identifies trends in order to evaluate management, resource, system, policy, and training needs.

VRE provides technical and advisory support to its divisions regarding regulations, policies, and procedures.

- Serves as technical consultant/advisor to VRE regional offices on rehabilitation policy, employment, and independent living services.
- Investigates and responds to a variety of program-related inquiries including Veteran, congressional, and all other stakeholder inquiries.
- Applies knowledge of current program legislation, policy, and rehabilitation trends to investigate, analyze and complete requests for administrative case reviews, advisory opinions, employee suggestions, or complaints.
- Makes recommendations to modify procedures, forms, and form letters based on regional office staff input.

- Establishes and maintains relationships with other VA service-level organizations and other Federal agencies, such as Department of Labor and Small Business Administration.

VRE oversees staff training programs.

- Analyzes training needs of VA central and regional office staff to identify gaps and training needs related to the delivery of VRE services. Develops a training plan that is comprehensive, clear, and that satisfies the needs for both novice and expert personnel.
- Develops leaders with well-planned training programs aligned with VRE and VA business objectives and strategies for both novice and experienced personnel.
- Develops VACO staff by designing training programs tailored to the specific needs and function of VRE service and the impact on the overall business line strategy and goals.
- Ensures delivery of training in multi-channel ways, taking advantage of technological advances.

VRE implements and provides oversight of effective outreach programs to ensure Servicemembers and Veterans are provided with opportunities to participate in the VRE program.

- Collaborates with DoD to conduct outreach and early intervention counseling at Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) locations and through the Coming Home to Work Program (CHTW).
- Collaborates with the VHA, colleges, and universities to ensure supportive services are provided to the Post-9/11 GI Bill student-Veteran through the VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) program.
- Coordinates and conducts effective outreach to special Veteran populations to increase participation and ensure successful outcomes, such as Guard and National Reserve components, female Veterans, etc.

VRE communicates and establishes agreements with employers to connect job-ready Veterans with employment opportunities at the regional office level and oversees employment activities.

- Establishes and maintains a national and local network of potential private and public sector employers through the use of employment coordinators' "account management" approach and through marketing the use of the VA VetSuccess.gov Web site.
  - Plans, coordinates, and participates in job fairs to promote the value of hiring VRE program graduates and expose job-ready Veterans to potential employers.
  - Reviews, assesses, and defines policy or program issues regarding employment services provided to Veterans with disabilities, and improving services to meet the employment needs of Veterans.
  - Promotes the use of special hiring authorities, the special employment incentive programs, internships, and tax incentives to maximize employment of Veterans.
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VRE manages requirements for data to analyze performance metrics in support of Department goals.

- Analyzes existing data for organizational performance to ensure VRE exceeds Veterans' expectations of quality, timeliness, and responsiveness.
- Enhances data reporting to support changing organizational requirements.
- Provides ad hoc and recurring reports to regional offices to assist in managing and overseeing regional office operations.
- Utilizes results to identify trends that necessitate changes in procedures and/or regional office training.

VRE procures and governs contracts.

- Collaborates with the Center for Acquisition Innovation (CAI) and the OGC on the centralized acquisition and governance of VRE service contracts.
- Provides guidance and training assistance to regional office VRE managers and contracting specialists in the areas of contracting policy and procedures.
- Ensures the Departmentwide Small Businesses, Small Disadvantaged Businesses, Women-Owned Small Businesses, Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses, Veteran-Owned Small Businesses, and Historically Underutilized Businesses are considered and documented in all VRE acquisition packages.

VRE continues to develop and refine effective IT systems.

- Develops and modifies requirements for existing and new IT systems to enable VRE staff to meet and exceed Veteran expectations of quality, timeliness, and responsiveness.
- Develops Veteran-facing tools in collaboration with VRM to assist Veterans in maximizing self service and expand access to tools that maximize success throughout the rehabilitation continuum.
- Updates tools that make policy, procedures, regulations, and training materials easily accessible to staff.

VRE collaborates with the OEO and aligns activities with LGY and Education Service as appropriate.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapters 1, 18, 31, 35, 36

38 CFR Part 21, Subparts A, C, D, M

### 3.5 OFFICE OF FIELD OPERATIONS

#### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Field Operations (OFO) oversees operations at VBA's area offices, regional offices (ROs), the Records Management Center (RMC), and the Appeals Management Center (AMC). Additionally, OFO oversees operations at satellite offices that are located in cities and areas with significant demand for benefits counseling. These operations consist of compensation and vocational rehabilitation claims and appeals processed at all ROs; pension claims, and appeals processed at the three pension management centers; housing benefits claims and appeals processed at the Regional Loan Centers at eight of the ROs; education benefits claims and appeals processed at the regional processing centers at four ROs; and Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) remands and grants processed at the AMC.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

OFO ensures that field offices deliver benefits and services to Veterans, Servicemembers, their families, and survivors effectively and efficiently.

- Reviews and evaluates management goals and objectives for VBA field and area offices, and helps develop achievable performance measures that ensure the quality and consistency of benefits delivery systems.

OFO facilitates performance and workload management for VBA's field offices.

- Ensures VBA benefits and services are provided in a timely, objective manner with respect to speed, accuracy, and customer satisfaction.
- Evaluates the performance of regional and area offices, and the Appeals Management Center (AMC).
- Monitors, tracks, and evaluates national workload systems.
- Oversees employee development, and rewards and recognition programs.

OFO oversees resource management for VBA's field offices.

- Analyzes national field operations budget execution.
- Recommends nominations for centralized field positions to USB.
- Ensures VA-wide Small Business Program Goals for Small Businesses, Small Disadvantaged Businesses, Women-Owned Small Businesses, Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses, Veteran-Owned Small Businesses, and Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Zone Small Businesses are considered in VBA acquisitions.

OFO ensures program and data integrity compliance at the field offices.

- Plans, develops, coordinates, and implements effective information security procedures as identified by OMB, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, VA policies, and VBA policy and guidance documents.

OFO provides the area offices, regional offices, RMC, and AMC with direction, guidance, and oversight when new and revised programs, policies, initiatives, and applications are implemented.

- Ensures policies, initiatives, and applications are implemented consistently nationwide.
- Monitors, tracks, and evaluates the cost and effectiveness of implemented changes.
- Provides senior leadership with feedback from the field.

OFO interacts with Veterans and national stakeholders.

- Communicates VBA policy, benefits programs, and procedures with national stakeholders (VSOs, Congress, VA, VHA, and public forums).
- Supports and assists audits and reviews conducted by the OIG, GAO, and others. Reviews and takes action on audit findings.

OFO oversees workplace and employee interaction.

- Promotes and maintains an effective labor-management relations program.
- Creates and maintains a working environment that is free of discrimination and assures diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
- Ensures that plans exist and are adequately implemented to recruit, select, train, coach, retain, motivate, empower, and advance employees; and promotes the needs and goals of the individual and the organization.
- Provides a safe, healthy work environment for employees.
- Develops, implements, and completes action plan methodology to address All-Employee Survey results.

OFO manages AMC:

- Supervises AMC, VBA's centralized processing center for appeals remanded by BVA.
- Monitors, tracks, and evaluates AMC's performance and workload.
- Partners with BVA to analyze and monitor remand trends.

OFO manages the National Capital Region Military Service Coordinators (MSC).

- Supervises VBA's Military Service Coordinators located at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 306, Chapter 77

38 CFR § 2.6(b)

### **3.6 OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT**

#### **Overview**

The Office of Management (OMGT) directs and oversees VBA's Offices of Employee Development and Training, Acquisitions, Administration, Emergency, and Facilities, Human Resources and Diversity Management and Equal Employment Opportunity.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

OMGT ensures that policies, concepts, and strategic approaches in offices under the jurisdiction of the Office of Management are successfully implemented in support of VBA's Veterans benefits programs and services.

- Advises VBA and Department officials on problems involving the relationship of specific work performed in OMGT with respect to broader programs and its impact on such programs.
- Liaises with the Department on issues regarding services and programs under the supervision of the OMGT.
- Recommends to the Under Secretary for Benefits plans, policies, regulations, procedures, standards, and legislation for VBA-wide application.
- Serves as a member of VBA's Executive Resources Board, Performance Review Board, and several senior-level task forces at the Departmental level.

OMGT oversees human resources management matters (such as recruitment, placement, succession planning, position management, classification, and employee and labor relations) for VBA Central Office staffs and field offices.

- Ensures appropriate policies and plans exist to recruit, retain, and advance VBA employees.
- Ensures the successful execution and maximum use of human capital management principles and resources at all organizational levels.
- Administers VA's labor and employee relations program working with VA labor partners and OGC to provide beneficial guidance to VBA leadership on national grievances, unfair labor practices unit clarification, and other sensitive labor and employee relations issues.

OMGT oversees policy development and procedures for VBA's activities in the areas of emergency preparedness, facilities, environmental and materiel management, custody, and movement of Veterans' records and acquisition of service Department records needed to process Veterans' claims.

- Provides effective, efficient, economical direction, control, and operation of VBA nationwide programs and services.
- Manages the areas of capital investment, privacy and security, and equipment inventory listing.

- Oversees VBA occupational safety and health program, forms, and records management, directives and publications, and VA Web management.
- Administers VBA's space management program for nationwide procurement and utilization of space and the design of modern office systems and environments.
- Leads the VBA emergency management and physical security programs in response to emergencies and disasters to reduce property loss, maintain public safety, and preserve continuity of benefits and services to Veterans and their families.
- Administers VBA's Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act to ensure the right of access to Federal Department records as required by law.

OMGT provides direction, guidance, and support to the field and Central Office on acquisition-related issues.

- Ensures that contracts are processed accurately and awarded on time.
- Provides support and guidance on Federal Acquisition Certifications in Contracting (FAC-C) Warrant Applications.
- Ensures that VBA's acquisition workforce accomplishes requisite training, education, and competency levels to successfully manage the acquisition cycle.

As the head of contracting activities (HCA) for VBA, OMTG establishes and manages VBA's procurement program and appointments of warranted individuals.

- Implements and oversees VBA contracting requirements.
- Serves as the approving authority for field and Central Office warrant holders.
- Terminates appointments of warranted individuals.

OMGT ensures that VBA's compliance with VA policies and directives, laws, executive orders, and other provisions that fosters a harmonious workplace that is free from discrimination with a diverse workforce that is committed to delivering quality care and services to our Nation's Veterans, Servicemembers, family members, and survivors.

- Processes Title VII EEO complaints filed with the ORM by employees and applicants who allege employment discrimination.
  - Processes Title VI discrimination complaints filed by students against proprietary schools referred by the Department of Education in accordance with VA's delegated agreement with the Department of Education.
  - Manages VBA's Alternative Dispute Resolution Program in compliance with the EEOC's regulations.
  - Coordinates and provides EEO, diversity, and inclusion training to employees, managers, and supervisors.
  - Submits compliance reports and plans annually.
  - Manages VBA's Summer Internship Program.
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- Oversees VBA's Special Emphasis Program commemorating special historical events and the contributions of ethnic groups and individuals.

OMGT ensures that VBA develops, implements, and evaluates innovative learning programs and practices that promote a systematic and comprehensive approach to training, and develops VBA employees in order to provide quality, seamless service to Veterans.

- Provides learning services to VBA employees.
- Provides technical training and evaluation services to VBA employees.
- Manages the Veterans Benefits Academy.
- Provides VBA employees with leadership development.
- Manages the VBA's Training Board that reviews training requirements for each business line based on funding levels, field priorities, and workload drivers.
- Manages VBA portion of Talent Management System (TMS) to analyze and prioritize VBA's requirements for ADVANCE training for each fiscal year.
  - Integrates training requirements from VBA field offices and business lines.
  - Manages recurring training reports and develops appropriate ad hoc reports to meet emergent needs as identified by leadership.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 306, Chapter 77

38 CFR § 2.6(b)

Title 5 U.S.C.

The Equal Pay Act of 1963

Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended

Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) of 1967

No Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the American Disability Act Amendments Act of 2008

Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation (No FEAR) Act of 2002, as amended in 2009

Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR)

American Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1967

P.L. 109-461

## **3.7 OFFICE OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Resource Management (ORM) helps VBA serve Veterans, employees, and taxpayers by effectively obtaining and accounting for financial and other resources, and by effectively planning and measuring results.

**Functions and Tasks**

ORM provides cost estimates, monitors transactions, and ensures accurate obligations and execution of funds for VBA:

- Formulates VBA's general operating expense budget for all business lines, Staff Offices, and field operations.
- Oversees obligations, providing detailed information about the VBA spending and ensuring proper management of funds.

ORM develops, prepares, and justifies all mandatory budget estimates necessary to support Veteran's benefits requirements.

- Submits estimates and justifications to the appropriate parties (VBA, VA, OMB, and Congress) over the course of the budget cycle.
- Provides cost estimates for new and amendatory legislation, and briefs senior officials in VBA, OMB, and Congress about matters concerning the mandatory benefits budget.
- Plays a distinct role in the distribution of funds pertaining to benefit payment activities.

ORM manages and directs all budgetary activities involving the VBA housing, insurance, and vocational rehabilitation programs.

ORM provides support to VBA Regional Offices for all finance activities, including payroll, travel, Government purchase card and benefits questions.

- Develops and issues formal policies and procedures.
- Implements business process improvements, including Treasury initiatives.
- Develops, implements, and supports fiscal systems (VETSNET, CWINRS, etc.) that support programs that deliver benefits.
- Prepares and submits new system business requirements, including the review and approval of functional specifications documents leading to user acceptance testing and the associated coordinating implementation with other VBA and VA organizations.

ORM manages and directs activities involved with ensuring the integrity of VA's financial accounting, reporting, and systems for VBA activities.

- Prepares and submits VBA financial statements and other reports, including the Improper Payment Report.
- Researches and corrects accounting errors.
- Ensures that current policies and procedures for programs are implemented.
- Provides detailed accounting business requirements and system testing support to the Finance Services Fiscal System staff.
- Serves as the primary liaison with financial statement auditors and ensures internal control reviews are accomplished.

- Serves as the VBA point of contact for all audit remediation efforts as well as the primary liaison for financial system inspector general activities.

**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 306 Chapter 77

38 CFR § 2.6(b)

**3.7.1 Administrative and Loan Accounting Center****Mission Statement**

The Administrative and Loan Accounting Center (ALAC) provides financial management support to the VA administrative accounting and housing programs by providing accounting, financial reporting, voucher examining, payments, budget support, verification, recertification, reclamation, limited payability, and financial advisory services for this national operation.

**Functions and Tasks**

ALAC performs Loan Guaranty Accounting for VBA.

- Oversees payment and collection processing, including payments for acquisitions, claims, property sales, and management expenses.
- Reviews LGY financing accounts general ledgers, and performs general ledger and subsidiary records reconciliations as well as system reconciliations to include the SF-224 Statement of Transactions reconciliation.
- Manages vendor receivables and processes all deposits for noncash collections, Lender Appraisal Processing Program (LAPP) fees, and Servicer Appraisal Processing Program (SAPP) fees.
- Processes and reports portfolio loans, transitional housing, loan sales, and Native American Direct Loans (NADL).

ALAC performs administrative accounting for VBA.

- Processes financial transactions for VBA regional offices nationwide. The transactions include budget, obligations, payments, receivables, deposits, accruals, advances, and cost adjustments.
- Reviews VBA financial transaction processing and management system reports for regional offices, VBA management, VACO, and oversight agencies.

ALAC manages VBA's National Finance Training Strategy (NFTS) and training.

- Designs, develops, and implements finance-specific training modules for VBA support services/financial management community.
- Coordinates internal ALAC training classes.

**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 306 Chapter 77

38 CFR § 2.6(b)

**3.7.2 VBA Finance Center****Mission Statement**

The VBA Finance Center (VBA FC) provides accounting, financial reporting, and fiscal services related to the payment of benefits to Veterans and beneficiaries.

**Functions and Tasks**

The VBA FC provides direction and oversight for VBA:

- Assists and/or establishes regional office policies and procedures.
- Manages all financial and accounting operations for VBA program payments. These programs include compensation, pension, and educational assistance.
- Manages various accounting and fiscal transactions, and coordinates the utility of financial programs with Hines Information Technology Center (ITC).
- Ensures that officials at the Treasury Regional Financial Centers are informed of scheduling requirements relative to benefit payments.
- Manages the maintenance of an internal control network for all benefit payment systems ensuring the reliability and accuracy of the accounting and fiscal data that process through the systems.
- Facilitates Inspector General and Government Accountability Office (GAO) personnel in their performance of financial and system audits.

The VBA FC manages benefit accounting and payment certification for VBA:

- Ensures that all control and subsidiary accounts are reconciled and in balance allowing for the timely certification of all Veterans benefits program payments worldwide.
- Monitors and coordinates the processing of various accounting/fiscal transactions with various Federal agencies, including the Hines ITC, various VA offices, the Department of Treasury, the DoD, and the Department of Homeland Security.
- Provides technical advice and assistance in establishing and interpreting procedures and improvements to the accounting data processing runs.
- Prepares end-of-month/end-of-fiscal-year trial balance reports for each benefit payment program. It prepares monthly statements of transaction reports for all systems.
- Serves as liaison to the OIG, Department of Treasury, and GAO for all audit documentation requirements.

The VBA FC processes and controls recertification/limited payability transactions and entitlement/nonentitlement claims, and the interfacing of same within the benefit payment systems:

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- Apprises VACO and Treasury Department personnel of issues, problems, and the status of initiatives in progress, and provides technical advice to VBA regional office personnel concerning all phases of the recertification process, including the establishment of credits/debits into the payee benefit master records.
- Establishes and implements procedures for processing check cancellations, payment over cancellations, reclamations, reclamation collections, limited payability, and reporting fees.
- Prepares correspondence to payees and VBA regional offices regarding chargeback items, and responds to payee inquiries, VBA regional office personnel, and Treasury Department employees regarding status of claims.
- Operates and maintains the “Access” database application and the Benefits Delivery Network Recertification database. It also processes and reviews accounts regarding expenditure transfer items from the Treasury Department.

**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 306 Chapter 77

38 CFR § 2.6(b)

**3.8 OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS AND INTEGRITY****Overview**

The Office of Performance Analysis and Integrity (PA&I) develops and maintains the Enterprise Data Warehouse to generate recurring and ad hoc reports in response to VBA decision making and business needs. PA&I promulgates and posts reports displaying the operating data in the most insightful graphics possible. PA&I analyzes the data and provides VBA managers with the situational awareness needed to optimize their operating and business functions. PA&I coordinates all VBA-related OIT and GAO audits and reviews.

**Functions and Tasks**

PA&I performs data and information services for VBA:

- Keeps the Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW), which is populated with the data marts that are most used and of the greatest value for VBA business intelligence needs. It eliminates, combines or retires the data marts that are dormant while identifying data sets that could be and should be added or enhanced because of their recognized value.
- Manages the configuration of the EDW to simplify and optimize data access and reporting, including an approach to adding new data sets to the warehouse in a rational and repeatable way.
- Develops and maintains a 5-year plan that estimates how the EDW will grow in storage and back-up requirements, when technology refresh will be required, as well as what new technology or process will need to be incorporated into the EDW.

- Develops a technology refresh and acquisition plan in conjunction with OIT for EDW hardware and software and for the business intelligence tools needed to display reports.
- Develops a formal process with written procedures that describe receipt, triage/evaluation, risk assessment, prioritization, status tracking, quality assurance, and delivery of data products and services.
- Delivers the product for all data requests within 45 working days. It achieves 95-percent accuracy in the delivered data, reports, and services as defined by the customer requirements or business rules.

PA&I provides performance analysis services for VBA:

- Maintains an ongoing process to ensure that posted reports are of greatest use and value, eliminates dormant or low-value reports, and revises or combines existing reports to enhance their use and value.
- Ensures timeliness and accuracy in posted and delivered reports and services as defined by customer requirements or business rules.
- Develops and sustains the capability to address the analytical needs of VBA leadership and field activities.
- Coordinates preparation and submission of VBA's Annual Benefits Report and VBA's input into the Monthly Performance Review and VA's annual Performance and Accountability Report.
- Organizes, plans, and hosts at least one Introductory and one Advanced Management and Program Analyst Workshop a year to provide the opportunity for field and headquarters analysts to enhance their skills.
- Facilitates analytical and performance management training on a recurring and as-needed basis that increases the overall analytical capability of the organization using the tools and analytical techniques of the most value.

PA&I provides program integrity and internal controls services for VBA:

- Coordinates all activities associated with GAO engagements and VA Inspector General audits within VBA.
- Ensures VBA leadership is aware of the status and likely outcome of activities associated with external oversight reviews and audits.
- Coordinates the preparation and delivery of VBA responses to oversight reports, requests, and analyses to ensure accurate, on-time submission with language acceptable to all parties.
- Maintains an up-to-date Master Oversight Review calendar that external auditors can use to coordinate their planned activities with VBA field offices.

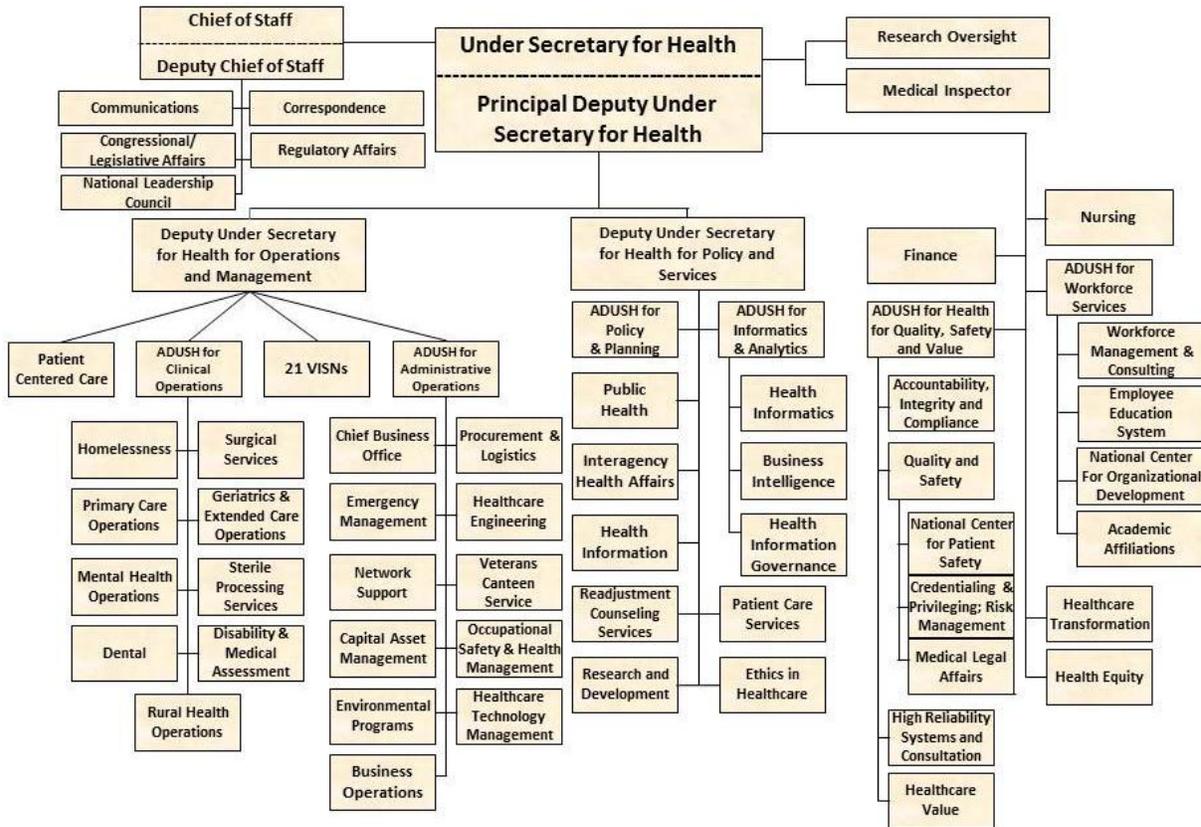
### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 306 Chapter 77

38 CFR § 2.6(b)

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## 4 VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (VHA)



### 4.1 VHA OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF HEALTH

#### Mission Statement

To honor America’s Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

#### Vision Statement

VHA will continue to be the benchmark of excellence and value in health care and benefits by providing exemplary services that are both patient-centered and evidence-based. This care will be delivered by engaged, collaborative teams in an integrated environment that supports learning, discovery and continuous improvement. It will emphasize prevention and population health, and contribute to the Nation’s well-being through education, research, and service in national emergencies.

#### Overview

The Office of the Under Secretary for Health (USH) is responsible for the leadership and direction of VHA, the Nation’s largest integrated health care system. The four statutory missions of VHA are: 1) to develop, maintain, and operate a national health care delivery system for eligible

Veterans; 2) to administer a program of education and training for health care personnel; 3) to conduct health care research; and 4) provide contingency support for DoD and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) during times of war or national emergency.

### **Functions and Tasks**

The USH leads and directs Veterans Health Administration.

- Leads VHA in defining corporate code of ethics, vision, principles, policies, goals, expectations, and the lines of authority through which these will be actualized.
- Communicates VHA's vision, principles, policies, goals, expectations, and outcomes to the Office of the Secretary, other VA departmental officials, members of Congress, Veterans, Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), other Federal agencies, and external stakeholders.
- Establishes committees, advisory groups, and review bodies as necessary to provide information and advice to the USH.
- Oversees formulation and execution strategies of VHA policies and budgets, and serves as chair of various boards, committees, and working groups.
- Establishes standards, policies, and positions regarding national workforce issues.
- Develops VHA policies that provide equal treatment of Veterans through the most cost-effective means. Fosters innovation, creativity, and informed risk-taking.
- Establishes policies that monitor the quality of health care with a goal of being a leader in the field of health care delivery.
- Promulgates and communicates policies that articulate VHA's role in national health care reform initiatives.
- Establishes and/or approves standards for VHA research programs, capital asset planning and management, and information management.

Administers a program of education and training for health care personnel.

- Recruits, trains, and employs personnel for occupations that are specific to the needs of the Veteran population.
- Establishes affiliation agreements with academic institutions across the country to support the educational needs of health care professionals.
- Establishes policies to support the professional growth of clinical and nonclinical employees through employee educational services.

Conducts health care research focused on creating knowledge and innovations to improve the health of Veterans.

- Establishes and/or approves standards for VHA's research program in biomedical research, mental health research, prosthetics, and other rehabilitative research and health care services research.
  - Establishes research oversight policies to monitor, review, and investigate matters of medical research compliance and assurance of safety.
-

Provides contingency support for DoD and HHS during times of war or national emergency.

- Establishes policies and designates resources related to medical services, crisis intervention, and emergency preparedness.
- Establishes policies that support the National Disaster Medical System and promotes sharing resources with other Federal agencies and community partners.

### **Authorities**

Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 73

P.L. 97-174

Veterans Administration and DoD Health Resources Sharing and Emergency Operations Act, 1982

Title 38 U.S.C. § 8011A

## **4.1.1 VHA Office of the Chief of Staff (COS)**

### **Overview**

VHA Office of the Chief of Staff (COS) works closely with the USH and the Principal and Deputy Under Secretaries in managing the day-to-day operations of VHA, the largest integrated health care system in the country. The COS serves as VHA's central coordination point for all high-level negotiations involving establishment or implementation of policies, practices, management, and operational activities to carry out the mission of VHA. COS manages VHA's executive correspondence, communication, congressional and legislative affairs, regulations, and the National Leadership Council (NLC), which is VHA's governing body.

### **Mission Statement**

VHA's Office of COS honors America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

### **Functions and Tasks**

Office of COS works closely with the USH in managing the day-to-day operations of VHA.

- Coordinates and responds to all requests for information from the Department and the White House.
  - Coordinates and responds to all requests for information from external stakeholders, such as Congress, VSOs, other Governmental agencies, and the general public.
  - Ensures VHA's message is clear, concise, and accurate with VA's current position and strategic direction.
  - Manages an Executive Correspondence Program to provide timely and accurate responses to inquiries by Congress and affiliated offices (Congressional Budget Office, Congressional Research Office, etc.) as well as Veterans, Veterans' family members, and the general public.
-

- Develops an effective legislative program for VHA initiatives.
- Provides written testimony, prepares briefings, and prepares VHA witnesses for hearings and briefings that have an impact on VHA and VA.
- Develops Federal regulations on topics pertinent to the delivery of health care services to Veterans.
- Oversees an effective National VHA communication strategy.
- COS works closely and effectively with partners throughout the Department including but not limited to the Office of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (OSVA), Office of Management (OM), Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs (OCLA), Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs (OPIA), Office of General Counsel (OGC), and Office of Policy and Planning (OPP).
- Provides accurate responses to Congress, the White House, VSOs, other Federal agencies, the media, and the public on a wide variety of system issues, both proactively and in response to inquiries.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapter 73 and applicable Subchapters I-IV

### **4.1.2 VHA Office of Research Oversight**

#### **Overview**

The Office of Research Oversight (ORO) promotes the responsible conduct of research, serves as the primary VHA office in advising the USH on matters of research compliance, and exercises oversight of compliance with VA and other Federal requirements for the protection of human research subjects, laboratory animal welfare, research safety, research laboratory security, research information security, research misconduct, and Federalwide debarment for research impropriety. P.L. 108-170, enacted December 2003 and codified at Title 38 U.S.C. 7307, established ORO in statute to report directly to the USH and stipulated ORO's oversight authority as independent of the Office of Research and Development (ORD) and any other VA components that administer or fund VA research.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

ORO:

- Advises the USH on all matters of regulatory requirements in research.
- Investigates suspected impropriety, regulatory noncompliance and misconduct in VA research.
- Receives and investigates reports of transgressions in VA research.
- Conducts prospective, preventive onsite compliance reviews.
- Oversees the implementation of remedial actions where warranted.
- Ensures the integrity of research misconduct reviews and investigations.

- Monitors serious adverse events in VA research.
- Tracks the cause of all unanticipated deaths in VA research.
- Trains VA's facility-based Research Compliance Officers (RCOs).
- Provides technical assistance to VA research facilities.
- Disseminates regulatory information to the broader VA research community.
- Maintains an active outreach program that includes regular attendance at VSO meetings, a Web site for Veterans considering research participation, and an anonymous tip/complaint line that is monitored daily.

**Authorities**

P.L. 108-170 § 401

38 U.S.C. 7307

**4.1.3 VHA Office of the Medical Inspector****Mission Statement**

The Office of the Medical Inspector (OMI) investigates concerns about the quality of health care provided to Veterans by VA.

**Overview**

As an internal VHA program office, OMI provides the USH with assessments of the quality of VA health care. In response to inquiries from stakeholders, (e.g., Veterans, caregivers, administrators, the USH, the SECVA, or Congress) OMI conducts independent investigations of health care quality through record reviews, site visits, focused reviews or surveys. OMI continually strives to improve the quality of Veterans' health care by assessing the delivery of care and by analyzing the clinical systems providing that care. On the basis of these analyses, OMI recommends changes in local and National VA health care systems, and shares these findings with VHA leadership, Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs), and VA medical centers (VAMCs). The Office of Inspector General has oversight of OMI.

**Functions and Tasks**

OMI conducts clinical investigations, evaluates the quality of medical care and recommends improvements to ensure VHA provides high quality health care to Veterans.

- Responds to Veterans health care concerns with individual attention, advice and counsel, and provides advocacy as needed.
- Conducts record reviews and site visits to investigate quality-of-care concerns.
- Produces reports and reviews generated by investigations and submits them to VHA leadership.
- Reviews corrective action plans for appropriateness and tracks individual actions to completion.

Advances Veterans health care by conducting quality of VHA medical care assessments to inform leaders of system-wide issues and opportunities for improvement.

- Collects and analyzes data generated by assessments and produces a report based on findings.
- Submits reports to VHA leadership with recommendations for corrective actions.
- Promotes evidence-based best practices and cross-fertilization of ideas between VHA Central Office and field facilities to improve patient care outcomes.

Provides clinical consultation to VA medical centers (VAMCs), VISN, and VHA program offices.

- Provides other program offices with OMI clinical experts to enhance employees' knowledge base.
- Makes recommendations resulting from investigations to VAMC leadership.
- Disseminates lessons learned to Chief Medical Officers and Quality Management Officers.

### **Authorities**

P.L. 100-322 § 201

## **4.2 VHA OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH (PDUSH)**

### **Mission Statement**

The Office of the Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health (PDUSH) ensures the integration, effectiveness, and reliability of the systems and programs supporting the health and well-being of our Nation's Veterans.

### **Vision**

With Veterans as our inspiration and motivation, we will continue to engender insight, knowledge, and innovation to support the mission of VA.

### **Value**

As the purveyors of solutions, we empower the organization with the right people providing the right resources and ensure fidelity of services, synergy of systems, and coherence of mission to deliver superior value.

### **Overview**

In the absence of the USH, the PDUSH performs the duties of the USH. PDUSH collaborates closely with the Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management, and the Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Policy and Services to provide leadership, guidance and strategic direction that supports the mission of the USH and VHA. The Office of the PDUSH comprises six program offices: The Office of Finance; the Office of Nursing; the Office of Quality,

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Safety and Value; the Office of Healthcare Transformation; the Office for Workforce Services, and the Office of Health Equity. The Management Review Service program, also in the PDUSH office, manages VHA collaborations with the OIG, the GAO, and OCLA. The Community Engagement Program, also in the PDUSH Office, facilitates and promotes effective partnerships between VHA and non-VA providers, as well as organizations to improve the health and wellness of Veterans, their family members, and caregivers.

### **Functions and Tasks**

The PDUSH acts as the immediate assistant to the USH in daily administrative duties and is responsible for the integration of programs and policies across VA's National health care system.

- Oversees and guides chief officers, network directors, and program officials in VACO and National health care facilities.
- Leads VHA in defining the corporate code of ethics, vision, principles, policies, goals, expectations, and the lines of authority through which these will be actualized.
- Establishes or approves standards for VHA research programs, emergency care, capital asset planning and management, and information management.
- Provides innovative and forward-looking fiscal investment planning, programming, and budget execution (PPBE) oversight throughout VHA.
- Develops policy, program initiatives, and management requirements that align with the VA strategic plan, PPBE, and enterprisewide solutions.
- Collaborates with the Office of Information Technology (OIT), DoD, and external experts to develop national information systems and standards for information systems databases.
- Monitors VHA compliance and outcome measures for treatment standards and quality of care, and guides development of clinical practice guidelines and clinical pathways.
- Monitors clinical performance and convenes the oversight clinical review board in the event of clinical adverse events.

The PDUSH leads VHA's National quality, safety, health equity, and value initiatives.

- Integrates program office initiatives that enhance quality of care through education programs for health profession students and nonclinical support teams.
- Recruits, develops, and retains high-performing workforce that distinguishes VHA as a leader in health care systems.
- Encourages training and certification through International Organization for Standardization (ISO), project management, and VA Learning University (VALU) to transform human capital management and ensure effective succession planning that promotes a strong VA management infrastructure and an integrated operating model.
- Leads the development of an organizational culture where excellence in nursing is valued in the delivery of health care to Veterans and their families.
- Establishes and implements policies and procedures for financial management, ensuring compliance with Office of Management and Budget (OMB), GAO and VA guidelines.

- Prepares and monitors budgets that ensure financial and technical aspects of program plans include analysis of cost to achieve goals.
- Leads the development of cultural competency and communication that encourages an organizational approach to diversity in the VA workforce.
- Establishes program office initiatives and policies that improve individualized health and health care outcomes for Veterans.

The PDUSH represents VA and VHA on several executive committees, including the Central Institutional Review Board for VA research initiatives; the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention; National Priority for Patients with Health and Human Services and the National Quality Forum; and the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute.

- Ensures executive-level oversight of appropriate practices for research and compliance with human protection regulations.
- Builds alliances and demonstrates openness about VA programs.
- Addresses adverse events through fact finding and risk evaluations.
- Implements policies to improve health care performance.
- Integrates best practices and quality measures to improve health care and programmatic outcomes.

The PDUSH leads VHA compliance through the Management Review Service (MRS) program that manages coordination with GAO and OIG, and monitors active and timely resolution of findings specific to reports and assessments.

- Partners with subject matter experts to aid in the design and focus of external reviews in partnership with external review teams.
- Ensures VHA compliance with internal and external reviews, and audits protocol for VHA programs, policies, and activities.
- Reviews GAO and OIG findings to assess whether new VHA standards are required and notifies VHA leadership of the outcome.
- Manages accountability, controls, and the follow-up of tracking related to GAO and OIG findings of material weakness to ensure appropriate programs are implementing processes towards resolution.

The PDUSH facilitates and strengthens VHA collaborations within communities and with public and private organizations to improve the health and wellness of Veterans, their family members, and caregivers.

- Explores and launches promising new partnerships with Federal agencies, states, nonprofits, professional associations, and other non-governmental organizations to enhance care and expand capacity and services.

- Promotes partnerships between VHA program offices, field offices and non-VA organizations by providing best practices, tools, and training on how to develop and sustain effective partnerships.
- Serves as a resource and point of contact within VHA for VA staff and outside organizations seeking guidance on how to create or manage effective collaborations.

**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapter 73 and applicable Subchapters I-IV

**4.2.1 VHA Office of Nursing Services (ONS)****Mission Statement**

The Office of Nursing Services (ONS) provides leadership, guidance, and strategic direction on all issues related to nursing practice, research, academics, emergency preparedness, and nursing workforce for clinical and administrative programs across the continuum of care and across the spectrum of care delivery sites that impact our Veterans.

**Overview**

ONS leads the development of initiatives and policies to guide the strategic direction of VA's nursing workforce in alignment with the Department and VHA's strategic mission and vision, and serves as a consultative body on all matters regarding VA nursing. ONS enhances the level of professional practice, advances the application of evidence-based nursing care, and supports VA nursing workforce to strengthen the interdisciplinary teamwork in order to provide quality, patient-centered care for Veterans.

**Functions and Tasks**

ONS comprises an interwoven organizational model where the VA national nursing goals are led and developed by four portfolios: Nursing Practice Transformation; Evidence-Based Practice; Career Development and Workforce Management; and Leadership Excellence.

Nursing Practice Transformation Portfolio establishes systematic approaches to support efficient and effective patient-driven care.

- Adopts patient-driven nursing care delivery models that prepare for future practice environments, populations, technologies, and workforce designs.
- Uses systems redesign principles to deploy an automated, data-driven, and evidence-based staffing methodology.
- Facilitates and implements national approaches to address key initiatives.
- Fully implements nursing roles that directly support and function as part of teams within VHA's new models of care. These roles include RN care managers and other RN representatives in Patient-Aligned Care Team (PACT), clinical nurse specialists on

specialty care teams, and partnering clinical nurse leaders with hospitalists to support specialty care.

- Grows and sustains the current number of clinical nurse leaders (CNL) in the VHA system in order to have one CNL at each care setting at all VAMCs.
- Adopts independent practice authority for advanced practice RNs (APRNs), including certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNA), clinical nurse specialists (CNS), and nurse practitioners (NP), which will allow all APRNs to function as independent licensed professionals regardless of the state in which they are licensed.

Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Portfolio creates and facilitates an environment in which all nurses apply the best available evidence to improve health care delivery and outcomes throughout VA.

- Develops a business case for EBP throughout VA nursing.
- Develops an infrastructure for EBP.
- Develops an education plan and engages all nursing staff in EBP.
- Implements and disseminates EBP tools.
- Develops action and evaluation plans to track progress of nursing advancement for EBP.
- Increases nursing research capacity in VHA by expanding field-based grant applications and funding for nursing scientific endeavors.
- Creates systematic processes to identify nursing sensitive measures that impact patient outcomes.

Career Development and Workforce Management Portfolio enhances the competent, dedicated, compassionate, and high-performing nursing workforce through retention, recruitment, and organization initiatives.

- Develops and facilitates programs supporting organizational health associated with high-nursing satisfaction and quality Veteran outcomes.
- Supports facilities pursuing American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet designation.
- Promotes avenues to increase the number of nurses with board certification.
- Fosters local implementation of recommendations to streamline and shorten the hiring process.
- Fosters local implementation of programs to reduce nursing staff injuries.
- Designs and supports programs to distinguish VHA as a learning organization, such as the new Graduate Nurse Residency program.
- Advises and supports the implementation of the Travel Nurse Corps (TNC).
- Educates nurse executives and human resource chiefs on existing authorities and best practices for nurse retention, recruitment, and competitive pay.
- Develops and implements mentoring programs for nurse scientists.

- Develops and implements programs to prepare nurses to assume specialized roles in targeted areas of current/projected needs (i.e., perioperative, oncology, OEF/OIF, and infection control).
- Develops programs and training to provide comprehensive nursing services to Veterans, and address national emergency response plans for local, state, VISN, and national needs.

Nursing Leadership Excellence Portfolio sustains, supports and develops leadership orientation, education, and systemwide programs that prepare nurse leaders for the future.

- Implements and evaluates the Career Paths Program.
- Develops leadership programs to support key nursing roles.
- Enhances business and informatics competencies of key nursing leaders by incorporating informatics and analytics components to leadership, and development mentoring programs. Also collaborates with VA Transformational Health Informatics Initiative (hi<sup>2</sup>) to enhance informatics knowledge through competency, career and community development efforts.
- Provides a nursing consultation program that offers VISN, facility, and VACO-level consultation for the purpose of developing and supporting nurse leaders, particularly in response to resolving high-priority, high-risk leadership issues.
- Develops the Executive Career Field (ECF) Nurse Executive Track Program.
- Provides strategies related to technology, advanced nursing practice, research, and informatics.

### **Authorities**

P.L. 79-293

P.L. 98-160

P.L. 107-135

P.L. 111-163

## **4.2.2 VHA Office of Workforce Services**

### **Overview**

The Office of Workforce Services has overarching responsibility for the development and management of human capital for VHA, including recruitment and training of current and future health care workers, ongoing education of current employees, and organizational growth and development. These responsibilities are managed by four subordinate offices: Workforce Management and Consulting, Employee Education System, National Center for Organizational Development, and Office of Academic Affiliations.

**Mission Statement**

The Office of Workforce Services develops, recruits, and retains a high-performing workforce throughout the human capital life cycle within a workforce culture that keeps VHA out front as a world-class health care system.

**Functions and Tasks**

The Office of Workforce Services provides VHA-wide leadership for workforce operations and administration management functions, including strategic human capital planning; senior executive recruitment and performance; senior-level advisory services; labor management and labor relations; retention and recruitment; training and career development; and retention of a diverse, highly skilled, motivated, and effective workforce. The Office of Workforce Services also provides staffing, recruitment, employee/labor relations, classification, and retirement and benefits support to the VA health system.

- Advises senior-level executives, field and program offices about human resource (HR) issues. Provides advice and guidance concerning conduct and performance issues involving senior-level executives in VHA, and manages the recruitment and nomination process for VHA executive level positions.
- Designs, develops, and implements training and development programs for VHA's professionals.
- The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)/Affirmative Employment Office provides guidance on EEO regulations.
- Workforce Management, Performance, and Awards Office provides guidance and technical expertise to key VHA officials on matters relating to workforce planning, performance management system, and the VHA employee awards program.
- The Healthcare Talent Management (HTM) Office produces an annual 5-year VHA Workforce Succession Strategic Plan, manages VHA workforce and leadership development programs and provides HR information system support. The office identifies and monitors talent within the organization, and links succession planning and business strategies, presenting VHA with the opportunity to affect long-term goals and achieve human capital objectives.
- Healthcare Retention and Recruitment Office (HRRO) provides programs, services, and tools that enhance recruitment and retention of clinicians, allied health, and support staff. HRRO recruits, markets, advertises, and manages placement, employee scholarships, and debt-reduction incentive programs.
- The VHA Diversity and Inclusion Office (DI) advances diversity, cultural competency and inclusion within VHA. The Office supports the VA Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan through programs that focus on patient-centric health care delivered by engaged teams.
- Operations and Administration coordinates the VHA Central Office Resource Management Committee (RMC). This program oversees logistics and operational services specific to VACO, including space management, transit benefits, and the VHA travel card program.

- Human Resources and Staffing Services (HR&SS) provides recruitment and staffing services, and human resource and consultative support to VA and VHA customers. HR&SS manages comprehensive and effective recruitment and merit promotion services, employee and labor relations, classification, personnel and records services, and retirement and benefits support.

The Employee Education System (EES) is VHA's national provider of accredited continuing clinical education. Training programs, products, and services are provided to support VA and VHA missions, major transformation initiatives, and organization-specific goals that advance excellence in health care for our Nation's Veterans.

- EES partners with clients in VHA's program offices, Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs), and medical facilities to provide quality education and training.
- High priority training is aligned to support VA's transformation of patient-aligned care, specialty care, mental health, Telehealth, and homelessness programs.
- EES is the VA/VHA lead for coordinating intra- and interagency sharing (including DoD) of clinical learning resources resulting in significant training shared, as well as cost avoidance for VA and all involved Federal partners.
- Through the Simulation Learning Education and Research Network (SimLEARN), EES addresses high clinical priorities and improves clinical outcomes by providing a safe, supportive environment in which practitioners master skills, practice protocols, learn system-based practices, apply critical decision making, and improve communication and interpersonal skills.
- EES facilitates VHA support for VA Learning University (VALU) initiatives such as ADVANCE and the VA Talent Management System.
- EES supports the Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs (OPIA) communication and outreach initiatives such as The American Veteran.
- EES maximizes VHA employees' access to learning through multiple delivery methods including: blended learning, Web-based, satellite broadcasts, and video on demand.
- EES provides support to VHA's VISN and medical facility Designated Learning Officers (DLOs) through skills and competencies development.
- EES provides event management services for training events.
- EES ensures that training programs are evaluated for effectiveness.

National Center for Organization Development (NCOD) supports efforts to impact the overall organizational culture of VHA, supporting the development and sustainment of healthy organizations where employees want to work and Veterans want to receive services.

- Administers the annual All Employee Survey.
- Provides onsite consultations to various organizational units, including intensive workplace interventions at all levels of the organization.

- Develops and applies three Web-based assessment tools: Executive 360-degree, 360-degree, and 180-degree assessments.
- Offers executive coaching expertise to current and developing leaders within the organization.
- Develops and implements the VA Team Model and Executive Team Assessment and Leadership Team Assessment Instrument to increase leadership effectiveness in conjunction with executive coaching.
- Conducts management studies resulting in data-driven, qualitative and quantitative research, and publications.
- Supports the VA Civility, Respect and Engagement in the Workforce (CREW) initiative focused on raising awareness of civility and respect among coworkers, and to increase their understanding of the relationship between civility, patient care, and business outcomes.

The Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) oversees VA's statutory mission to train health professionals. OAA provides leadership, advice, and subject matter expertise across the full range of VHA's health professions education programs, including trainee education policy, training budget development and execution, and academic affiliation relationships.

- Ensures VHA's trainee educational programs are relevant to both VHA and national clinical workforce needs and holds responsibility for the development, analysis, oversight and evaluation of all policies, guidelines and programs relating to health professional trainees and academic affiliation matters.
- Develops strategic and operational alliances with key stakeholders, including VA medical facilities, other VHA program offices, VA Staff Offices, academic affiliates, accreditation and credentialing bodies, other Federal agencies, and professional societies.
- Fosters excellence and innovation in trainee education through transformative learning projects.
- Provides guidance, mentoring, and development opportunities to field education leaders, and collaborates with other Workforce Services program offices on workforce development and succession planning.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapter 73 and applicable Subchapters I-IV

5 U.S.C. Title 5

38 U.S.C.

P.L. 79-293

P.L. 89-785

P.L. 92-541

P.L. 93-82

P.L. 96-151

P.L. 96-330

P.L. 98-160  
P.L. 100-322  
P.L. 102-40  
P.L. 102-405  
P.L. 106-117  
P.L. 106-419  
P.L. 108-170

### **4.2.3 VHA Office of Finance**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Finance is the steward of VHA financial resources for Veterans who receive healthcare. Continuous improvement is achieved through the full cycle of healthcare budget and accounting activities within a large VA financial community and in external partnerships.

#### **Vision Statement**

The Office of Finance will be a model of excellence for accurate, timely, and valued information to assure our Veterans receive full benefit of the financial resources provided by a grateful Nation.

#### **Overview**

The Office of Finance is the principal financial advisor to the USH. The office has an overarching responsibility for VHA budget development and allocation, monitors the execution of funds to networks, guides, and oversees financial management and accounting operations, and maintains the Managerial Cost Accounting System for VA. The Office of Finance is composed of four major organizational elements: Financial Management and Accounting Systems, Resource Management, Financial Assistance, and Decision Support.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

The Financial Management and Accounting Systems Office establishes and implements policies and procedures governing financial management and accounting, internal controls management, and analysis of financial information and activities in support of financial statement reporting.

- Develops VHA policies and oversight activities related to payroll, cash/debt management, accounting, and financial policy.
- Provides guidance and direction to ensure compliance with OMB, the GAO, Treasury, and VA requirements; publishes policy and procedures; and provides accounting and financial management guidance.
- Establishes and maintains operational internal controls consistent with official guidelines.
- Analyzes financial information and activities at the national and facility level in support of financial statement reporting.

- Develops and implements VHA financial internal review programs, reviews internal and external audits and reviews, and develops corrective actions to avoid or remedy material weaknesses.

The Resource Management Office provides VHA budget formulation, allocation, execution and analysis, and health care workload and cost analyses.

- Develops, formulates, submits and defends VHA portion of the annual President's budget submission to Congress.
- Provides the allocation of VHA appropriation funds using the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA) model and the Specific Purpose budget processes, issues Transfers of Disbursing Authority (TDAs) to VHA stations and program offices. Environmental Programs Service (EPS)
- 
- Monitors execution of VHA funds and provides periodic formal budget analyses, such as the Quarterly Status Report to Congress, the Monthly Performance Review for the Deputy Secretary of VA, and the monthly execution and enrollment report for the OMB.
- Provides health care workload and cost analyses through the Allocation Resource Center (ARC); provides end-user reports on VERA and related topics on the ARC Web page; and provides VERA education and training at all levels of VHA.

The Financial Assistance Office reviews, audits and oversees special program fiscal performance, compliance with fiscal policy and Federal accounting rules, and clarifies applied finance guidelines.

- Provides reporting on the Improper Payment Elimination and Recovery ACT (IPERA) for the Performance Accountability Report (PAR), assistance and financial oversight of the Homeless Grant and Per Diem Program Office, and financial assistance to the Research NonProfit Corporation Program Office.
- Assists VHA program managers in meeting their responsibilities to improve performance (efficiency, accountability, and economy) of operations and resource management.
- Verifies and ensures accounting and financial policy compliance and coordinates fiscal quality assurance reviews.

The Decision Support Office operates and manages VA's managerial cost accounting system, the Decision Support System (DSS), which ensures compliance with public laws. The DSS maintains a database built from standard VHA financial and clinical feeder systems.

- Inputs clinical and financial data required for activity-based costs and supports clinical analyses and budget formulation, allocation, and execution at all levels of the Administration.
- Develops and presents detailed activity-based workload and cost-accounting reports.

- Maintains the DSS Reports Web page and an effective-user education and training program.
- Produces supportive reports for dissemination to Congress, GAO, OMB, and other entities external to VA.
- Supports VA's major initiatives (MI), specifically with Initiative 10, Systems to Drive Performance (STDP), in order to develop, deploy, evaluate, and sustain the VA Business Intelligence Dashboard Managerial Cost Accounting STDP Dashboard.

**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapter 73 and applicable Subchapters I-IV

OMB Circular A-123: Management's Responsibility for Internal Control

Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR)

44 U.S.C. § 3541

P.L. 101-576

P.L. 111-81

P.L. 111-201

E.O. 13520

**4.2.4 VHA Office of Quality, Safety and Value****Overview**

The Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for QSV (ADUSH for QSV) enhances the quality, safety, reliability, and value of VHA's clinical and business systems by enabling innovative, enterprisewide approaches to compliance, risk awareness, and continuous improvement. QSV allows VHA to provide the best health care value to the Veteran by ensuring outstanding population health and an excellent and seamless patient experience with the lowest expenditure of resources. QSV anticipates and manages risks by ensuring VHA clinical and business processes are highly reliable, educating the workforce, and encouraging highly effective collaborative teams dedicated to improvement. QSV conducts a variety of functions to foster a culture that acts with integrity to achieve accountability while remaining mindful, proactively risk aware, and highly reliable and predictable in delivery systems.

**Functions and Tasks**

The Office of Compliance and Business Integrity (CBI) serves to advance all elements of an effective compliance and oversight program for VHA revenue and purchased care operations.

- Develops tools and systems to address systemwide business related risks (i.e., education and curriculum development specific to risk life cycle and risk management).
  - Provides internal oversight of revenue operations to comply with applicable laws, regulations and standards.
  - Provides targeted guidance and assistance to the VISN and facility Compliance Officers to support local CBI Program initiatives in alignment with core priorities and needs.
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Quality Standards and Regulatory Governance promotes the integration and alignment of health care regulatory and governance strategies. Key accreditation, mission readiness, and ISO-9001 emphasis functions work together to promote further integration with compliance programs and to better direct consultative and education resources to high-risk areas while avoiding needless survey burden on facility operations.

- Mission Ready Consultation Strategy works in synchrony with other accreditation and regulatory programs to identify and resolve noncompliant practices.
    - Performs assessment of high-risk issues at each facility to direct appropriate consultation resources.
    - Consults with all VHA facilities and Consolidated Mail Order Pharmacies (CMOPs) specific to different direct patient care, adjunct clinical support, and other administrative support programs and functions.
    - Through high-risk assessment and consultations, assists medical centers to meet standards of clinical care.
    - Identifies best care practices and shares this information with other networks and medical centers.
  - The Integrated External Accreditation Program manages all accreditation activities leading to successful certification by accrediting bodies.
    - Ensures that accepted standards of health care operation are met and high-risk areas are systematically addressed in an integrated manner.
    - Manages and coordinates with VHA's primary outside accreditation programs: health care organization accreditation by The Joint Commission, rehabilitation program accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), and URAC (formerly, Utilization Review Accreditation Commission).
    - Provides education and support of field's continuous readiness efforts through management and coordination of Continuous Readiness (CSR) Program.
  - The ISO Consultation Division (ICD) seeks to infuse the standards-based discipline of ISO-9001:2008 quality management into the health care delivery processes and programs. This in turn promotes sustained reliability and excellence in daily practices and service for our Veterans.
    - Supports the creation of effective and repeatable processes for use throughout the continuum of Veteran health care.
    - Implements ISO 9001, the global benchmark for quality management in all facilities, beginning with Sterile Processing Services (SPS).
    - Proactively implements consistent quality management systems that become benchmarks for the public and private sectors for continual improvement and elevation of the standard of Veteran-centric care.
  - The Utilization and Efficiency Management Program actively manages quality and resource utilization. The program provides a series of initiatives and automated tools to
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ensure Veterans receive the right care at the right time, in the right place, for the right clinical reason.

- Ensures a standardized process, proper use of evidence-based utilization criteria and entry of utilization findings into the National Utilization Management Integration (NUMI) database. It also ensures that the Utilization Management workforce is properly educated and trained to perform utilization reviews.
- Develops Consolidated Utilization Management metrics through clinical review and consultation using industry standard evidence to assure the right care at the right time, in the right setting, for the right reason.
- Reviews Utilization Management data and other utilization and efficiency reports, and through consultation and education, assists facilities to evaluate and improve clinical efficiency.
- In collaboration with oversight committees, determines and implements additional utilization modalities, and prepares UM workforce to apply criteria, collect utilization data, and improve efficiency through the health care continuum.

The Credentialing and Privileging process includes collecting relevant data and information to appoint, reappoint, and privilege health care providers, and assure that qualified health care professionals are providing the appropriate care, in the appropriate setting, based upon the scope of their respective privileges.

- Supports a culture of safe, competent care by assuring the recruitment and appropriate credentialing of qualified, appropriately licensed health care providers.
- Assists VHA and medical center leadership in meeting the provider competency and oversight of health care delivery to ensure that safe, high quality, reliable care.
- Guides VHA medical center leadership through medical staff processes from recruitment to termination.

The National Center for Patient Safety (NCPS) assures patient care is safe, preventable harm is reduced, and safety risks are eliminated.

- Develops programs and initiatives focused on a systems approach to problem solving, based on prevention, not punishment.
  - Develops patient safety products, such as toolkits, checklists, alerts, advisories, and cognitive aides.
  - Designs and implements VHA-wide patient safety initiatives and identifies potential practices that could cause harm to patients as a result of their care.
  - Develops VHA priorities in patient safety by supporting root cause analysis efforts VHA-wide, reviewing the reported adverse events and close calls, and providing local or national guidance based on the results, as appropriate.
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- Leads efforts to implement a culture of safety that rises above the “name and blame” culture of the past, and is focused on improving or replacing faulty clinical processes that can cause harm to patients, regardless of the caregiver involved.

Enterprise Risk Management (ERM), currently under development within VHA, broadly examines multiple risk categories and projects how a given set of risks might impact the entire organization. Knowledge from this risk appraisal aids in the prioritization, design and implementation of mitigation, and reduction strategies based upon risk likelihood and impact.

The Clinical Risk Management Program ensures that health care delivery adverse risk events are appropriately addressed at the organizational and provider level to promote learning and administer appropriate disciplinary action as needed. It is only one component of a larger enterprise risk program that seeks to progressively embrace a proactive enterprise risk management approach.

- Reviews and analyzes VHA-wide data related to facility-level peer review for quality management activities.
- Reviews and analyzes VHA-wide data related to external audits of peer review for quality management activities for data validation and identification of performance improvement opportunities.
- Develops, coordinates, and monitors activity requirements related to administrative processing of tort claims.
- Reviews and analyzes VHA-wide data related to disclosure of adverse events to patients.

The Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Guidelines Program develops and disseminates evidence-based standards into the delivery process to improve Veteran care by reducing overuse, misuse, and underuse of evidence-based practice, and systematizing “best known practices” to produce population health.

- Works with DoD to develop evidence-based practice guidelines to be used within VA and DoD. VA/DoD guideline-development work is done under the auspices of VA/DoD Evidence-Based Practice Working Group (EBPWG), which is chartered by VA/DoD Health Executive Committee (HEC) since 1998.
- Identifies and assesses opportunities to improve the adoption of evidence-based clinical practices through the coordination and sharing of health-related services and resources between the Departments.
- Facilitates on-going implementation of evidence-based clinical advances into practice.
- Champions the integration of evidence-based clinical practice into current developing information systems.
- Fosters integration of evidence-based practice into VA/DoD initiatives related to health promotion, disease prevention, and wellness initiatives.
- Adopts or adapts, develops and maintains evidence-based clinical practices guidelines.

- Assesses the effectiveness of implementation and makes recommendations to maximize performance improvement.
- Identifies opportunities and makes recommendations for research related to evidence-based practice within VA/DoD.

The Office of Medical Legal Affairs was established to facilitate VHA's support of the Health Care Quality Improvement Act of 1986, which established an HHS system to track practitioners on whose behalf a malpractice claim has been paid.

- Coordinates and convenes panels to review all paid VHA tort claims for determining whether the standard of care was rendered.
- Identifies licensed practitioners for reporting to the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB).

The Systems Redesign and Continuous Improvement Program examines all parts of an integrated delivery system to identify opportunities to reduce variation, remove waste, and manage constraints.

- Leads and facilitates implementation of high-reliability systems at VHA facilities through investments in improvement capability.
- Leads and facilitates improvements to patient access to health care.
- Trains teams at the local, regional, and national level to develop the lean and Six Sigma competencies to continuously improve their delivery systems toward efficiency and optimization.

The Veteran Engineering Resource Centers (VERC) systematically apply the concepts of industrial and systems engineering in health care to derive safe, efficient solutions and optimized platforms of care delivery.

- Leverages engineering analysis tools to understand the scope and nature of current deficits and bottlenecks.
- Designs and develops engineering solutions to identified clinical and operational systems issues and priorities.
- Teaches engineering principles to health care professionals.
- Teaches health care principles to engineering professionals.

Healthcare Value is the key overarching endpoint of the success of program strategies for all aspects of the QSV organization addressing concepts specific to measurement and results, risk intelligence, and education and program planning.

- Develops a balanced scorecard of leading indicators of organizational health in key value domains, including financial sustainability, organizational culture, business and clinical process integrity, clinical safety, effectiveness and reliability, system improvement and optimization, and workforce competencies.

- Guides the organization to begin the measurement of population health for different disease burdens and at-risk groups.
- Prioritizes, endorses, and directs organizational initiatives and projects that simultaneously enhance population health and create a seamless patient experience with superior levels of Veteran activation in their health care at a low per capita cost.
- Allows for collaborative work with research, clinical programs, and analytic partners to increase enterprise value (better health, better care, efficiency) by providing and aligning the creation of value-driven information technology systems.
- Supports partnering to plan, control, and improve data generation, collection and reporting to support emphasis on long-term outcomes of care and systems efficiency across the continuum.
- Develops core and specialized competency assessment tools for the work force that address quality, safety, high-reliability concepts, and principles.
- Develops quality, safety and high-reliability education and training content, and delivery modalities for the quality workforce.
- Assures strategic communication of quality, safety, high-reliability policy, evidence, research and best practices.
- Develop enterprise infrastructure and services to make the information accessible and useful through customizable reporting solutions.
- Strengthen enterprisewide relationships to build a stronger and risk aware community in VHA.

**Authorities**

5 U.S.C. 552a

28 U.S.C. 2346(b) and 2671-2680

38 U.S.C. Chapter 17

38 U.S.C. 5705

43 U.S.C. 11101-11152

38 CFR Part 46

VHA Directives 1030

VHA Directives 2006-067

VHA Directives 2008-002

VHA Directives 2008-077

VHA Directives 2009-043

VHA Directives 2009-032

VHA Directives 2010-011

VHA Directives 2010-023

VHA Directives 2010-025

VHA Handbook 1004.07, 1050.01, 1100.17, 1100.19

P.L. 104-191.

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#### **4.2.5 VHA Office of Healthcare Transformation**

##### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Healthcare Transformation stimulates transformative change and process standardization across the organization by coordinating strategy, stakeholders, and resources to cultivate and support integration.

##### **Overview**

The Office of Healthcare Transformation (OHT) is responsible for the development and management of tactical planning in support of the VHA strategic plan and for the portfolio management of the VHA Transformation Major Initiatives. OHT frequently partners with senior program officials within VHA; Program Offices in 10N, 10P, and 10A; Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN) leadership and staff; the Office of Policy and Planning (OPP); the Office of Finance; the Enterprise Program Management Office; the Office of Acquisition, Logistics and Construction (OALC); the Office of Information Technology (OIT); and the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) to coordinate projects. OHT has successfully established a program and project management infrastructure designed to foster integration across the organization.

##### **Functions and Tasks**

Provides strategic direction, oversight, and integration of projects and programs that are developed in support of the VHA strategic plan.

- Develops and manages tactical planning in support of the VHA strategic plan.
- Coordinates and facilitates execution of strategy.
- Identifies risks and mitigation plans.
- Aligns efforts to ensure organizational resiliency and readiness for change.
- Ensures business and clinical processes are designed to support strategy.
- Fosters benchmarking, innovation, integration, and discovery to advance the strategic plan.
- Evaluates outcomes to identify future opportunities.
- Provides consultation, project management expertise, repeatable processes, and reusable tools designed to facilitate successful execution of strategy.
- Serves as principal liaison to VA's OPP and the ePMO on all matters relating to VHA Transformation Major Initiatives.
- Serves as principal advisor and liaison to VHA's executive leadership on all matters relating to VHA Transformation Major Initiatives through the PDUSH.
- Integrates efforts with stakeholders within VA, other Federal partners, and community organizations to advance VHA's strategic plan.

##### **Authorities**

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VHA Executive Decision Memo: Establishment of Veterans Health Administration “Office of Healthcare Transformation,” signed July 9, 2009.

#### **4.2.6 VHA Office of Health Equity**

##### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Health Equity (OHE) champions the advancement of health equity and the reduction of health disparities by providing individualized health care to each Veteran in a way that eliminates disparate health outcomes and assures health equity.

##### **Overview**

OHE strengthens and broadens the ability of VHA leadership to address health inequalities and reduce health disparities through operations, policy, oversight, and research. Working in two fundamental areas, education/communication and health care outcomes, OHE positively impacts the health and health care of vulnerable sub-populations within VHA.

##### **Functions and Tasks**

OHE impacts health and health care equity for Veterans by working to replace barriers preventing appropriate individualized health care with desired health and health care outcomes.

- Aligns the VHA Health Equity Action Plan with the Department of Health and Human Services’ *National Stakeholder Strategy to Achieve Health Equity*.
- Cultivates commitment of VHA leadership for successful implementation of OHE goals.

Increases awareness of the significance of health inequalities and disparities, their impact, and the actions necessary within VHA to improve health care and health outcomes for vulnerable populations.

- Promotes widespread awareness of inequalities, disparities, and issues of equity among internal and external stakeholders through a comprehensive communications plan that articulates the barriers, data needs and recommended actions.
- Incorporates consideration of health inequality and disparities in strategic resources and clinical decision-making (e.g., using the framework of integrated ethics) to move VHA toward the achievement of health equity.

Improves health and health care outcomes for Veteran sub-populations experiencing health disparities.

- Assesses Veteran enrollment in benefits and health care programs, tracks by sub-populations market penetration over time and analyzes reasons for any identified disparities.
  - Works with other VHA offices to identify and establish outcome metrics for awareness of eligibility, access to benefits, health care delivery, and patient satisfaction consistent with
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those used in Healthy People 2020 and the annual Health Disparities Report published by the HHS.

Improves cultural and linguistic competency and the diversity of the VA workforce involved in advancing the health and well-being of Veterans.

- Promotes an understanding of the link between workforce diversity and achievement of equity in health care and outcomes.
- Promotes interactive cultural competency training that addresses bias, behaviors, attitudes, and integrates recognition of culture into the delivery of health care services.

Improves the availability, coordination, and utilization of data and evaluation of outcomes, as well as the diffusion of research, to track progress toward the achievement of health equity.

- Monitors, coordinates, and provides assistance and guidance to further research and improvement efforts, and to translate research and quality improvement findings into operation plans, clinical treatment, education, and related services.
- Ensures collection of current and accurate data on vulnerable populations.
- Partners with the ADUSH for Informatics and Analytics and other program offices to assess quality of care differences and ensure data capture of health care and outcome measures.
- Explores the development of new measures and the use of measures validated by other organizations that will help VHA understand the intermediate steps in the causal pathway leading to inequitable health care delivery, health outcomes or satisfaction with care.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapter 73 and applicable Subchapters I-IV

## **4.3 VHA OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH FOR POLICY AND SERVICES**

### **Mission Statement**

Policy and Services is dedicated to ensuring excellence for Veterans through the integrated functioning of health informatics and analysis, research, strategic planning policy, and program development, epidemiology and public health, organizational ethics, coordination of intergovernmental interactions, outreach, which promote dignity and respect, and is achieved by employing innovative approaches through interdisciplinary collaboration within and beyond VHA.

### **Vision Statement**

Our vision is to provide leadership in policy and services that result in the best possible health care for our Nation's Veterans and the health care community.

**Overview**

The Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Policy and Services (DUSHPS) is dedicated to ensuring excellence in the full continuum of health care policy, information management, research, ethics, and public health-related services. It provides oversight of DUSHPS programs and aligns them with the strategic objectives and agency priority goals (APGs) articulated by the Department, as well as VHA strategic goals.

**Functions and Tasks**

Advises the USH, PDUSH, and other principal officials on all matters pertaining to the health policy and programs.

- Develops and presents policies, plans, and programs for appropriate decision making.
- Catalyzes innovation and promotes diffusion of best practices and technologies throughout VHA by using innovative approaches and technologies and collaborating with partners within and outside VHA.
- Ensures effective coordination of policies and programs within VHA.
- Communicates and advocates VA policies, plans, and programs to external audiences on all matters pertaining to VA health care system.
- Serves on internal and external committees and represents VHA interests.
- Serves as a bridge between the operations and oversight arms of VHA for safe and effective delivery of health care services.
- Collaborates with Operations and QSV arms of the organization.

Provides executive leadership and direction to offices under the DUSHPS, including the Office of Policy and Planning, Office of Informatics and Analytics, Office of Public Health, Office of Patient Care Services, Office of Interagency Health Affairs, National Center for Ethics in Health Care, Office of Readjustment Counseling, and Office of Research and Development.

- Guides and oversees the responsible ADUSHs and Chief Officers in developing, implementing, executing, and supervising where appropriate, the execution of VA policy, plans, programs, budgets, and activities.
- Addresses gaps or concerns by promulgating policy, employing information and informatics tools to improve outcomes, and measuring results to ensure continuous learning.
- Oversees the execution of Policy and Services acquisitions, financial management, travel, human resource management space and information management strategic plans.
- Oversees productivity and management of Policy and Services programs.
- Develops policies and programs within the functional areas of the office.
- Oversees the office strategic planning process, identification of best practices and evaluation mechanisms, including process and outcomes measures.

**Authority**

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## 38 U.S.C. Chapter 73

### 4.3.1 VHA Office of Policy and Planning

#### Mission Statement

The Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for the Office of Policy and Planning (OPP) advances the Veteran health care system through mission-critical planning, forecasting, information and policy analysis.

#### Functions and Tasks

Ensures Veterans and their families have access to high-quality health care services through effective and integrated systemwide strategic planning.

- Leads, supports and coordinates VHA strategic planning process.
- Coordinates VHA support to VA strategic plan and reporting requirements.

Facilitates the delivery of high-quality health care by providing analytics to support policy decisions and advance system effectiveness.

- Oversees, monitors and supports health care policy development efforts in support of VHA strategic goals.
- Advances development/utilization of the VA Enrollee Health Care Projection Model (EHCPM) to forecast Veteran enrollment, demand and resource requirements for VA health care services, and to support the VA medical care budget process, and strategic and capital planning activities.
- Conducts the Survey of Veteran Enrollees' Health and Reliance Upon VA.
- Provides leading edge, geospatial analysis and tools that are used across VA to optimize health care access; enables decision-makers to "visualize choice."
- Conducts special studies and analyses that support VHA strategic planning and direction.

Increases access to quality health care services for Veterans residing in rural and highly rural areas.

- Meets the objectives of P.L. 110-329 to expand and enhance the delivery of health care to rural Veterans, and ensures integration with overall strategic planning efforts.
    - Collaborates with VA program offices, other Federal and state partners and rural health communities to build partnerships.
    - Engages in studies and analyses, and promulgates best practices.
    - Translates research and best practices into policy and measurable impacts.
  - Obligates Office of Rural Health funds to support VA rural health initiatives.
  - Implements and oversees goals, procedures, policies and performance measures for Office of Rural Health by documenting the impacts of best practices in rural health, enhancing existing and implementing new strategies to improve and begin new collaborations, and increase service options for rural Veterans.
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**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapter 73

P.L. 109-461 § 212 (7307-7308)

**4.3.2 VHA Office of Informatics and Analytics (OIA)****Overview**

The Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health (ADUSH) for the Office of Informatics and Analytics (OIA) provides health data and ready access to health data in a multitude of formats and through a wide variety of systems to ensure Veterans and their beneficiaries receive optimal health care and other services in timely and efficient ways.

**Functions and Tasks**

Executes world-class health information programs within VHA.

- Develops OIA business processes, internal collaborations, and external partnerships to support rapid response to customer and client health information needs.
- Creates next-generation, interoperable Electronic Health Record (EHR) data and records, such as the Health Management Platform (HMP) as part of VA major initiatives (MI), the Interagency Electronic Health Record (iEHR) and the Health Informatics Initiative (hi2).
- Provides advanced capabilities in executing VA's personal health record initiatives and bar code-based enhancements to promote uniform quality, safety, and value.
- Expands safety reporting guidelines for EHR and mechanisms to inform internal and external health information technology stakeholders about opportunities and challenges in using EHR in the delivery of patient care.
- Supports the Department's data governance process in coordination with OPP's Office of Data Governance and Analysis.

Supports the iEHR governance framework, processes, and resource planning.

- Participates in iEHR focus, governance, and working groups.
- Leads and participates in the joint requirements and architecture tiger teams.
- Develops iEHR capability-specific requirements and architectural artifacts.
- Monitors and reports status of iEHR IT projects.
- Advises the ICIB on the activities of iEHR and interagency business.
- Supports the Department's data governance process in coordination with OPP's Office of Data Governance and Analysis.

Provides and manages IT business requirements and architecture for the Department's major initiatives (MI) regarding health IT efforts and evaluates program effectiveness and operations.

- Coordinates project support across the MI with VHA Office of Healthcare Transformation, monitors status of projects, and works with OHT and OIT leadership to address concerns.
- Consults VA MI business leads to jointly analyze the business capabilities of the MI, identify gaps, and recommend solutions.
- Reports status of IT projects supporting VHA-led MI and other high-priority efforts.
- Develops specific project artifacts to support MI and executive-level decision-making.
- Identifies and tracks relationships, dependencies, and redundancies among the MI and other categories of IT projects where VHA has a major stake, including Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLHR), ER, iEHR, New Models of Health Care (NMHC), Enhancing the Veteran Experience and Access to Health Care (EVEAH,) Veterans Relationship Management (VRM), and Health Informatics Initiative (hi2).

Collaborates with VHA, VA program offices, and OIT to facilitate planning, documentation, system development, implementation, and oversight of the comprehensive portfolio of health IT systems used by VHA.

- Manages strategic IT project portfolios using business case analysis, and applies business architectures, health IT strategic planning and VA-level IT governance to support VHA leadership to align IT investments with VHA strategic priorities.
- Maintains and manages VHA business architecture and architecture framework.
- Maintains and manages VHA IT requirements engineering policy, processes, inventory, and global perspective for USH.
- Integrates business architecture and requirements methodologies to ensure that business needs are efficiently collected and comprehensively represented.
- Manages processes by which IT systems are accepted and released to ensure appropriate involvement, awareness, and concurrence by VHA business owners.
- Collects and prioritizes VHA IT needs and collaborates with OIT to develop and implement VHA portfolio of capabilities and corresponding user requirements for new and legacy information systems.
- Elicits, models, and documents functional requirements, and monitors system interdependencies, and, in collaboration with OIT, tests and deploys functional IT capabilities for VHA.
- Performs risk assessments and provides mitigation strategies and solutions to successfully deliver critical IT projects and programs to VHA.

Sustains and advances VHA informatics architecture and implementation framework to facilitate semantic interoperability of data to support VHA health care priorities, the MI, and the National Strategy for Quality Improvement in Health Care.

- Develops information models consistent with the needs of iEHR Common Information Interoperability Framework and other VHA and VA initiatives.

- Further develops the Health Information Exchange model in concert with other VA, DoD, Federal agency, and private sector partners through the Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER) Health program.
- Collaborates with multiple partners to develop internal VA standards, terminologies, information models, and services in support of knowledge management and clinical decision support activities within OIA and VHA.
- Creates and executes strategy for designation of the Department as a Meaningful User of Health IT, including certification of VA's EHR and execution of quality reporting requirements identified in Stages 1 through 3 by the HHS Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONCHIT).

Delivers a collaborative, open-source tooling environment to support knowledge management, clinical documentation, research, analysis, semantic interoperability, and decision support.

- Delivers a constraint model that can be used together with Systematized Nomenclature Of Medicine (SNOMED) to form the foundation for knowledge-driven, structured data entry system.
- Deliver an Integrated Workbench and Light-weight Granular Objects (LEGO) development environment that includes the ability to create edit LEGOs to support new form development.

Support VHA's health care IT priorities, ensuring VHA's IT needs are appropriately addressed in the Department's governance process.

- Maintains VHA's prioritized IT needs and advocates for IT funding.
- Develops and maintains VHA's Health IT strategic plan (HISP) and links it to VHA strategic plan and VA IT strategic plan.
- Advocates for VHA IT needs in the Department's IT governance processes, advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.
- Coordinates new facility activations among VHA, OIT and Construction, Facilities and Management (CFM). Establishes and facilitates working groups that share critical budget and facility/space planning elements.
- Liaises with OIT for the health care portion of the IT budget and supports IT budget prioritization, formulation, and execution processes.

Develops national standards, information models and terminologies in collaboration with HHS ONCHIT, the National E Health Collaborative, Standards Development Organizations, and other standards organizations. Establishes and sustains a human factors program that ensures OIA products effectively address the needs of the end user.

- Applies User Centered Design (UCD) methods to create highly usable interface designs so that clinicians, Veterans, caregivers, and other who use VHA health information systems may do so effectively.

- Analyzes user needs, context of use, and information workflow to determine user interface requirements that will enable them to successfully and efficiently complete online tasks.
- Conducts user interface design and usability reviews, assessments, tests and certification of software applications, and Web and mobile solutions.
- Provides test-and-evaluation environments for use by human computer interaction, human factors, cognitive engineers and other user experience professionals.
- Continuously tracks available and developing health information systems and approaches.
- Delivery of service-oriented architecture (SOA) service interface specifications suitable for basis of standardization efforts in support of Health Level 7 (HL7).

Ensures that clinicians, staff, patients and others are presented – at the point of care – with intelligently filtered knowledge, person-specific information, and potential actions at the right time and in the right way to enhance health and health care.

- Develops a detailed analysis of decision-support integration into the workflow processes (clinical decision, process and logistical/managerial decision processes) including assessments of the decision-support needs within these processes, and decision-support integration (both effective and ineffective modalities) to inform development efforts.

Sustains and advances a framework to deliver knowledge, clinical decision support, cognitive decision support and other related capabilities to points of care.

Provides a roadmap for ongoing clinical decision support (CDS) advancement to continually improve VA's ability to improve the quality, safety, and value of delivered health care.

- Evaluates and pilots CDS emerging technologies. Examples include advanced search capabilities for existing computerized patient record system data and “Infobutton” capabilities to link clinical records to supporting evidence-based materials.
- Provides stewardship of CDS Rules and content for VHA and other users of electronic health systems. Evaluates and implements methods to develop, manage and maintain decision support rules and content over time.
- Promotes effective use of existing VHA CDS tools to improve quality, safety and efficiency of health care delivery, and supports CDS-related process improvement activities.

Develops an effective program for data acquisition and stewardship, and uses explicit policies for data standardization and acquisition.

- Migrates key data elements to the Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW).
- Develops data stewardship infrastructure to streamline data-related decision-making.
- Develops and promulgates data standards to ensure that health care identity management practices support interoperability with sharing partners.

- Develops VHA’s capacity to support “transactional quality,” the ability to collect data in real time during the course of clinical or administrative transactions while minimizing reliance on redundant data entry or post-hoc approaches to data capture and storage.
- Provides common definitions for basic core data sets (e.g., enrollee, unique user, race, age, gender, encounter, etc.) and promulgates a library of standard data definitions.

Identifies and enforces data quality standards and establishes a consolidated data repository for all critical VHA source data, processed data and metadata.

Develops data standards and data quality programs that ensure consistency, availability, role-based accessibility, and validity of data.

- Establishes requirements for metadata repository functionality to document business rules, data quality metrics, and master data management.
- Ensures OIA has the necessary technical resources for enterprise data systems.
- Develops an integrated data model for use by all VHA staff that has a need to interact with data.

Support VHA’s health care IT priorities, ensuring VHA’s IT needs are appropriately addressed in the Department’s governance process.

- Maintains VHA’s prioritized IT needs and advocates for IT funding.
- Develops and maintains VHA’s Health IT strategic plan (HISP) and links it to VHA strategic plan and VA IT strategic plan.
- Advocates for VHA IT needs in the Department’s IT governance processes, advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.
- Coordinates new facility activations among VHA, OIT, and Construction, Facilities and Management (CFM). Establishes and facilitates working groups that share critical budget and facility/space planning elements.
- Liaises with OIT for the health care portion of the IT budget and supports IT budget prioritization, formulation and execution processes.

Serves as the primary liaison for VA/DoD health information sharing initiatives with VHA, VA’s OIT, the DoD/VA Interagency Program Office (IPO) Director and DoD’s MHS Chief Information Officer.

- Develops critical health information sharing and systems interoperability between VHA and other agencies, including the DoD MHS, other Federal agencies, and private sector health care organizations to make electronic health information securely available to the doctors, clinicians, and staff working with Veterans and Active-Duty patients while protecting patient privacy.
- Manages and coordinates key high-visibility VA/DoD health information sharing interoperability projects, such as the Federal and Bi-directional Health Information

Exchange (F/BHIE), VA/DoD Image Exchange, Clinical Data Repository/Health Data Repository (CHDR) interface between the DoD Clinical Data Repository and VA Health Data Repository, Laboratory Data Sharing Interoperability (LDSI) and Polytrauma/Wounded Warrior Data Exchange.

Translates VHA's abundant data into information and knowledge by enhancing the capacity for data analysis at the enterprise and local levels.

- Develops high-level analytic capabilities to take maximum advantage of VA's vast information resources, particularly in the realm of predictive modeling and data mining.
- Develops and expands enterprisewide analytics training through distance-learning programs, with focus on the data and analysis used by medical centers and clinical programs.
- Develops Web solutions to improve the capability to utilize our large datasets to address current business challenges and opportunities.

Standardizes the reporting of key enterprise information and creates a transparent, seamless system for data access.

- Develops new conduits and expands existing tools, e.g., Clinical Assessment Reporting and Tracking Program for Cardiac Catheterization Laboratories that report analytic outputs where they can be used to improve health care and health system decision making.
- Ensures reported data is accessible to all members of the user community.
- Eliminates undue restrictions and promotes wide use of available data by managers, clinicians, and researchers to address important questions for health care delivery, operational effectiveness, and population health.
- Enhances innovation and integration of social media by identifying functional requirements through input from stakeholders and assessing various collaboration products against these requirements.

Uses health information technology to improve the services VHA provides. Empowers Veterans to take control of their health through increased access to health information.

- Implements best practices and industry standards within VHA and when working with external business partners to ensure that privacy, security, health care identity management and other interoperability concerns are addressed.
- Ensures VHA personnel have access to peer-reviewed and other library resources needed to maintain expertise and deliver quality care to Veterans.
- Provides Veterans, families, and caregivers access to authoritative information.

As legal custodian of the health record, Health Information Management (HIM) provides subject matter expertise and serves as VA business owner for the implementation of International

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Classification of Diseases version 10 (ICD-10) Coding System, including responsibility for the VHA National ICD-10 Program Office.

- Develops comprehensive training program for staff, to include clinicians, coders, and revenue staff.
- Develops business requirements for 36 VistA applications that require conversion from ICD-9 to ICD-10. Issues guidance for standard content changes to Clinical Reminders, Problem List, and Encounter Forms.
- Collaborates with DoD, Indian Health Service (IHS), and various VHA program offices to complete timely execution of this nationally required implementation.

Manages VHA's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Office.

- Serves as expert on FOIA issues to assist and advise all levels of leadership and VACO staff as well as staff at VISNs and VHA health care facilities.
- Implements FOIA policy and develops guidance documents for VHA Central Office and VHA field facilities.
- Responds to FOIA requests received by VHA Central Office.
- Manages data calls for congressional oversight committees and prepares responses to such requests.

Manages Bar Code Resource Office.

- Aligns clinical and business operations with technology solutions by defining requirements as well as sharing goals, objectives, and measures as meaningful representatives of performance.
- Provides clinical and technical expertise to gather and analyze data, track and establish trends, and create optimal process improvement plans to enhance the overall safety and effectiveness of clinical care delivery.

Manages VHA's Privacy and Security Offices.

- Serves as expert on Privacy Act, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act, and other privacy regulation issues to assist and advise all levels of leadership and VACO staff, as well as staff at VISNs and VHA health care facilities.
  - Develops and implements privacy and security policy, as well as subsequent guidance documents, for VHA Central Office, VHA Program Offices, VISNs, and VHA field facilities.
  - Prepares responses to privacy and security requests received by VHA Central Office.
  - As VA's covered entity, designated VHA Privacy and Security Officers manage the relationship with the HHS' Office for Civil Rights and ensure HIPAA compliance through Health Information Management coding audits, privacy/security compliance audits, and Business Associate Agreement reviews.
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Collaborates with partners throughout VA to leverage technology and innovation transforming the delivery of care for Veterans and caregivers with unified, integrated, and personalized virtual services that connect them with a state-of-the-art system of care.

- Ensures an integrated and cohesive ConnectedHealth strategy is developed and implemented that supports VA's and VHA's strategic goals and business objectives.
- Consolidates ConnectedHealth strategic plans and budgets into a single portfolio.
- Executes VHA's ConnectedHealth strategy, focused on health care improvement by engaging Veteran patients and caregivers outside of traditional health care visits and providing opportunities for involvement earlier in their course of care.
- Improves data sharing to increase the value of health information, enhancing direct communication between Veterans and caregivers with VA care teams.
- Oversees VA's development of mobile applications (apps) ensuring that end users have input into product design and a consistent user experience.
- Manages the governance, standardization, certification, and evaluation processes of VA Mobile Apps.
- In conjunction with OIT, develops a unified, consistent, and effective approach to develop, implement, and sustain health care technologies to ensure:
  - Consistent interfaces and information displays.
  - Consistent application of identity management.
  - Veterans' information sharing needs.
  - Policies are consistent and effective.
  - Appropriate information security and privacy controls are integrated.

Develops and/or oversees the development and implementation of mobile solutions, including apps and mobile-optimized Web sites, to assist Veterans, caregivers and VA care teams, to address a range of health, management, and administrative needs.

- Develops apps through integrated teams of OIT, VHA, and contracted developers, and facilitates a knowledge transfer of information relating to app development.
- Develops, implements, and/or procures/oversees pilot mobile app programs to understand how mobile and Web site solutions can make health information more accessible and convenient for Veterans, caregivers, and providers.
- Oversees national implementation of successful development/procured pilot app programs.
- Establishes/manages VA's Mobile Apps Environment (MAE).
- Manages mobile apps life cycle, focusing on compliance to OIT's Mobile Program Management Accountability System (PMAS) and, working with OIT, supervises the certification process.

Manages mission-critical innovations as a component of the Secretary's VA Center for Innovation (VACI) from the inception of the idea to deployment to the enterprise.

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- Fosters the development of innovation through annual organizationwide competitions and industry partners through VACI.
- Serves as effective stewards in maximizing the value of health innovation investments, and provides funds, personnel, and other resources.
- Promotes the creation of a governance structure between VHA, VACI, and OIT to develop innovations that support the delivery of care.
- Leverages the Open Source Electronic Health Record Agent (OSEHRA) in the innovative development process to promote collaboration among innovators and support advancement of ideas.
- Develops and maintains an authoritative catalog/database of all mobile applications that support the delivery of care.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapter 73 and applicable Subchapters I-IV

The Privacy Act of 1974

The Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1980

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996

The Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA) of 1998

The Electronic Government Act of 2002

The Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) of 2002

The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act of 2009

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) of 2009

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

The Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 (Information Technology Management Reform Act)

38 U.S.C. 5701

5 U.S.C. 552

38 U.S.C. 7332

38 U.S.C. 5705

E.O. 12862

E.O. 13571

29 U.S.C. 794d, § 508

### **4.3.3 VHA Office of Public Health**

#### **Functions and Tasks**

The Office of Public Health provides public health expertise to VHA.

- Organizes interdisciplinary teams to address the physical, mental, and environmental health concerns of populations for Veterans, their families, VA staff.
- In collaboration with other VA/VHA program offices, the community, and Government agencies, Office of Public Health develops general guidance for developing policies and

programs related to Veterans in order to identify local and national health problems and priorities of Veterans.

- Assesses, surveys, and monitors Veteran populations to identify health problems and establish public health measures to ensure the well-being of Veterans and VA Staff.
- Disseminates information pertaining to public health campaigns focused on preventing illness and promoting prevention measures for Veterans and VA staff.
- Provides administrative oversight and support to Post-Deployment Health, Clinical Public Health, Population Health, and Occupational Health programs.

The Post-Deployment Health Group conducts assessments, scientific studies, surveillance, outreach, and education to address Veterans exposed to environmental hazards as a result of military service.

- Performs surveillance and epidemiological studies of environmental exposures occurring during Active Duty to ensure that environmental exposures among Veterans of all eras remain a priority.
- Coordinates with DoD through the Deployment Health Working Group on all potential environmental and occupational hazards affecting Veterans' health to facilitate data sharing and coordinate policy development.
- Develops, maintains, updates, and evaluates VA health registries, including the Persian Gulf War Health, Agent Orange, Ionizing Radiation, and Traumatic Brain Injury and Open Burn Pit registries.

The Clinical Public Health Group provides clinical policy and guidance nationally to VHA networks and facility partners on issues where public health and clinical medicine intersect.

- Supports programs on Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and hepatitis C (HCV) and viral hepatitis, seasonal influenza, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, consequences of tobacco use and tobacco-use cessation, preparedness and response for new and re-emerging infectious diseases, health impacts of climate change and environmental justice, and other public health hazards, public health program health care quality, surveillance and research, and epidemiologic investigations.
  - Collaborates with other offices and programs to provide field guidance and support on use of emerging treatments on new HIV/HCV antiviral therapy, including clinician training through Telehealth programs.
  - Represents VA as a member of the White House's National HIV/AIDS Strategy Committee.
  - Conducts public health surveillance and research within VA focusing on biosurveillance and Health care-Associated Infections.
  - Manages Health Care-Associated Infections and Influenza Surveillance System (HAISS), an automated system using EHR data for detection of infections, antimicrobial use, and disease incidence anomalies.
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- Leads epidemiological investigations for unexpected adverse events.
- Develops and disseminates clinical resources responsive to the smoking and tobacco use of Veterans population in care.

Responsible for planning and coordination of tobacco use cessation and tobacco control policy and programs in the VA health care system.

- Develops clinical policies and programs to increase Veterans' access to evidence-based tobacco cessation care.
- Identifies clinical and training needs to disseminate knowledge on smoking and tobacco use cessation needs of Veteran populations.
- Provides ongoing guidance to VHA health care professionals and administrators on smoke-free policy and secondhand smoke exposure issues.

The Population Health Group provides epidemiologic expertise, quantitative analysis, and evidence-based recommendations to support the three core functions of public health practice, assessment, policy development, and assurance.

- Provides quantitative and qualitative analysis to Public Health and other national program offices pertaining to health outcomes of defined Veteran populations to improve care for Veterans.
- Engages with internal partners to analyze and plan interventions for Veteran populations.

The Occupational Health Group provides leadership, consultation, policy analysis and evidence-based programming to promote a healthy and safe work environment, reduce injury, prevent violence and support meaningful work in VHA.

- Supports, reviews, analyzes, and responds to emerging trends in related regulatory (Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Joint Commission) requirements, OIG investigations, congressional mandates, and VHA Veteran care priorities.
- Identifies training needs and develops products and services to disseminate knowledge and build occupational health, injury reduction, and health promotion capacity within VHA medical center work environments.
- Creates products and services that support employee well-being.
- Develops, maintains, and analyzes databases for employee accident and injury tracking, medical surveillance, occupational safety, and occupational/employee health.
- Provides advice to VA medical facilities on health, safety and prevention programs.
- Evaluates existing programs, supports organizational operational research, and funds operational trials on important issues for occupational safety, health, and prevention.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapter 73 and applicable Subchapters I-IV.

#### 4.3.4 VHA Office Patient Care Services (PCS)

##### Overview

The Office of Patient Care Services is dedicated to ensuring the full continuum of health care, which comprises health promotion, disease prevention, diagnostics, therapeutic and rehabilitative care, recovery and palliative care. PCS provides care through policy and program development that promotes dignity and respect, and is achieved by utilizing innovative approaches and technologies through interdisciplinary collaboration both within and outside of VHA.

##### Functions and Tasks

PCS provides leadership and policy to enable VA to provide the best possible health care for our Nations' Veterans.

Care Management and Social Work Services (CMSWS) supports and advances the mission of VHA by providing comprehensive psychosocial support services to Veterans, their families, and caregivers. These services include transition assistance, assessment, crisis intervention, high-risk screening, discharge planning, case management, advocacy, education, supportive counseling, psychotherapy, resource referrals, and resource acquisition.

- Provides caregiver support services nationwide to ensure Veterans and their family caregivers have emotional and physical support, and access to health care.
- Provides support services directly to family caregivers ensuring that Veterans who can no longer care for themselves can remain in their homes with adequate support.
- Provides assistance to families of Veterans, Active Duty Servicemembers, and their families through the Family Hospitality Program. Resources include the VA Fisher House Program, which provides temporary accommodations for the families and caregivers of Veterans and Servicemembers who are receiving medical care at VA medical facilities nationwide.
- Provides comprehensive psychosocial support and transition assistance to Veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND) as they transition from DoD to VA and re-integrate into their home communities.
- Provides increased clinical support and care management for severely wounded Veterans returning from service.
- Provides temporary lodging for Veterans receiving outpatient VA medical care or Compensation and Pension examinations. Veterans may be accompanied by family members or caregivers to provide additional support during the course of treatment.
- Provides policy guidance and program oversight for social workers servicing all VAMCs and program areas.

Clinical Strategic Planning and Measurement supports PCS leadership in developing, implementing and evaluating the Patient Care Service Strategic Plan, which supports and advances VA and VHA strategic goals and objectives.

- Provides advice on developing a comprehensive strategic vision, which includes organizational objectives and execution strategies.
- Provides data; conducts assessments of current conditions; collaborates with PCS leaders to develop realistic and appropriate performance evaluation metrics; and develops and produces analysis and reporting tools that support leadership capacity and the capability to implement, evaluate, and course-adjust strategic activities.
- Represents the Chief and Deputy Chief PCS officers in high-level negotiations involving the establishment or implementation of policies, practices, management and operational activities under the purview of PCS.
- Responds to Departmental, administration, congressional, and GAO inquiries.
- Participates in Departmentwide activities involving organizational alignment, functional assignments, strategic development of patient care, performance measurement and staffing.
- Provides leadership and advisory services, which are oriented toward providing general management solutions to achieve optimum overall program balance in relation to VHA's and VA's missions.

Diagnostic Services convenes interdisciplinary groups among diagnostic services employees (physicians, nurses, technicians, technologists, administrators, program assistants, and analysts) to share technical knowledge and best practices.

Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Services (PLMS) establishes national policies for VA clinical laboratories.

- PLMS provides guidance to the senior leadership in the VA, VHA, and the VA laboratory community in general to help ensure that timely, cost-effective, and high quality anatomic and clinical pathology services are provided for VA patients and caregivers.
- PLMS' National Enforcement Office oversees the quality of services provided by VA clinical laboratories, and laboratory compliance with regulatory, accreditation and policy guidelines.
- PLMS collaborates with the centers for Medicare and Medicaid services, the DoD, the Food and Drug Administration, the various accrediting organizations, and other Federal and civilian external agencies.
- Supports and promotes the delivery of quality laboratory services to eligible Veterans.

National Nuclear Medicine and Radiation Safety Services is proactive in VA's mission as a leader in quality, safety, clinical informatics, care efficacy, and efficiency within a Veteran-focused and Employer of Choice culture.

- Provides a Nuclear Medicine self-assessment tool to the field for a complete quality review of field Nuclear Medicine services.
- Physician professional performance medicine is tested through an integrated Nuclear Medicine imaging and interpretive annual proficiency program that provides physician-specific performance data and information to the service and physician.
- Tracks and communicates shortages and recalls of radioactive isotopes to the field to ensure safe patient care.
- Educates Nuclear Medicine stakeholder groups, such as physicians, technologists, and Radiation Safety Officers through LiveMeetings and webinars specific to the educational needs of each of these groups.
- Provides advice and counsel to stakeholders, including VACO, VISNs, and VAMCs by disseminating trends in nuclear services from volume and type of studies performed, and monitoring quality benchmarks such as the annual Nuclear Imaging Proficiency Program. Also advises on issues concerning professional recruitment and retention, and technologist and physician productivity.
- Sponsors ad hoc support groups in nuclear medicine and radiation safety issues, and develops productivity models to provide stakeholders with previously unavailable benchmarks.
- Identifies trends, issues, and projects through quarterly conference calls with the Radiation Safety Center for Inquiry and the Nuclear Medicine Technologist Advisory Group.
- Produces an annual staffing productivity model that assists field offices in assessing current technologist staffing needs and predicting future needs.

Radiology advises and recommends courses of action to VACO, VISNs, and facility staff in order to facilitate timely, cost-effective, and high quality diagnostic care in safe environments.

- Analyzes and presents trends in imaging statistics to support effective VHA decision making.
- Provides advanced educational opportunities to diagnostic service employees.
- Radiology nominates specific areas of health care research to address the emerging needs of patients.
- Collaborates with DoD and other Government agencies to provide back-up diagnostic services in times of crisis or disaster.
- Provides radiology subject matter expertise to various VA offices on diverse topics, including strategic planning, contracting, restructuring, information system requirements, and appropriate standards of care in support of program and project implementation and policy development.
- Certifies VHA Mammography Services in compliance with the Mammography Quality Standards Act to ensure quality services to our patients.

TeleRadiology provides remote radiologic interpretations and transmits images and results to wherever they are needed.

The Geriatrics and Extended Care Service (GEC) advances quality care for aging and chronically ill Veterans by providing policy direction for the development, coordination, and integration of geriatrics and long-term care clinical programs, and for the advancement of geriatrics and long-term care through research, education, and evaluation of new clinical models. The shared purpose of all Geriatric and Extended Care programs is to prevent or lessen the burden of disability on older, frail, chronically ill patients and their families/caregivers, to maximize each patient's functional independence; and to optimize quality of life, or as appropriate, the quality of death. Because the course of chronic illness varies, the health care needs of the chronically ill patient also change, requiring the services of one, some, or all Geriatrics and Extended Care services over time.

Geriatric Evaluation, Inpatient and Outpatient Geriatric Evaluation & Management, and GeriPACT (formerly Geriatric Primary Care) offer interdisciplinary inpatient or outpatient services to elderly patients that help clarify whether – and if so what – additional geriatric program(s) within or beyond VA may be helpful for optimizing function and minimizing decline.

Geriatric Evaluation, for which every enrolled Veteran is eligible as part of his or her guaranteed Veterans Benefits, is a clinical service available in a range of settings that consists of a multidimensional set of evaluations leading to development of an interdisciplinary plan of care consisting of treatment, rehabilitation, health promotion and social service interventions, on behalf of a chronically debilitated Veteran, with the explicit intention of identifying and minimizing functional impairments and clinical needs, both apparent and emergent. Geriatric evaluation may be provided in Specialized Geriatric Evaluation and Management programs (see below), Community Living Centers, acute care, outpatient clinics, and Home-Based Primary Care.

Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM) is a specialized program of Geriatric Evaluation in an inpatient or outpatient setting. The Goals and Objectives of GEM Programs are to: (1) improve the processes and outcome of clinical care; (2) ensure efficient use of hospital and community resources; and (3) provide geriatric education for health professionals and trainees.

- In outpatient GEM, the initial assessment and development of the plan of care is followed by execution of the care plan in the originating Patient-Aligned Care Team (PACT) or following the transfer of the Veteran from PACT to a GeriPACT.
- Inpatient GEM follows the a process of initial assessment, development and implementation of a care plan through an interdisciplinary team approach. Post-discharge patients are followed by a GeriPACT after transfer of primary care responsibility from the PACT.

Geriatric Patient-Aligned Care Team (GeriPACT, formerly called Geriatric Primary Care) provides patient-centered, interdisciplinary, team-based primary care to particularly frail and/or complex Veterans (often but not exclusively of advanced age). GeriPACT offers geriatric evaluation followed by interdisciplinary provision of medical, nursing, psychosocial, and associated health services for disease treatment and prevention; health promotion and education of both patients and caregivers; referral for specialty, rehabilitation, and other levels of care; caregiver support; and care management. The interdisciplinary GeriPACT team members are trained specifically for geriatric evaluation and the management of health care issues associated with chronic diseases and aging. GeriPACT is currently offered in about half of VAMCs and where provided, collocated PACTs and their patients benefit from GeriPACT's assumption of care of some of the PACTs' most time-consuming and resource intensive Veterans.

Home-Based Primary Care, Respite Care, Adult Day Health Care, and Long Term Services and Supports Care assist Veterans to remain in their homes through combinations of disease mitigation, functional support, and caregiver support, either provided by or purchased from the community and coordinated by VHA staff.

Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC) is a home care program for which every enrolled Veteran is eligible as part of his or her guaranteed Veterans Benefits. HBPC provides comprehensive, interdisciplinary, longitudinal primary care in the homes of Veterans with complex medical, social, and behavioral conditions for which routine clinic-based care is not effective or not feasible due to transportation challenges. HBPC is designed to serve the chronically ill through the months and years before death, providing primary care, palliative care, rehabilitation, disease management, and coordination of care services. HBPC primarily targets three types of patients in need of home care: (a) longitudinal care patients with chronic complex medical, social, and behavioral conditions; b) longitudinal care patients who require palliative care for an advanced disease that is life limiting or refractory to disease modifying treatment; and (c) patients whose home care needs are expected to be of short duration or for a single problem not requiring an interdisciplinary team, when such services best help the facility meet the needs of this population.

Respite Care is a general term for time-limited supervision and provision of supportive care for the purpose of permitting a caregiver to attend to his or her own personal needs and well-being. Every enrolled Veteran is eligible to receive up to 30 days of respite care per year as part of his or her guaranteed Veterans Benefits. Respite may be provided through admission to an inpatient unit (acute care, VA Community Living Center or community nursing home), as part of a Homemaker/Home Health Aide service, or through a VA- or Community-Adult Day Health Care program.

Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) is a therapeutically oriented, outpatient day program for which every enrolled Veteran is eligible, as part of his or her guaranteed Veterans Benefits. ADHC

provides health maintenance and rehabilitative services to frail elderly and functionally impaired Veterans in a congregate setting. Individualized programs of care are delivered by an interdisciplinary team of health professionals and support staff with an emphasis on helping participants and their caregivers to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to manage care in the home. The program serves as day respite for caregivers, often permitting ongoing employment in the face of a Veterans' need for constant supervision.

Purchased Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS), for which every enrolled Veteran is eligible as part of his or her guaranteed Veterans Benefits, permits dependent Veterans to remain living in the community despite a need for daily support, such as assistance with medications, bathing, meals, dressing, and mobility. LTSS are paid for by VHA but provided by community agencies or through other fee-for-service arrangements, and include:

- Homemaker/Home Health Aide (HM/HHA) to provide a need-based level of support in addressing daily cares required for ongoing life in the community.
- Purchased Skilled Home Nursing (PSHN) for time-limited skilled care (e.g., dressing changes, medication infusion) that supports early discharge from hospital.
- Community Adult Day Health Care (C-ADHC), which is ADHC-provided by a non-VA entity and often includes transportation to and from the program.
- Veteran-Directed Home and Community Based Care (VDHCBC), which is a new, uniquely Veteran-centered approach to LTSS in which VHA works with the Veterans and family to identify and procure (with VA support) the specific combination of services (including but not limited to HM/HHA, PSHN, C-ADHC and Respite) and providers selected to address specific Veteran needs and preferences.

Through the VHA Transformation funding, GEC is currently piloting a wide range of approaches to care at more than 150 sites in VA. With the shared goals of reducing reliance on high-cost yet restrictive institution-based forms of extended care and empowering interdisciplinary teams, approaches that are being implemented and evaluated for broader dissemination include:

- Dementia case management including caregiver and transition care support.
- Transition care to reduce readmission and institutionalization rates following changes in the care venue.
- Home-based hospital care to reduce exposure to the risks of the inpatient setting by treating a specified range of conditions in the home, supervised by a health care team in person and through remote sensing technology.
- Delirium surveillance to reduce the onset of acute cognitive decline in the inpatient setting through a variety of nursing and educational interventions, thereby reducing the need for more restrictive forms of care post-discharge.
- Caregiver support through a variety of educational and interactional mechanisms, including modified Adult Day Health Care in low-population density communities.

- Virtual geriatric assessment and Telehealth geriatrics support for PACT that enhances geriatric specialty support to rural areas and VA sites lacking geriatrics expertise.
- VA partners with Medicare-supported Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly to minimize risk of decline in a community dwelling, and dependent Veterans who would otherwise require nursing home placement.
- Pre-admission and pre-discharge conditioning and rehabilitation to reduce length of stay, deconditioning, readmission, and functional decline associated with hospital care.
- Integration of HBPC and Telehealth to expand access of home care by limiting the need for home visits extending service into remote areas.

Hospice and palliative care (HPC) is a continuum of comfort-oriented and supportive services provided in the home, community, outpatient, or inpatient settings for persons with advanced life-limiting disease. HPC adds focus on quality of life and comfort to the treatment plan, contributing a balance of comfort measures and curative interventions to achieve the goals of care while offering support and bereavement care to the Veteran's family. The goal of HPC is to achieve the best possible quality of life through relief of suffering, control of symptoms, and restoration of functional capacity while remaining sensitive to personal, cultural, and religious values, beliefs, and practices. Programs emphasize the comprehensive management of the physical, psychological, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of the patient. Hospice, for which every enrolled Veteran is eligible, as part of his or her guaranteed Veterans Benefits, is a mode of palliative care for an individual diagnosed with a known terminal condition with a prognosis less than six months and desiring therapies with a palliative intent for the terminal condition. Palliative care is a broader term that includes hospice care as well as other care that emphasizes symptom control, but does not necessarily require the presence of an imminently terminal condition or a time-limited prognosis. Palliative care may include a balance of comfort measures and curative interventions that vary across a wide spectrum.

VA Community Living Centers, Community Nursing Homes, State Veteran Homes, Community Residential Care, and Medical Foster Home offer alternative residential settings, with or without therapeutic programs, for individuals who are not able to live independently either transiently or indefinitely.

The mission of the VA Community Living Centers (CLC) program, formerly known as VA Nursing Home Care Units, is to provide compassionate care to eligible Veterans with short-term or chronic functional impairment severe enough to require multiple nursing interventions throughout the day and night. Veterans with chronic stable conditions including dementia, those requiring rehabilitation or short-term specialized services such as respite or intravenous therapy, or those who need comfort and care at the end of life are served in CLC. The goal of care is to restore the resident to maximum function, prevent further decline, maximize independence, and/or provide comfort when dying. Most CLCs are well suited to providing short-term, restorative, and

rehabilitative care and longer term care for Veterans who meet eligibility criteria and/or require end of life care, prolonged active rehabilitation, are unable to sustain a placement in a community nursing home, or lack clinically appropriate community alternatives.

The Community Nursing Home program (CNH) offers eligible Veterans requiring a nursing home level of care, acutely or chronically, to receive it at VA expense in privately-owned facilities closer to their homes. Residents receive their medical care through the facility but are seen at least monthly by a VHA clinical employee who ascertains the ongoing need for care and the quality and appropriateness of the service being provided.

Every state and Puerto Rico owns and operates at least one State Veterans Home (SVH), each of which provides nursing home care. Some offer inpatient hospital care and/or Adult Day Care programs as well. VA shares with the state the expense of building SVH facilities and underwrites a portion of the daily charges to Veterans residing in them, but every state owns and operates the facility and sets its own eligibility and admission criteria. VHA oversees a quality assurance program for every SVH.

Community Residential Care (CRC) provides health care supervision to eligible Veterans not in need of hospital or nursing home care but who, because of medical and/or psychosocial health conditions as determined through a statement of needed care, are not able to live independently and have no suitable family or significant others to provide the needed supervision and supportive care. CRC settings may vary from a small family home to larger, more formal residential facilities, and are selected by the Veteran. The care provided in CRC consists of room and board, and a level of assistance with activities of daily living and supervision determined by individual need. Case management, site safety, and care provider education is provided by the local VA facility. The cost of care is financed by the Veteran's own resources.

Medical Foster Home (MFH) is a newly available, unique partnership between CRC and HBPC. Veterans who enter MFH all meet nursing home criteria but have the means and desire to remain in a community setting. HBPC provides the Veteran-specific caregiver education necessary to maintain the Veteran in the MFH. As with CRC, the Veteran pays for room, board, and the efforts of the caregiver, and VA coordinates the care and ensures patient safety.

Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Centers support the advancement, refinement, integration, and dissemination of established and innovative approaches to geriatric care.

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) initiated a strategy in the mid-1970s to focus attention on the aging Veteran population, to increase the basic knowledge of aging, to transmit that knowledge to health care providers, and to improve the quality of care to the aged. The cornerstone of this strategy was the development of Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Centers

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(GRECCs), “centers of geriatric excellence” designed for the advancement and integration of research, education, and clinical achievements in geriatrics and gerontology for the benefit of the total VA health care system. There are currently 19 GRECCs in 18 of the 21 VISNs. Each GRECC focuses its research energies in a limited number of geriatric questions (e.g., falls, dementia, osteoporosis, stroke, vascular stiffness, etc.), innovates new clinical approaches based on the findings, and then shares basic geriatric knowledge and the findings of the innovations within the host VA, the VISN, and nationally.

Specialty Care Services (SCS) comprises a number of components designed to ensure the best overall preventive, clinical, spiritual, religious, and nutritional care is made available to the Veteran patient. VACO and field-based National Program Directors report to the Specialty Care Services Chief Consultant. The National Program Directors preside over a number of Field Advisory Committees that are aligned with different operational services and components as well as specific medical and surgical subspecialties. In addition, there are a number of specific purpose workgroups that are field based and have specialized purposes.

- Anesthesia Service provides guidance and consultation on all matters regarding the practice of anesthesia, which includes providing pain management during surgical, obstetrical, therapeutic and diagnostic procedures; monitoring and restoring homeostasis during the perioperative period; diagnosis and treatment of painful syndromes; and the management of cardiac and pulmonary resuscitation. Anesthesia Services collaborates with Surgical Services and the Pain Management Program.
- Cardiology Service provides information, guidance, and oversight to VHA cardiology initiatives to ensure the delivery of quality cardiac care. It is estimated that more than 30 percent of enrolled Veterans have cardiac problems, and VHA implants approximately 10,000 pacemakers and defibrillators each year. The Cardiac Implant Surveillance System remotely monitors implant performance. The National Implantable Device Registry follows Veterans with cardiac implants, and tracks recalls and device-related problems.
- Chaplain Service offers religious, spiritual, and pastoral care to meet Veterans’ individual needs and desires. Chaplains ensure that Veterans’ right to free exercise of religion is upheld, and ensure that spiritual and pastoral care is fully integrated into the total care and treatment program of each health care facility. As members of interdisciplinary health care teams, chaplains use a full spectrum of interventions to address spiritual injuries and enhance Veterans’ spiritual health. Every VAMC has a Chapel available for use by all Veterans and their families. Diabetes and Endocrinology Service develops and implements clinical guidelines for the prevention and treatment of associated diseases or disorders, and the mechanisms to track use of these guidelines as well as assessing their medical outcomes. It is estimated that more than 20 percent of enrolled Veterans have diabetes. VA research supports clinical trials and basic science studies that may result in discoveries to benefit diabetics. The Diabetes Program Office collaborates with the National Prevention Center, Food and Nutrition Services, Podiatry, Eye Care and the Office of Research and

Development with the goal of keeping blood glucose at safe levels. VA works to improve the health of Veterans with diabetes by identifying and treating risk factors for complications.

- Emergency Medicine works in collaboration with all other specialties, particularly Neurology and Cardiology in the areas of stroke and heart attack. In FY 2011, Emergency Medicine treated more than 2 million patients.
- Eye Care – Optometry and Ophthalmology Services work together and provide a full spectrum of primary, secondary, and tertiary eye care services for over 1.5 million Veterans annually. In addition, they contribute to the national VA Teleretinal Imaging Screening Program in concert with the VHA Office of Telehealth Services. This effort improves access and reduces preventable vision loss from diabetic retinopathy.
- The VA/DoD Vision Center of Excellence (VCE) leads and advocates for programs and initiatives across the VA and DoD health care systems in the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, research, and rehabilitation of eye injuries and diseases, including visual dysfunctions related to Traumatic Brain Injury. The VCE provides oversight and program management of the Vision Registry implementation, which facilitates VA and DoD data sharing of ocular injuries and treatments to enable longitudinal outcomes analyses, to guide research, and to promote best clinical practices.
- Gastroenterology Services provides guidance, advice, and oversight on all matters related to diseases affecting the gastrointestinal tract. The office was established in 2011 and is developing strategies to address the rapidly increasing demand for services provided by Gastroenterology (e.g. colorectal cancer screening and surveillance) and Hepatology (e.g. hepatitis C and end-stage liver disease management). The Gastroenterology Program is also working to develop national endoscopy reporting processes that facilitate quality assurance efforts. This office collaborates with other programs on a variety of issues, such as the Infection Disease Service (e.g. treatment of *Clostridium difficile* infection), the Anesthesia Service (e.g. moderate sedation policy), the National Center for Prevention (e.g. colorectal cancer screening guidelines) and the Clinical Public Health Group (e.g. hepatitis C policy).
- Office of Genomic Medicine, established in 2010, facilitates the application of currently available genetic technologies to improve the health care of Veterans, and establishes an enriched resource for genomics research that can be translated into clinical care within VA. This office coordinates genetic counseling functions, establishes strategic guidance regarding the phased integration of genomic testing into clinical care, and most importantly, organizes broad education initiatives that will be rolled out over subsequent years.

National Infectious Diseases Service (NIDS) is charged with the development of national policy and participation in activities relative to infectious diseases in clinical practice, infection prevention and control, and biosurveillance and bio preparedness across the spectrum of settings in which VHA provides its mission-based services of patient care, research, education, and support.

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This is accomplished through collaboration and communication with numerous VA and VHA Offices, Programs and Services; Federal Agency partners; professional groups, and numerous non-Federal entities using different mechanisms such as:

- Written policy Directives and guidance documents.
- Information Letters.
- Educational activities and programs.
- Multimedia dissemination to Central Office and field-based facilities.
- Consultation from infectious disease practitioners.

In the policy arena, NIDS has been involved in systemwide implementation of leading-edge strategies, such as development of the National Taskforce on Multidrug Resistant Organisms (MDROs), formerly known as the National Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* MRSA Taskforce, which is associated with significant reductions in health care-associated infections of MRSA in acute care settings, community-living centers, and spinal cord injury units; the National Antimicrobial Stewardship Taskforce, which is providing education and outreach to help VHA practitioners in choosing antibiotics wisely to reduce the burden of antimicrobial resistance on the system; development of national policy regarding Legionella prevention strategies with proactive evaluation and risk assessment intrinsically coupled with engineering controls for domestic hot water temperature limits; the Inpatient Evaluation Center (IPEC), which is associated with significant reductions in health care-associated infections (HAIs) nationwide in VHA of central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSIs), ventilator-associated pneumonias (VAPs), catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTIs); and, realization of Hand Hygiene Practices VHA Directive policy as being a fundamental cornerstone to infection prevention and control activities, to list a few. As such, NIDS is VHA's designated lead coordinator for issues regarding HAIs and Infection Prevention and Control.

- Nephrology Services, responsible for the diagnosis and treatment of kidney diseases, has been the subject of several VHA pilot programs. VHA is developing a strategic plan to address such issues as the potential to increase hospital-based dialysis capacity and potential at-home dialysis options.
  - Neurology Services provides research, clinical care, and patient and family education about neurological disorders. Specialty care networks have been established for the more than 200,000 Veteran patients with degenerative neurological diseases, which include Multiple Sclerosis Centers of Excellence (MSCoEs); Parkinson's Associated Disorders, Research, Education and Clinical Centers (PADRECCs); and Epilepsy Centers of Excellence (ECoEs). In addition, VA is developing and implementing guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) or Lou Gehrig's disease. Neurology Services collaborates with Emergency Medicine and Rehabilitative Services on the treatment of stroke and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).
  - Nutrition and Food Services (NFS) develops and provides comprehensive nutritional services for our Veterans across VA's health care facilities. NFS registered dietitians serve
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as nutrition diagnosticians for Veterans in providing medical nutrition therapy and using the nutrition care process. Nutrition professionals promote wellness and disease prevention through serving nutritious food selections. The nutrition team proactively contributes to multiple VA initiatives including Telehealth, the Patient-Aligned Care Team, Culture Transformation, and social media communications. NFS is transforming VA in its advanced clinical nutrition practices and health teaching programs to improve Veterans and their family members' health outcomes.

- Oncology Program coordinates the VA's Cancer Registry System and manages the VA Central Cancer Registry, and provides policy, guidance, and oversight to the implementation of the National Cancer Strategy, which addresses prevention and education, screening, early detection and diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and research.
- Pain Management Program provides policy, coordination, guidance, and oversight for implementation of the National Pain Management Strategy and compliance of accepted standards of pain care. The overall objective of the national strategy is to promote adoption of a comprehensive, multicultural, integrated, systemwide approach to pain management that reduces pain and suffering and improves quality of life for Veterans experiencing acute and chronic pain associated with a wide range of injuries and illnesses, including terminal illness. Pain Management collaborates with Anesthesia, Mental Health, Nursing, Pharmacy Benefits, and Primary Care, among others. Podiatry Services collaborates with other programs to provide medical and surgical foot and ankle care. It also works closely with the Diabetes and Endocrinology Service in developing and implementing initiatives to prevent and treat diabetes and disorders related to diabetes. This program tracks data elements through the use of amputation/ulcer database and High-Risk for Amputation ProClarity Cubes.
- Pulmonary and Critical Care Services provides guidance, advice, and oversight to the hospital-based programs and Intensive Care Units. Veterans have a high incidence of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder (COPD) and sleep disorders. Pulmonary and Critical Care collaborates regularly with Cardiology, Pharmacy Benefits, and Infectious Diseases.

Mental Health Services (MHS) facilitates the improvement of quality and availability of prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation services in order to promote optimal mental health, and reduce illness, death, disability and cost to society resulting from mental and addictive disorders among Veterans.

- Promotes a Recovery Model throughout mental health care and specifically in the clinical areas of serious mental illness (SMI), PTSD, addictive disorders, psychosocial rehabilitation, geropsychiatry, and residential rehabilitation (domiciliaries). Other key functional areas include informatics, education, research, and designated special programs, such as the National Center for PTSD, Mental Illness Education, Research and Clinical

Centers (MIRECCs), advisory committees (SMI and PTSD), and Mental Health Centers of Excellence.

- Promotes effective prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and education policies, and services.
- Develops and promotes quality standards for service delivery.
- Develops, synthesizes, and disseminates information to improve prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services, and to improve the organization, financing and delivery of these services.
- Collaborates with other agencies to enhance VA's preparedness to support the National Emergency Response Plan with mental health assets.
- Works to eliminate the barriers that impede prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation services for Veterans with substance use disorders and mental illnesses.

National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP) advocates for health promotion, disease prevention and patient health education, and advises VA leadership on evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention policy.

- Provides programs, education, resources, coordination, guidance, and oversight for field offices to prevent illness and enhance health, well-being, and quality of life for Veterans.
- Partners with colleagues within and outside of VA to identify and disseminate health education, health promotion, and disease prevention resources, and tools for Veterans and VA staff.
- NCP has several current programs, including MOVE!, an evidence-based weight management program for Veterans.
- Provides facility support for preventive care by training clinical staff in patient-centered communication, health coaching, and motivational interviewing, and by developing and disseminating information on for Veterans regarding health promotion and disease prevention resources and services.

Pharmacy Benefits Management (PBM) Services leads and supports pharmacy activities in VHA, and provides advice on pharmacy issues to a wide variety of stakeholders. Major PBM program areas include: Pharmacy Practice, Formulary Management, Pharmacy Education, Prescription Fulfillment Activities, Drug Safety, Emergency Pharmacy Services, Clinical Informatics and Pharmacy Re-engineering, and VAMedSAFE.

- VA Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy (CMOP) ranked highest among mail-order pharmacies for customer satisfaction in J.D. Power and Associates 2012 National Pharmacy Study with a score of 871. VA CMOP processed 116 million outpatient prescriptions in FY 2012. This equates to more than 460,000 prescriptions mailed to over 310,000 Veterans each day. Approximately 79 percent of all outpatient prescriptions dispensed by VHA are from CMOP. In addition, CMOP fills prescriptions to one DoD site, 22 Indian Health Service sites, and CHAMPVA.

- PBM National Pharmacy Efficiency Program annually develops a list of initiatives that target cost avoidance while maintaining high-quality pharmaceutical care. The voluntary initiatives were utilized by the VISNS and medical center facilities in their pharmacy cost avoidance plans.
- PBM's Formulary Management is responsible for coordinating the VA formulary management process with the Medical Advisory Panel and VISN Pharmacist Executive Committee.
- VAMedSAFE tracks and evaluates high-risk and volume agents, and New Molecular Entities with potential risk in the Veteran population. This program maintains VA's national drug safety program with an emphasis on integrated database utilization, communication, and education
- Emergency Pharmacy Service (PBM EPS) manages the configuration, maintenance, and activation of caches to be used in response to natural disasters, catastrophes, terrorist attacks, or weapons of mass destruction events. PBM EPS manages readiness of mobile pharmacy assets to be deployed for immediate prescription services for Veterans displaced or affected by a catastrophic event.
- Pharmacy Re-engineering (PRE) and Clinical Informatics, in partnership with the Office of Information Technology (OIT) PBM, deployed its clinical decision support system for Drug Interactions, Medication Order Check Healthcare Application (MOCHA). Phase 2 – Dosing is currently in production testing. Adverse Drug Events (ADE) reduced by 7.1percent for all ADEs and a 14 percent reduction in dosing related ADEs. The PRE Alpha Production site has reduced dosing ADEs by 71 percent. A national pharmacist survey indicated that 71 percent of pharmacists believed that MOCHA improved patient Safety.
- The PBM VA National Drug File is the Nation's largest Government developed open-source system for drug terminology, and its content is used for medication ordering and management at the VA and other systems, and provides that information to the National Library of Medicine.
- Academic Detailing Program in VISN 21/22 for Mental Health Initiatives was established as a joint initiative between PBM and Mental Health Service, to guide evidence-based prescribing in mental health. Multiple initiatives are improving care to patients with mental health conditions. Evidence-based clozapine prescribing for treatment resistant schizophrenia increased with a statistically significant difference in rate of change. Off-label/nonevidence-based prescribing of antipsychotics was significantly reduced in patients with diagnosis of dementia alone, and for patients with low doses of antipsychotics, and patients on multiple antipsychotic prescriptions. Academic detailing on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) provided 1,184 unique clinicians with educational outreach visits using five Academic Detailing Clinical Pharmacy Specialists in VISN 21 and 22. This initiative resulted in improved evidence based pharmacotherapy (14- to 18-percent increase) for use of prazosin with PTSD sleep disturbances.

- Meds by Mail (MbM) program coordinates the CHAMPVA Meds by Mail Program, processing 2.6 million outpatient prescriptions each year with an estimated cost savings to VA in excess of \$135 million annually. MbM coordinates the Virtual Pharmacy Services (VPS) Program processing over 1.2 million outpatient prescription remotely for VAMC pharmacies.
- The Pharmacy Residency Program Office (PRPO) oversees the strategic planning of pharmacy residency programs nationwide. To support VHA strategic initiatives, PRPO has expanded the Mental Health Pharmacy Residency programs and is now the largest trainer of Mental Health Pharmacy residents with the highest percentage of Board Certified Psychiatric Pharmacists in the country. Currently, the PRPO has over 575 residents, which includes specialty training in Geriatrics, Mental Health, Oncology, Pharmacy Administration, Infectious Disease, Internal Medicine, and Ambulatory Care.
- Pharmaceutical Compounding and Hazardous Drug Management provides technical guidance on proper disposal and management of pharmaceutical waste and hazardous drug products in compliance with EPA Resource Conservation and Recovery Act regulations. Initiatives include working with VHA stakeholders on hazardous drug classification of pharmaceutical products in VA drug formulary system to ensure proper disposal and handling at the point of care. This office develops policy, technical guidance, and tracks practices on pharmaceutical compounding of sterile and non-sterile products by VAMCs in compliance with Chapter USP 797 and 795 standards, including the use of outsourced compounding pharmacies by VA to meet compounding product needs for patents.
- VA Medication Reconciliation Initiative collaborated with VHA program offices, Indian Health Services, and DoD's Medication Use Crisis Virtual Conference Series offering 16 of hours of programming for 850 registrants who claimed 4,500 CEU hours, garnering \$1.2 M Travel Cost Avoidance during the "May is Medication Reconciliation Awareness Month" activities. Joint Initiatives including the Medication Information Management Education Module and the National Alliance for Patient Medication Information Standardization were also established to complement ongoing programming supporting strong patient medication information management practice in policy, documentation, monitoring, staff/patient education, and clinical adoption.
- The Pharmacy Recruitment and Retention Office (PRRO) was established to provide guidance and support to VA facilities facing pharmacy recruitment and retention challenges. PRRO provided subject matter experts for developing the My Career at VA Web site, which won a 2012 Bright Idea in Government award from Harvard University's Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government. PRRO authored sections of the VA National Workforce Succession Strategic Plan, and hosted recruiting events at three national meetings that engaged more than 600 highly-skilled pharmacists. PRRO provided tuition support for three VA pharmacists enrolled in the Pharmacy Leadership Academy (PLA), contributed to recruiting a diverse

workforce by posting vacancy announcements on the job board for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, precepted 4 PGY2 Health-System Pharmacy Administration residents, and continued monthly publications of *Pharmacy News* in collaboration with the PBM Clinical Pharmacy Program Office (CPPO).

- The Clinical Pharmacy Program Office has demonstrated over 76,000 clinical pharmacy interventions documented by 314 pharmacists at 26 VA sites since implementation in FY 12. Clinical Pharmacy Boot camp training in FY 11 resulted in an increase in a global scope of practice for pharmacists working in primary care from 207 pharmacists in 2011 to 1,021 pharmacists in 2013 (an 80-percent increase). Ongoing integration of the pharmacists into team-based modes of care has resulted in a tripling of pharmacists coded visits over the past three years to nearly 3 million visits in FY 12.

Physician Assistant Services provide periodic review of VA qualification standards and clinical practice policy development for physician assistants. The program office also assists in workforce planning, recruitment and retention efforts, and assessment of the educational needs for the physician assistant occupation.

Primary Care Services oversees program and policy development for primary care in VHA. VA Primary Care honors America's Veterans by providing quality and accessible primary care to all Veterans. It promotes patient-centered care that focuses on a comprehensive approach to health care and is leading the implementation of the Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACTs). The national programs and services provided under Primary Care Services include: Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PCMHI), Post-Deployment Integrated Care (PDIC), and Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM).

The Radiation Oncology Program Office manages the accreditation process for VHA radiation oncology services, which includes monitoring the creation and resolution of corrective action plans with the Network Office. The Office directly coordinates these activities with the ACR, arranging consultative surveys when necessary. The program office also monitors the VHA contract with the Radiologic Physics Center, which provides external oversight for radiation delivery operations within VHA. The Office operates the VHA Radiation Oncology Field Advisory Committee (ROFAC), which is composed of VHA physicians and physicists who coordinate national program objectives with field operations. It also provides subject matter expertise in the areas of the clinical practice of Radiation Oncology and medical physics for VHA. In this role the program Office coordinates inspection activities and error reporting with the Director, National Health Physics Program.

Rehabilitation and Prosthetic Services coordinates the provision of the full range of medical rehabilitative services to promote the health, independence, and quality of life for Veterans with disabilities. The national programs and services provided under Office of Rehabilitation and

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Prosthetic Services include: Audiology and Speech Language Pathology; Blind Rehabilitation; Chiropractic Care; Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation; Recreation Therapy; and, Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Services. Specialty rehabilitation programs include the Amputation System of Care; Blind Rehabilitation Care Continuum; Driver Rehabilitation Program; Polytrauma System of Care; and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Program. This office aligns clinical expertise and specialized procurement resources to provide prosthetic, orthotic, sensory aids, implants, assistive devices, and rehabilitation services in the most economical and timely manner across the VHA health care continuum.

Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders (SCI/D) promotes the health, independence, quality of life, and productivity of individuals with spinal cord injury and disorders throughout the patients' lives.

- Provides an integrated and coordinated continuum of services that addresses the needs of Veterans with SCI/D. These services include rehabilitation, ongoing medical and surgical care, primary and preventive care, specialty care, home care, and long-term care.
- Comprehensive services include patient and family education, psychological, social and vocational services, recreation therapy, and the provision of medical supplies and equipment.

Telehealth Services supports the development and sustainment of clinical uses of information and telehealth technologies to provide health care services in situations where the Veteran patient and practitioner delivering care are separated by geographical distance.

- Supports the development and sustainment of clinical uses of information and telecommunication technologies to provide health care services in situations where the Veteran patient and practitioner delivering care are separated by geographical distance.
- Enables VA to enhance access to care, and target care and case management resources thereby changing the site at which Veteran patients receive care to more convenient locations. Telemental Health uses virtual links between Veterans and mental health providers to deliver mental health services.
- Telerehabilitation delivers services that are critical to maximizing the health of Veteran patients through virtual linkages between VA patients and rehabilitation providers separated by distance or time. Examples of Telerehabilitation in VA include the use clinical video-conferencing technologies to link patients with speech pathologists within urban-located VA medical centers with Veteran patients, post-stroke therapy located at the local VA community-based outpatient clinic, or using Home Telehealth technologies to connect with Veterans at home to monitor their functional status and rehabilitation needs.
- Tele-Intensive Care (ICU) supports the management of critically-ill patients by providing physicians and nurses remote access to other physicians and nurses with critical care expertise. This is an active pilot program.

- Telehealth options for care connects health care teams to others with expertise to assess, treat, and rehabilitate the physical, mental, and psycho-social problems that accompany polytrauma.
- Polytrauma Telehealth Network links the organization's five Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers (PRCs) in Minneapolis, MN; Palo Alto, CA; Richmond, VA; San Antonio, TX; and Tampa, FL; with each other and the 23 Polytrauma Network Sites (PNSs) with the express mission of improving access to care and the quality of care provided to combat wounded Veterans.

Women's Health Services (WHS) oversees program and policy development for women's health in VHA and provides strategic support to implement positive changes in the provision of care for all women Veterans. WHS works to ensure that timely, equitable, high quality, comprehensive health care services are provided in a sensitive and safe environment at VA facilities nationwide. WHS programs include comprehensive primary care, women's health education, reproductive health, communication, and partnerships.

- Transforms health care delivery for women Veterans using a personalized, proactive, patient-centered model of care.
- Implements and evaluates a women's health comprehensive primary care model of care at every VA site.
- Leverages women's comprehensive primary care as a model practice for the Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT).
- Ensures the dignity, privacy, sense of security and safety of every woman Veteran in all care settings.
- Changes the language, practice, and culture of VA to be more inclusive of and sensitive to women Veterans.
- Assesses gaps in care for women's specialty care services (e.g., cardiology, rheumatology, neurology, pain medicine, geriatrics and oncology).
- Improves mammography services including accessibility, care coordination, tracking, and communication of results.
- Utilizes technology for outreach and improved access to women's health services at all sites of care.
- Eliminates gender disparities in screening, prevention and chronic disease management.
- Educates, influences, and partners with women Veterans to assist them in managing their own health and wellness.

WHS develops, implements, and influences VA health policy as it relates to women Veterans.

- Leads, coordinates, and strengthens VA partnerships to implement and sustain new VA health policy that will set the standard for care delivery for women Veterans.
- Engages all programs to take care of women Veterans by enhancing program plans to account for and reflect needs of women Veterans (e.g., mental health, aging).

- Develops a policy-focused analysis based on gender-specific national data that promotes accurate representation of women Veterans (demographics, epidemiology, health status, quality of care, etc.).
- Develops and implements key policies in reproductive health.

WHS ensures a proficient and agile clinical workforce through training and education.

- Develops and deploys a strategy to meet immediate knowledge and skills gaps resulting from a clinical workforce that has seen primarily male patients.
- Identifies unique ways to deploy training and education to minimize staff travel, and time away from clinical duties.
- Provides clinicians and medical centers with clinical resources, training options, and assessment tools needed to ensure clinician proficiency is maintained.
- Partners with other program offices and VISNs to ensure that women Veteran topics and issues are integrated in major VHA training programs so consolidated messages about training are provided to the field.

WHS develops, seamlessly integrates, and enhances VA reproductive health care.

- Ensures that pregnant women Veterans receive the highest quality maternity and newborn care and have a seamless interaction with VA health care systems.
- Enhances delivery of quality gender-specific Emergency Department Services for Women Veterans.
- Ensures safety of prescribing to women Veterans of childbearing age at all VAs.
- Ensures that preconception care is provided as a routine part of comprehensive health for women Veterans of childbearing age.
- Ensures provision of high-quality gynecologic care to aging women Veterans (beyond the childbearing years).
- Makes reproductive psychiatric information readily available to VA providers and women Veterans throughout the VA health care system.
- Provides workforce capacity and infrastructure to ensure seamless integration of Reproductive Health services throughout the VA.

WHS Drives the focus and sets the agenda to increase understanding of the effects of military service on women Veterans' lives.

- Drives the focus of research to increase understanding of the health care needs of women Veterans and of best practices for meeting these needs.
- Leads and coordinates quality research as it relates to women Veterans Health.

The National Health Physics Program (NHPP) provides regulatory oversight for radiation safety while providing health and medical physics consultation throughout the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). NHPP assists Radiation Safety Officers and other interested facility staff

by making relevant health physics, medical physics, and regulatory information easily and readily accessible on a Web site, site visits to impacted facilities, and Webinar training. The scope of the information for consultative assistance includes providing regulations, directives, and standards from the VHA, Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), American College of Radiology, the Joint Commission, and pertinent guidelines from other U.S. or international organizations. Furthermore, best practices, lessons learned, and model procedures are provided to enhance facility-level capability for keeping radiation exposures to employees, patients, and the public as low as reasonably achievable.

- NHPP is the primary VHA office for implementing an NRC master materials license. NHPP issues permits and inspects VHA facilities using radioactive materials. NHPP also provides health and medical physics support for other uses of ionizing radiation and reports to the National Radiation Safety Committee. NHPP partners with the Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Quality, Safety, and Value (ADUSH QSV) to help manage overall VHA organizational risk, and facilitate an integrated, industry-standard approach to compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and standards while identifying non-compliant practices that require improvement. The overall goal is to achieve the VHA mission to provide high-quality, safe, and reliable care for Veterans.

### **Authority**

38 U.S.C. Part V, Chapter 73, Subchapter I, § 7301 and 7305; Subchapter II, § 7314, §§ 7315, 7318, 7319, 7320, 7321, 7321A, 7322, 7329, 7330, 7330A.

## **4.3.5 VHA Office of Interagency Health Affairs**

### **Overview**

The VHA Office of Interagency Health Affairs (IHA) coordinates VA/DoD sharing programs, including TRICARE, the Joint Incentive Fund (JIF) and Joint Ventures (JVs), which increase access to health care for Veterans and DOD beneficiaries and increase cost efficiencies. IHA also serves as the VA outreach conduit with the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), National Cemetery Administration (NCA), DoD, all Federal executive agencies, the National Guard, Reserves, VHA field staff, and all internal and external stakeholders ensuring returning Servicemembers and Veterans are informed, educated and encouraged to enroll for VA health care, benefits and services. IHA also serves as VHA's intergovernmental affairs liaison and coordinator.

### **Functions and Tasks**

IHA facilitates the development and tracking of VA/DoD sharing agreements at the local medical facility, VISN or national level for the purpose of sharing medical services between VA and DoD entities.

- Coordinates with DoD to produce sharing agreements for facilities and programs that result in increased efficiency and cost reductions for a broad spectrum of services.

- Maintains a database that records essential information about sharing agreements.
- Provides data for VA responses to external inquiries regarding sharing agreements.
- Networks and communicates with DoD entities and VA staff concerning VA's role in sharing agreements.
- Assists VHA Chief Business Office with sharing agreement charges and workload capture in VistA Fee.
- Compiles reports on VA/DoD sharing that are sorted by clinical services, VISN, DoD branches, and other ad hoc reporting.
- Interfaces between the VISNs and the VHA Medical Sharing Office at VACO and other VA organizations.
- Analyzes financial data for sharing cost centers and associated clinical workload.
- Answers questions for the field and VACO program offices regarding VA/DoD sharing.
- Researches, develops, writes, and coordinates VHA policy regarding sharing resources with DoD.

IHA manages the Health Care Sharing Incentive Fund commonly known as the Joint Incentive Fund (JIF) program. The JIF is a joint program between VA and DoD to identify, provide incentives to, implement, fund, and evaluate creative coordination and sharing initiatives at the facility, intra-regional, and national level.

- Issues calls for JIF proposals; reviews, and analyzes proposals; ensures VISN and VHA leadership concur; forwards recommended proposals to the Financial Management Work Group (FMWG); and provides expert knowledge on annual JIF proposals.
  - Ensures VA representation at the FMWG meetings.
  - Performs cost-benefit analyses and advises on enhancements for program operations.
  - Interfaces among the VISN/VAMCs Directors, VACO and TRICARE regional offices to develop and implement JIF projects.
  - Coordinates relationships among DoD and VISN/VAMC Directors, the VA Business Office, and other VA offices regarding JIF proposals.
  - Interfaces between the VISNs and the VHA Medical Sharing Office at VACO and other VA organizations.
  - Communicates, educates, and informs VHA staff concerning VA's role in the JIF program.
  - Prepares JIF funding transfers with VA and DoD Health Affairs via the Treasury Department and from VACO and VISN's/VAMC's.
  - Coordinates periodic meetings for review and approval of new JIF projects and progress meetings.
  - Prepares annual updates, presentations and briefs for the Joint Executive Council (JEC) and the Health Executive Council (HEC) regarding the JIF program.
  - Participates in regional committees and internal or external work groups to identify and recommend improvements to the JIF and medical sharing programs.
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- Assists in developing appropriate standardized metrics to evaluate the benefit of JIF proposals for both VA and DoD.
- Prepares budgetary workbooks and quarterly inputs (e.g., budget estimates and obligation projections) for the JIF budget chapter as part of VA's annual President's budget submission.
- Creates, develops, and manages JIF-related content on the VHA Medical Sharing Office intranet Web site.
- Researches, develops, writes, and coordinates JIF policy for VHA.

IHA liaises with DoD's TRICARE Program.

- Liaisons with TRICARE contractors, VISNs, VHA, and TRICARE Management Activity to resolve issues related to authorization, payment, and transition.
- Networks and communicates with DoD entities and VA staff concerning VA's role in the TRICARE Program.
- Formulates proposals to improve VAMCs' participation in TRICARE, VA/DoD sharing and JIF.
- Coordinates VISN/VAMC TRICARE educational events in coordination with the Managed Care Support Contractors (MCSCs) and VHA Chief Business Office (CBO).
- Aligns within the TRICARE Regional Office (TRO) to promote VA's role in TRICARE and assists with TRO's programs to optimize military treatment facilities (MTF).
- Assists the VHA Chief Business Office with TRICARE handbooks, manuals, and training aides.
- Provides a single VA intranet Web site with information on TRICARE, VA/DoD sharing, and JIF.
- Authors and co-authors memorandums of agreement or memorandums of understanding between VA and DoD that relate to TRICARE and sharing.
- Assists MTFs and VAMCs with referrals, authorizations, and claims payment for TRICARE beneficiaries and the integrated disability evaluation system (IDES).
- Analyzes TRICARE claims data and identifies billing and reimbursement issues.
- Develops and coordinates templates for TRICARE network agreements for each TRICARE region.
- Works with facilities and VISNs to write and coordinate individual TRICARE network agreements.
- Facilitates TRICARE reimbursement negotiation between the VISNs and MCSCs.

IHA is the VHA liaison for VA/DoD Joint Market Opportunities (JMO) and JVs.

- Uses criteria-based processes, and in collaboration with DoD partners, determines select sites for consultative JMO visits and obtains HEC concurrence.

- Conducts in-progress reviews and follows up with facility personnel; provides guidance with sharing agreements and necessary monitoring and evaluation of shared services in accordance with the VA/DoD Strategic Plan.

IHA collaborates on VA/DoD JVs.

- Provides JVs with guidance on requirements of Joint VA/DoD Strategic Plan to identify shared services where a minimum of 5-percent cost efficiencies can be achieved through sharing, and develops and provides tools, including templates, for reporting accomplishments.
- Participates in the Construction Planning Committee, the Strategic Capital Investment Planning (SCIP) process, and the DoD Capital Investment Decision Model (CIDM) process to determine areas where joint VA/DoD construction may offer economies of scale for both Departments.
- Advises and guides joint sharing sites through the process of becoming a joint venture. Participates and/or hosts the annual VA/DoD Joint Venture Conference to bring together leadership from JV and select VA/DoD sharing sites to communicate facility updates, best practices, and lessons learned.

IHA participates in VA/DoD JEC activities.

- The office leadership attends the JEC meetings and attends pre-briefs and hot washes for or with the Under Secretary for Health (USH). VA and DoD alternate as hosts of the bimonthly JEC meetings.
- Coordinates HEC presentations and/or information papers, including making formal assignments to the presenters (usually work group co-chairs) when VA is hosting the JEC.
- Coordinates JEC-related assignments with DoD Health Affairs (HA) staff and VA's Office of Policy and Planning (OPP).
- Tracks HEC-related assignments from JEC Co-Chairs.
- Tracks on HEC related issues contained in the annual FY JEC Guidance and assures due dates are met.

IHA leads the coordination of activities for the VA/DoD HEC.

- With DoD HA, coordinates all HEC-related matters, to include all HEC meeting functions as well as urgent issues as they arise. DoD HA and VHA alternate hosting of HEC bimonthly meetings, usually on the months opposite the JEC meetings.
- With DoD HA, develops the HEC agenda based on JEC deliverables, Co-Chair interests, emerging issues, and HEC Work Group requests, and; coordinates any HEC agenda presentations or information papers listed on the agenda.
- Analyzes all HEC presentations and information papers to assure VHA and Department concerns are addressed and that conflicts are resolved.

- Prepares VHA senior leadership for meetings by providing comprehensive, point-focused pre-briefs.
- Tracks assignments from HEC Co-Chairs, as well as ongoing issues.
- Coordinates all HEC-related assignments with DoD HA staff and provides any JEC deliverables to VA OPP.
- Reviews and updates the HEC charter at least biannually; upon HEC Co-Chairs' concurrence on changes, charter is forwarded to the JEC for final approval.

IHA facilitates the work of VA/DoD HEC Work Groups (WG).

- Facilitates the creation of new WGs as directed by HEC Co-Chairs to include charter, required membership (by title), and initial task assignment.
- With the WG Co-Chairs, reviews, and updates existing HEC WG's charters at least biannually and submits changes to HEC Co-Chairs.
- Assists WG Co-Chairs or functional members with any unresolved concerns related to coordination or logistics.
- Communicates JEC priorities to HEC WGs along with other high-level or emerging issues.
- Coordinates assignments of any WG presentation or information papers based on JEC deliverables or HEC assignments.

IHA annually prepares the HEC portion of the VA/DoD Joint Strategic Plan (JSP).

- Collaborates with DoD HA staff to develop joint strategic goals, which guide the content of the JSP based on Co-Chairs' guidance.
- Collaborates with the DoD HA staff to provide guidance to HEC Work Groups Co-Chairs and Centers of Excellence (CoEs) points of contact at the initiation of JSP planning cycle, to include annual priorities or high-interest items based on JEC and HEC Co-Chair guidance.
- Works with HEC WGs to develop JSP Smart Objectives and their related activities, milestones and performance metrics.
- Coordinates the VHA concurrence process for HEC portion of the JSP.
- Submits the HEC portion of the JSP to the JEC staff upon approval by HEC Co-Chairs.

IHA annually prepares the HEC portion of the congressionally mandated Annual Report (AR) to Congress on the VA/DoD JSP.

- Reviews mid-year HEC WG updates to the HEC on progress toward successful completion of the JSP Smart Objectives and discusses any gaps with WG Co-Chairs to assure that due dates are met or explanations are provided when due dates are not met.
- Collaborates with the DoD HA staff to provide guidance to HEC Work Groups Co-Chairs and Centers of Excellence (CoEs) points of contact at the initiation of AR preparation cycle

- Coordinates with DoD HA staff, the annual reports from each HEC WG that convey progress towards meeting JSP objectives.
- Consolidates all WG reports into one document and coordinates the VHA concurrence process for the HEC portion of the annual report.

IHA supports the VA/DoD Interagency Care Coordination Committee (IC3), a sub-committee of the Joint Executive Committee.

- The IHA Executive Director serves as the VA Co-Chair of the IC3's Policy and Oversight (P&O) Work Group.
- The P&O WG is working to establish overarching interagency governance and policy that supports a single model of care management and coordination throughout the life cycle of care for Servicemembers and their families.
- The P&O WG assures that existing and future Departmental and Service-level guidance is harmonized with the new over-overarching interagency guidance.

IHA is establishing the Rural Veterans Coordination Pilot Program.

- VA will run a 2-year grant pilot program in rural areas that will provide limited funding to organizations to assist new Veterans and their families. These organizations are to coordinate the efforts of local entities (Government or otherwise) with the goal of:
  - Increasing the coordination of care and benefits for Veterans in transition.
  - Increasing availability of medical and mental health services for Veterans.
  - Assisting families of Veterans who are also in transition.
  - Providing outreach and connection information about benefits and care to Veterans and their families.
- Oversees the five pilot locations.
- Will report results of the pilot projects to Congress at the end of the initial two-year test period.

IHA manages and analyzes data maintained in the Veterans Outreach Reporting System (VORS), an online system that tracks measurement data on national outreach programs/events. These programs include:

- VA OEF/OIF/OND Returning Servicemembers Welcome Home Events.
  - VA Homeless Stand Down events.
  - Veterans Employment outreach events.
  - VA College and University outreach events.
  - Disability Evaluation System (DES) actions.
  - Warrior Transition Unit (WTU) events.
  - Demobilization (DEMOB).
  - Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) Musters.
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- Post-Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA).
- DoD Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) events.
- Transition Assistance Advisors (TAAs).

IHA supports the DoD YRRP.

- Employs a full-time VHA liaison to work with the YRRP's Pentagon office, in collaboration with VHA and VBA, to help provide National Guard and Reserve Servicemembers and their families with knowledge of and access to local resources before, during, and after deployments, especially during the reintegration phase that occurs months after the Servicemembers return home.
- Provides technical information about VA benefits, services, and programs to YRRP leadership and personnel, and recommendations for improving access to VA experts at YRRP events.
- Ensures VHA Care Management Outreach field teams receive timely schedules of events.
- Ensures VA leadership receives up-to-date information on the YRRP functions and issues, and assists VA field personnel with YRRP-related tasks.

IHA coordinates and supports foreign dignitaries' visits to VHA in coordination with VA Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs (OPIA).

- Provides focused VA health care information to visiting overseas dignitaries through briefings and discussions with subject matter experts.

IHA supports VHA Veterans outreach efforts.

- Serves as VHA's lead office in collaboration with OPIA, along with VBA, NCA, nonprofit organizations, and non-government organizations (NGOs).
- Ensures continual outreach initiatives are strategic and proactive programs that increase access to VA health care and benefits by optimizing links to VA services for all Veterans and their families through targeted programs.
- Liaises with Federal, state, and local entities to coordinate and synchronize VHA information on outreach efforts such as the VA support to the National Guard, and VA partnership with the National Guard TAAs, and their critical role in VA outreach in the state/community.

IHA supports VHA's social media outreach activities in coordination with VA OPIA.

- Ensures outreach information is current and readily available for OEF/OIF/OND or disseminates programs and activities through social media (at this time Facebook and Twitter) and Web site postings on [www.oefoif.va.gov](http://www.oefoif.va.gov).
- Works closely with VA partner agencies and outside stakeholders to distribute valuable content on health care benefits for all categories of Servicemembers and Veterans.
- Participates in Web communications training.

**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapter 73

P.L. 111-163 § 506

P.L. 110-181

38 U.S.C. Chapters 73, 523, 532, 701

P.L. 107-314 § 721(d)

P.L. 110-417 § 706

**4.3.6 VHA National Center for Ethics in Health Care****Overview**

The National Center for Ethics in Health Care (NCEHC) establishes, interprets, and communicates ethical health care standards and promotes practices consistent with those standards within VHA and nationwide. It is the primary VHA resource that addresses the complex ethical issues that arise in health care, including those related to clinical ethics, organizational ethics, and research ethics. The NCEHC collaborates with VHA senior leadership, field facilities, and program offices to accomplish these tasks. The NCEHC continuously improves VHA's ethics-related decisions, actions, systems, processes, environment, and culture by providing analysis, information, education, tools, advice, and support.

**Functions and Tasks**

The NCEHC establishes, updates, and clarifies standards for ethical health care practice by providing policies, authoritative reports, and other similar guidance.

The NCEHC creates and promulgates a model for health care ethics programs called IntegratedEthics.<sup>TM</sup>

- Assists facilities and VISNs to develop local IntegratedEthics<sup>TM</sup> programs in each VHA facility.
- Establishes IntegratedEthics<sup>TM</sup> program standards and annual performance targets.
- Establishes roles, responsibilities and training requirements for IntegratedEthics<sup>TM</sup> staff.
- Develops evaluation tools to assess IntegratedEthics<sup>TM</sup> programs and practices.
- Monitors progress on specific IntegratedEthics<sup>TM</sup> measures and provides reports to the field.
- Provides IntegratedEthics<sup>TM</sup> training, tools, coaching, and developmental opportunities.
- Develops and maintains software to facilitate documentation of IntegratedEthics<sup>TM</sup> activities.
- Develops field champions and shares promising practices across VHA.

The NCEHC is a resource for information, advice, and support related to ethics in health care to VHA.

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- Provides ethics consultation services to VHA staff and maintains a comprehensive database of ethics questions and responses.
- Provides written ethical analyses on complex organizational problems at leadership's request.
- Develops and provides educational products or forums to support field staff in understanding and applying ethics concepts, knowledge, and policy.
- Develops and provides educational products and tools for Veterans and families on ethics topics.
- Reviews draft legislative proposals, regulations, and policies from an ethics perspective.
- Convenes stakeholder meetings to build consensus on controversial health care ethics topics.
- Represents VA on matters relating to health care ethics in communications with media, Congress, and the White House.
- Represents VA on work groups and projects relating to health care ethics involving other Government agencies, professional societies, universities, nonprofits, and other organizations.

**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. 7306

38 U.S.C. 7331

CFR 17.32

VHA Directive 1004

VHA Directive 2008-002

VHA Handbooks 1004.01-1004.07

**4.3.7 VHA Office of Readjustment Counseling Services (RCS)****Overview**

The Office of Readjustment Counseling Service (RCS) Vet Centers welcomes home war Veterans with honor, and provides three major service functions: outreach, readjustment counseling, and referral for Veterans and their families. The RCS Vet Centers are staffed community facilities that treat the Veteran as a whole person in or near their home community. Readjustment counseling services are authorized by a separate authority than VHA health care and employs different eligibility criteria. The eligibility criteria for Vet Centers include all eras of combat Veterans and their family members, and does not require enrollment for medical care. The RCS Chief Officer reports to the Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Policy and Services and is responsible for direct line supervision of the Vet Centers through the seven RCS regional managers.

## Functions and Tasks

Vet Centers provide individual and group readjustment counseling to assist combat Veterans in resolving war-related trauma and readjusting to civilian life.

- Provides confidential services in a safe community setting.
- Schedules counseling after-hours and weekend appointments as requested.
- Provides professional counseling services by VHA-qualified mental health professionals, many of whom are Veterans themselves.
- Vet Centers provide family counseling for problems related to the Veteran's combat experience.

Vet Centers provide community outreach and education to help combat Veterans overcome all unnecessary barriers.

- Provides brochures, public service announcements, and presentations in numerous settings to educate local service providers, and civic leaders about military-related issues, combat theaters, Veterans' service needs, and VA services and benefits available to meet these needs.

Provides direct outreach to engage Veterans in a personal way that minimizes bureaucratic formality and helps the Veteran overcome stigma and other barriers to care. The Vet Center Veteran-to-Veteran peer model is critical for helping Veterans overcome stigma and relaxing combat-related avoidance tendencies. Vet Centers provide assessment and referral for other needed services.

- Provides assessment and referral for substance abuse, mental health and medical problems.
- Provides assessment and referral for employment services.
- Provides assessment and referral for VA benefits.
- Provides assessment, counseling, and referral for Military Sexual Trauma (MST).
- Provides bereavement counseling for surviving family members of Servicemembers whose death was incurred on Active Duty.

## Authorities

38 U.S.C. 1712A

P.L. 96-22 § 103

P.L. 111-163 § 401

## 4.3.8 VHA Office of Research and Development (ORD)

### Mission Statement

The mission of VHA Office of Research and Development is to discover knowledge and create innovations that advance health care for our Veterans and the Nation.

**Organizational Description**

ORD improves the lives of Veterans through health care discovery and innovation. VA Research and Development includes additional features in support of its mission:

- Career Development Program to mentor junior investigators and recruit top young scientists to VA.
- An extensive Human Subject's Protection Program.
- Cooperative Studies Program, which enables VA investigators to conduct large, multi-site clinical trials.
- A rigorous peer review process that ensures all VA research meets the highest standards of scientific excellence.

**Functions and Tasks**

ORD advances knowledge to improve each Veteran's health and well-being through basic, translational clinical health services, and rehabilitative science.

Performs research that:

- Improves the understanding of how blast-caused TBI affects cognitive function to develop effective screening methods, treatments, and social reintegration strategies.
- Improves the understanding of spinal cord injuries, promotes repair of the spinal cord, and translates the structural repair into improved function.
- Improves the understanding of ALS and its causes by using advanced laboratory and gene-based scientific methods.
- Advances and implements methodologies to identify health concerns associated with exposure to environmental agents and advance related health care of affected Veterans.
- Improves the understanding of PTSD and its causes by using advanced laboratory and gene-based scientific methods.
- Improves the understanding of serious mental illness (SMI) and its causes by using advanced laboratory and gene-based scientific methods.
- Refines methods for extracting information from the EHR and makes it securely available for studies conducted under the Health Care Informatics Research Initiative.
- Advances understanding of linkages between medical care and individual Veteran characteristics.
- Advances understanding of the underlying workings of health, disease, and injury.
- Establishes a genomic research database through implementation of "Million Veteran Program."

Applies advances in scientific knowledge to create, test, compare, and implement new treatments, technologies, education modules, and models of care so that Veterans receive the most effective individualized care solutions.

- Defines characteristics associated with the onset of PTSD.
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- Determines effective new treatments for PTSD.
- Integrates team treatment models in mental health, and integrates evidence-based collaborative care models in VA's mental health care delivery system.
- Expands understanding of the promise and limitations of brain-computer interface (BCI) assistive devices by conducting research to objectively assess their benefits.
- Continues development of an advanced full-arm prosthesis that better suits the active lifestyles of today's Veterans and is better suited for female Veterans.
- Develops and implements robot-assisted interventions as standard clinical practice for patients who have suffered neurological injury due to conditions such as stroke, spinal cord injury or multiple sclerosis.
- Develops treatments and interventions that prevent or lessen the duration and severity of pressure ulcers.
- Facilitates rapid translation of research findings into practice with quality enhancement research initiative (QUERI).
- Enhances the interface between VA health care providers and policy decision-makers to identify key research questions for comparative effectiveness research, and enhances the Evidence-based Synthesis Program (ESP) to improve development of Veteran-focused research syntheses.
- Enhances research efforts to reduce gender disparities, increase women Veterans' access to care, address issues of women's mental health and PTSD, and improve reintegration of women Veterans into the home and community.
- Initiates new multi-site clinical trials in chronic disease.
- Continues and expands VA research efforts on aging-related conditions, sponsors activities in neurodegenerative diseases, and initiates a new program in translational neuroscience to support preclinical testing of drugs and other therapeutic modalities for potential application for a variety of aging-related neurological disorders.
- Enhances research efforts to identify strategies for reducing health disparities.
- Develops effective cognitive and non-narcotic pharmacological treatments based on new knowledge of the psychological, molecular and genetic bases of pain transmission in the nervous system.
- Enhances methods for delivering remote care.
- Identifies best approaches to detect mild TBI with screenings.
- Determines the best methods to identify and address problems with cognitive function, emotional equilibrium, and social reintegration for Veterans with TBI.
- Performs clinical testing of a prosthetic retina for patients with degenerative disorders of the retina, such as retinitis pigmentosa and macular degeneration.
- Manages a rehabilitation program to reduce tinnitus and associated disabilities relating to hearing loss.
- Continues studies of symptoms and conditions related to Gulf War service.

- Continues to develop, implement, and evaluate evidence-based caregiving practices in VA's health care delivery system.
- Continues innovative research on improving the quality of life, health, functional abilities and health outcomes for Veterans receiving long-term care services.
- Assesses selected VAMC's system implementation and use of the Point of Care research model.
- Develops and implements a plan to revise research and development infrastructure for research support to promote new knowledge and measurable improvements in care for Veterans.
- Promotes improved care for Veterans who are homeless.

Assures a state-of-the-art research enterprise with a culture of professionalism, collaboration, accountability, and the highest regard for research volunteers' safety and privacy.

- Completes the process of Human Subject Protection Program accreditation.
- Enhances research education methods and policies that support the highest levels of research professionalism by VA investigators and staff.
- Manages a centralized, remote Internet-based system that supports secure access to research data and analysis tools.
- Expands the use of VA Central Institutional Review Board to all multi-site trials within VHA that are sponsored by VA Research and by VHA Central Office.
- Manages a communication system that disseminates information, fosters information sharing among investigators and assures transparency.
- Manages an enhanced framework of communication exchange between VA research and development program, and field offices with medical center leadership, and Regional Administrators to help ensure research is responsive to the needs of Veterans and facilitates implementation of research advances.
- Maintains an efficient research program by focusing on improving issues faced by the Office of Research and Development, including infrastructure, administrative management, and personnel processes.
- Revises compliance requirements for VA human research protection to harmonize with non-VA requirements.

Attracts, trains, and retains the highest-caliber investigators and staff, and nurtures their continuous development as leaders in their fields.

The Career Development Program provides a number of options to VA staff to enhance their careers. One is aimed at clinician scientists, including physicians and Ph.D. psychologists, physical therapists, audiologists, and others who will dedicate 25 percent of their time to medical care and 75 percent to innovative research. The Career Scientist program funds salaries for experienced, top tier investigators.

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- Expands training in the budding field of rehabilitation research.
- Expands the capacity to conduct research in areas related to TBI.
- Expands the small clinical trials training program for new clinical investigators.
- Conducts an evaluation of the Career Development and Research Career Scientist programs.
- Manages an ongoing program of Human Subject's Protection Program of awareness and a culture of research compliance in all VA Research programs.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapter 73 and applicable Subchapters I-IV

## **4.4 VHA OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH FOR OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT (DUSHOM)**

### **Mission Statement**

The Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (DUSHOM) leads VHA operations and ensures it continues to be the benchmark for health care excellence and value through the clinical and administrative services we provide to care for Veterans and their families.

### **Overview**

DUSHOM operates VHA health care systems, medical centers, systems of clinics, and outpatient clinics. It oversees field operations and provides operational guidance to each VISN. VHA's coverage area is divided into 21 VISNs, each a shared system of care working together to better meet local health care needs and provide Veterans greater access to care. The DUSHOM is responsible for 20 other VHA clinical and administrative program offices that ensure that VHA program policies and regulations are executed and supported to fulfill the operating needs of VHA field operations.

DUSHOM provides operational direction and guidance to each of the 21 VISNs.

- In collaboration with the 21 Network Directors, the Performance Management Work Group (PMWG) and other VHA performance management offices, DUSHOM establishes and updates metrics that hold VISNs accountable to standards for the services they provide.
- Conducts regular VISN performance reviews with VISN Network Directors to assist and support VISNs in achieving and maintaining the highest standards of care.

The Office of the DUSHOM is the focal point for the flow of information and guidance between VACO and the field.

- Disseminates pertinent information and VA/VHA Central Office leadership priorities through network liaisons within the Office of the DUSHOM.

- Collects, analyzes, and prioritizes key health care service issues coming from VISN and medical center facilities on a recurring basis through network liaisons and integrated operations within the Office of the DUSHOM.
- Engages with VISN leadership and staff on strategic and long-term operational issues at various forums, such as the NLC and weekly Network Director conference calls.
- Engages in daily contact with VISN personnel to provide feedback on day-to-day operations and care issues, and ensures all DUSHOM staff has the knowledge and information necessary to act as “champions” for VISN initiatives.

The Office of the DUSHOM coordinates and directs a wide range of operational matters dealing with VISN planning, congressional issues, Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), the media, Veterans, and families.

- Works in collaboration with the VISNs and VHA congressional advisory offices to mediate, advocate for and resolve incoming congressional issues and priorities at all levels of the organization.
- Works in collaboration with VISNs and VHA communications advisors to provide clear, accurate and consistent messaging to external media, Veterans, and their families regarding daily issues and long-term goals for VA.
- Works as a partner with all VSOs to ensure interests are addressed and needs are met for the optimal outcome for Veterans.

Oversees and coordinates VISN initiatives within VACO.

- Closely coordinates and maintains solid working relationships with other VA/VHA offices to advance VA/VHA initiatives.
- Engages appropriate stakeholders within and across organizations as needed to support key operations projects.
- Identifies challenges and inefficiencies that may affect collaboration and impede productivity within the organization.

Serves as the Principal Advisor to the USH and other executive leadership within VHA on matters pertaining to VHA field operations.

- Prepares testimony and presents briefings to VHA and VA leadership, congressional members, external and internal stakeholders as directed by the USH.
- Notifies VA and VHA leadership of imminent operational issues.

Provides oversight and guidance to the clinical and administrative services that compose the Office of the DUSHOM through the assistant DUSHOMs.

- Guides the long-term planning, goals, and direction of the clinical and administrative services that support the Office of the DUSHOM.

- Obtains regular reports, aggregate data, and emerging clinical and/or administrative trends occurring in VHA field operations.
- Manages the ongoing process of anticipating, receiving, addressing and monitoring internal and external reviews regarding clinical and administrative issues.
- Ensures regulatory requirements are being met and related issues addressed through the appropriate clinical or administrative service.
- Implements appropriate key operational policies and guidance through assistance from the appropriate clinical and/or administrative service.

**Authorities**

Title 38, U.S.C. Chapter 73 and applicable Subchapters I-IV

P.L. 111-8

P.L. 99-166 Title II

VHA Directive 2006-031

VHA Directive 2010-27

VHA Handbook 1030.02

VHA Handbook (to be published), "Patient Aligned Care Teams"

P.L. 106-117, The Veterans Millennium Health Care Benefits Act

38 U.S.C. 1710B, 1717, 1720C

38 U.S.C. 1718

45 CFR 164.512

VHA Handbook 1004.1, 1160.01, 1160.02, 1605.1

21 U.S.C. 321

42 U.S.C. 362

38 U.S.C. 1712

38 CFR 17.160-17.166

VHA Executive Decision Memo of March 7, 2011, "Activation of the Office of Disability and Medical Assessment"

P.L. 112-10 for FY2011

Title 38 U.S.C. 8102

Title 38 U.S.C. 8103

Title 38 U.S.C. 8104

Title 38 U.S.C. 8131-8135

Title 38 U.S.C. 8153

VAAR 801.695-2

E.O. 12656

PDD-67

38 U.S.C. § 1785

HSPD 10

HSPD 18

HSPD 20

HSPD 21

#### **4.4.1 VHA Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Administrative Operations (ADUSH/AO)**

##### **Mission Statement**

The Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Administrative Operations (ADUSH/AO) is the national leader in health care systems for administrative and operational support. It creates operational excellence that is measurable and value-added.

##### **Overview**

The Office of ADUSH/AO serves Veterans and their families by delivering improved logistics, procurement, capital, facilities, and issues management through VISNs, VHA facilities, and directly to Veterans and their families. The office comprises 12 components that strive to lead VHA administrative operations towards excellence using the guiding principles of financial stewardship; customer-centric services for our Nation's Veterans; assurance of a learning environment for employees; and demonstrating inclusion through a respectful and diverse workforce.

##### **Functions and Tasks**

The Office of Emergency Management manages VHA Comprehensive Emergency Management Program (CEMP) to ensure these services are integrated throughout the VHA health care system.

- Provides oversight of operational management during local and national emergency events affecting VA facilities and services to Veterans.
- Develops emergency management policies and guidance.
- Provides planning for continuity of operations.
- Coordinates responsibilities under the National Response Framework in preparation for and response to a national disaster.

Procurement and Logistics Office (P&LO).

- Awards contracts in support of VHA requirements, monitors procurement metrics to ensure procurement actions occur within specified time periods and in accordance with Federal and VA acquisition regulations (does not include national contracts, Federal Supply Schedule contracts, construction above \$10 million or information technology contracts above \$150,000).
- Identifies a Chief P&LO Officer, who serves as the head of the contracting activity and is responsible for all contract actions completed by P&LO personnel as well as non-P&LO personnel working under delegations issued by Office of Acquisition, Logistics and Construction contracting activities.

- Oversees the VHA Government Purchase Card Program.
- Issues logistics guidance and provides oversight of logistics activities conducted by VHA VISNs, and VAMCs.
- Provides life-cycle HR and fiscal services for reimbursable program office customers and contracting personnel.
- Provides security background services for contractor personnel.

The Office of Network Support provides consultative advice to leadership at all levels of VA and VHA regarding sensitive and complex issues related to health care system operations and management.

- Serves as a central organizing unit between field facilities, VISNs, VAMCs, and VACO.
- Manages information flow and knowledge sharing with VHA program offices.

The Office of Capital Asset Management Engineering and Support (OCAMES) provides VHA's guidance, oversight, and technical support for capital initiatives and engineering operations. Programs within this Office include Major Construction, Minor Construction, Non-Recurring Maintenance (NRM), Clinical Specific Initiatives (CSI), Leasing, Sharing Use of Space, Enhanced Use Leasing, Energy, Fleet, Engineering Operations, and State Home Construction Grant Program. OCAMES supports the medical centers and VISNs through:

- Providing professional engineering and capital expertise.
- Providing direction, guidance, and policy for capital and engineering programs.
- Develops budget requests for construction programs.
- Managing VHA's space inventory.
- Management, prioritization, and obligations of State Home Construction grant funding.
- Interpreting codes, regulations, policies, and standards for implementation.
- Overseeing and monitoring energy and fleet consumption.

Training medical center and VISN staff on capital and engineering programs and updates.

The Office of Healthcare Engineering provides comprehensive guidance, technical support, and oversight of engineering and facility management programs at VHA facilities.

- Serves as Principal Health Care Engineering Counsel to VHA in VACO.
- Provides comprehensive professional engineering support and special purpose review services for VHA facilities.
- Authoritatively interprets codes, regulations, policies, and standards for implementation.
- Represents VHA and VA on inter-Departmental and interagency governing boards, councils and task forces.
- Oversees and monitors facilities and fleets in the areas of operations, sustainment, energy, and accreditation.

- Develops technical, operational and procedural educational programs, and defines competencies.
- Oversees VHA engineering advisory boards and program groups in the areas of facilities operations, energy management, construction safety, and fleet management.
- Evaluates technologies for national integration at VHA field facilities.
- Supports VHA's national Continuity of Operations Plan capabilities.

Veterans Canteen Service (VCS) is responsible for making available reasonably priced merchandise and essential services for the comfort and well-being of Veterans enrolled in VA's Health Care System, their families, caregivers, employees, volunteers, and visitors.

- Serves as an internal VA resource for securing special purchases.
- Furnishes catering and other services on an ad hoc basis to Department personnel and recognized VSOs.
- Environmental Programs Service oversees field operations and carries out a wide-range of high-level management activities in the following areas of:
  - Environmental Sanitation.
  - Integrated Pest Control.
  - Textile Care Management and Processing.
  - Interior Design.
  - Hazardous Chemicals.
  - Waste Management and Recycling.
  - Ground Maintenance.
- Serves as the principal environmental advisor on policy development and technical support to the Office of the Under Secretary for Health (OUSH).
- Develops quantifiable goals and objectives which measure continuous environmental improvement and monitors progress.

Occupational Safety and Health, and Green Environmental Management Systems (GEMS) Programs is responsible for the following functions:

- Develops and ensures the full implementation of strategic goals for the national program through the collection and interpretation of analytical data provided by Program Managers and collected from field-focused databases and sources.
- Serves as the principle office to address untoward events of national significance related to occupational safety, industrial hygiene, fire protection, and environmental compliance.
- Provides direction, guidance, and interpretation of policy in all facets of program operations for field and VISN-level staff and the functions that they oversee. The Department proactively engages the development of appropriate risk assessment and mitigation strategies for the Occupational, Safety, Health (OSH) fire protection, industrial hygiene, environmental compliance, and Green Environmental Management System (GEMS) programs within VHA.

- Develops communication of program compliance and enforcement initiatives to field facilities and to the other affected VHA program offices either independently or in conjunction with the ADUSH/AO and other external agencies.
- Monitors regulatory compliance and makes appropriate recommendations to ADUSH/AO leadership for action to improve VHA's ability in fulfilling regulatory compliance requirements, requests, mandates, and initiatives from the President, Congress, and VA senior leadership, and other organizations.
- Provides guidance to both senior leadership and staff in the field in the development of novel and enterprisewide solutions that ensure compliance, mitigate identified issues, and sound business practices for the health care industry that are low cost or provide the best return on investment.

The Center for Engineering and Occupational Safety and Health (CEOSH) helps VA comply with internal and external requirements, improve existing programs, and maintain awareness of programmatic changes.

- Serves as a technical resource for biomedical, energy, environmental, and health care facilities engineering; emergency management; and occupational safety and health professionals throughout VA.
- Supports the development of VHA occupational safety, industrial hygiene, construction safety, fire protection, and environmental strategic goals through the development and collection of data from field-focused databases and sources in order to improve VHA's ability to comply with regulations, executive orders, congressional requests, and other higher level VA and Federal policy/initiatives.
- Provides technical resources used by VACO and the field to address untoward events of national significance related to occupational safety, engineering, biomedical engineering, industrial hygiene, fire protection, and environmental compliance.
- Supports the development of appropriate risk assessment and mitigation strategies for the OSH, health care engineering, biomedical engineering, fire protection, industrial hygiene, environmental compliance, and GEM system programs within VHA.

Healthcare Technology Management (HTM) is responsible for providing oversight, guidance, and biomedical engineering consultation regarding medical equipment and clinical technology in VHA. The Office establishes and communicates national policies on the management and technical support of medical technology to VISN, VAMCs, and biomedical engineering programs.

- Applies engineering and managerial skills to health care technology, working integrally with clinical program offices and VHA biomedical engineering workforce delivering services at the point of care.
  - Coordinates with clinical and operational program offices on cross-cutting national initiatives to ensure consistent implementation of health care technologies throughout VHA.
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- Manages VACO review and approval of high-cost, high-tech medical equipment requests.
- Promotes safe patient care by investigating and communicating equipment recalls and safety alerts, monitoring performance of scheduled maintenance, designing and implementing medical device protection and information security practices, and promoting adoption of safety enhancements to medical equipment.
- Designs and executes national performance monitoring and continuous program improvement across VHA biomedical engineering, including domains of human capital, customer satisfaction, process and quality, and financial performance. Facilitates spread of strong practices.
- Drives development of medical technology strategic plans at the VACO- and VISN-levels, incorporating initiatives such as standardization and coordinated recurring support to realize clinical and cost efficiencies.
- Supports biomedical engineering workforce development through horizontal training and education, and the recruitment of highly qualified professionals. Promotes succession planning through management of technical career field program for biomedical engineering.

The Business Operations Division provides financial, budgeting, human resources and resource management expertise, and support to the Offices of the DUSHOM.

- Provides special project budget formulation, detailed budget planning and execution oversight for the ADUSH/AO and ADUSH/CO.
- Provides support and assistance to ADUSH/AO and VISNs, including interaction with Financial Quality Assurance Managers and the Management Quality Assurance Service.

The National Activations Office is responsible for developing policy recommendations, templates, and best practices involving the activation of major new VAMCs.

- Acts as liaison with other key VACO offices in order to achieve timely and efficient results.
- Provides advocacy for the field during activation planning, start-up activities, and final opening of new VHA facilities.
- Provides subject matter expertise for field and VACO program offices during consideration and development of new facility strategic planning.

#### **4.4.2 VHA Chief Business Office (CBO)**

##### **Mission Statement**

The Chief Business Office serves Veterans by collaborating with colleagues and stakeholders as subject matter experts to provide excellence in health care operations and administration.

**Vision Statement**

CBO will be the national leader in health care systems for administrative and operational support.

**Overview**

CBO leads VA in advancing business practices that support patient care and delivery of health benefits. The CBO develops administrative processes, policy, regulations, and directives associated with VHA.

**Functions and Tasks**

The CBO leads the transformation of VHA business practices and health benefits policy to support the delivery of quality health care.

- Improves and implements consistent business practices that become benchmarks for the public and private sectors.
- Delivers timely, accurate, and accessible health benefits.
- Delivers accurate, responsive, and respectful customer service.
- Cultivates a dedicated workforce of highly skilled employees who understand, believe in, and take pride in VA's mission.

The CBO manages three business lines: Revenue Operations, Member Services, and Purchased Care. The CBO provides executive program support to the USH on a wide range of health benefit administration programs, activities, development of administrative processes, policy, regulations, and directives associated with the delivery of VA health benefit programs.

Business Policy Office develops, evaluates, and ensures consistent policies in the provision and delivery of VHA health care benefits and operations.

- Develops directives and handbooks to guide field staff.
  - Maintains the Policy Guide Portal, which provides detailed guidance on how to implement directives and handbooks.
  - Develops training for field staff on new or existing policy topics to ensure consistent application.
  - Coordinates the administrative appeals process for VHA and serves as the liaison to the Board of Veterans' Appeals.
  - Assists in development of white papers on policy topics.
  - Coordinates development of regulations.
  - Coordinates annual call for legislative proposals and development of impact assessments.
  - Liaises with VSOs.
  - Responds to Veteran questions and concerns, and researches Veterans' problems.
  - Shares information with VSO communities at VSO meetings and State Service Officer training events.
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- Publishes brochures and fact sheets, and posts information on VA Web sites to explain VA policy.

Office of eBusiness Solutions designs and supports the development of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) software solutions to meet the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), including changes to HIPAA as amended by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) in support of VA revenue processes.

- Defines software solutions and mandates to meet Federal statutes, regulations, and industry standard setting organizations, working collaboratively with the Office of Information Technology resources to ensure VA EDI software is compliant with industry standards.
- Partners with other Federal agencies – such as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Department of Treasury, and the Department of Defense – and trading partners – including third-party payers, clearinghouses, and Medicare Administrative Contractors (MAC) – to process EDI initiatives and transactions for VAMCs and CPACs.
- Designs the maintenance and iterative updates to the EDI enterprise tool used to bill over 1,650 third party health care insurance companies for nonservice connected care provided to Veterans.
- Works with industry standards-setting groups to advance development and use of electronic revenue transactions standards.

Business Information Office provides VHA's Performance and Operational Web-Enabled Reports (POWER) and POWER Plus reporting systems, and forecasts collections amounts.

- Allocates VHA's annual Medical Care and Collections Fund (MCCF) expected results to medical facility, VISN and CPAC levels.
- Develops MCCF collections estimates for the President's budget and provides business intelligence and analytical support, including managing and analyzing business data, assessing and refining information architecture, and producing specialized reports.
- Maintains and publishes business-critical information to increase collection revenues that are subsequently redirected to provide health care to Veterans.
- Develops 10-year collection forecasts.
- Initiates and supports business-improvement processes by applying relevant data and impact analysis using business intelligence tools.

Consolidated Patient Account Centers (CPAC) has seven offices located throughout VHA that consolidate business functions to manage revenue programs.

- Provides sustained revenue-cycle management by applying industry-proven methods, processes and business tools.
- Performs the back-end revenue cycle processes, while each of the VAMCs maintains ownership of key Veteran-facing revenue functions.
- Monitors key revenue-cycle metrics through CPAC deployment.

- Provides standardization and model efficiencies to demonstrate progress toward achieving increasingly challenging targets.
- Tracks key revenue cycle metrics closely to monitor the impact of CPAC deployment. Overall, there has been progress toward increasingly challenging targets, reflecting the benefits of a centralized model.
- On Sept. 24, 2012, the last VA Medical Center transitioned into the CPAC model, marking the official completion of implementation. The seven state-of-the-art business centers provide revenue-cycle operations based on industry best practices with more than 3,600 high-quality personnel hired and trained.

Member Services administers the VA health care enrollment program and other programs supporting Veterans' access to VA health care services and benefits information.

Health Eligibility Center is the national service center and authoritative source for registration, eligibility, enrollment and financial assessment activities supporting the delivery of VA health care benefits.

- Performs Veteran registration and enrollment activities.
- Provides an individualized Health Benefits Handbook to each Veteran enrolled in the VA health care system, which details specific benefits and responsibilities, and provides guidance on how to receive medical care.
- Verifies Veterans' self-reported household income information to establish eligibility for health care services, copayment status, and enrollment priority assignment.
- Performs Social Security number validation to support collection of Federal tax information.
- Manages Veteran demographic information.
- Manages the VA Site Tracking (VAST) program.
- Manages the Veteran Identification Card (VIC) program.

CBO Systems Management (CSM) is responsible for defining realizable solutions for intra/inter-agency business initiatives sponsored by ADUSH/OM to ensure Veterans access to their health benefits and services while achieving operational efficiencies. CSM provides the following services to ADUSH/OM, CBO, and CBO member services:

- Develops strategies and solutions to implement legislative and high-priority initiatives such as Affordable Care Act, Enterprise Identity and Access Management (IAM), VHA PIV Only Authentication, and integrated Electronic Health Record (iEHR).
  - Provides Senior Program and project management services for programs aimed to facilitate access to health care, support patient care, and ensure a seamless transition of Servicemembers into a Veteran life, such as Fix the Phones Patient Aligned Care Teams (FtP PACT), Health care Enrollment, Veteran Online Application for health benefits, Income Verification Modernization, and Veterans Financial Assessment.
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- Performs detailed business analysis to streamline operational processes and deliver improvements to VHA's interactions with our clients such as Consolidated Copayment Processing Center statements, Veterans Health Benefits Handbook, and Secure Messaging for Billing and Copay.
- Conducts business integration activities to ensure VHA's processes are supported by accurate, meaningful, and trusted information such as enterprise member services and data integration, which includes Military Service Data Sharing, and Customer Data Information (CDI).
- Designs and performs functional testing activities to ensure technical solutions deliver the expected business benefits.
- Delivers business engineering solutions that are flexible, innovative, secure, and adaptive to facilitate VA services. Solutions include the Electronic VHA Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs), Separation Health Assessments (SHA), Contracted Exam Solution, Homeless Stand Downs, and Veterans Transportation Services Portal (Web-based display of compiled beneficiary travel information).
- Sponsorship for the Program Application Support (PAS) Council.

Health Resource Center (HRC) operates VHA's National Customer Service Center assisting Veterans, their family members, and caregivers with questions regarding VHA health care. HRC supports the following programs within VHA:

- First Party Contact Center handles calls regarding copayment billings, means test, third-party insurance payments, and service connected billings.
- Health Benefits Contact Center handles calls regarding enrollment, health benefits, and programs/initiatives such as Caregivers, Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record, and the Health Benefits Handbook.
- Pharmacy Customer Care handles calls regarding VA prescriptions.
- Help Desk Support Contract Center provides Tier One technical support for the eBenefits Web site, My HealtheVet Web site, and VA Mobile Applications.

Veterans Transportation Program (VTS) comprises three business lines: Veterans Transportation Service, Beneficiary Travel Program and Rural Grants Program. The VTS was created as part of the Enhancing Veteran Experience and Access to Health care (EVEAH) Major Initiative. It provides means to transport Veterans to health care facilities.

The Beneficiary Travel (BT) program provides guidance to the field governing payments and allowances for beneficiary travel. The Rural Grants program provides grants to VSOs and state Veterans agencies to supply transportation services for Veterans in highly rural areas to travel to VAMCs.

VA Point of Service Program (VPS) was established under the EVEAH. VPS develops and deploys kiosk devices (including software) to provide Veterans self-service capabilities to access a broad range of information and services at VA health care facilities. These capabilities include checking in and viewing future appointments, validating demographics, eligibility, and other information, maps of facilities, completing forms and clinical questionnaires, performing medication and allergy reviews, and releases of information.

Chief Business Office Purchased Care is managed by the Deputy Chief Business Officer for Purchased Care Services and supports the delivery of health care benefits through enterprise program management and oversight of Purchased Care functions. This includes overall management of Health Care Payer Programs, which involves developing legislative, regulatory, and policy standards for program management, managing, monitoring, controlling and auditing all program areas.

- Manages the operational components to include eligibility, enrollment, and claims processing for the Civilian Health and Medical Program of VA (CHAMPVA), Spina Bifida Health Care Program, Foreign Medical Program, children of Women Vietnam Veterans Health Care Program, and the Family Caregiver Stipend Program.
- Provides enterprisewide business policy and standards, and oversees the Non-VA Medical Care (Fee) Program, the State Home Per Diem Program, and manages appropriate business and systems support for all program areas.

Health Care Payer Program and State Home Per Diem Program oversees the application, eligibility, admission process, funds control, and claims processing associated with the use of state Veterans Homes.

- Establishes eligibility for state Veteran Home benefits.
- Processes claims for reimbursement of State Home Per Diem payments.
- Responds to inquires pertaining to State Home Per Diem issues.
- Provides assistance to the National Association of State Veteran Homes and the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs.
- Establishes annual State Home Per Diem payment rates.
- Assists in the development or implementation of per diem payment regulations and legislation.

When a Veteran is not eligible for DoD Tricare health care benefits, CHAMPVA provides reimbursement for medical services and supplies for the spouse, surviving spouse, or child of a Veteran who (a) has a permanent and total service-connected disability, (b) died as a result of a service-connected disability, (c) was permanently and totally disabled from a service-connected condition at the time of death, or (d) has died during Active Duty.

- Establishes eligibility for Standard and Caregiver CHAMPVA benefits.
- Processes health care claims for reimbursement.

- Operationally manages the program, including overall planning, organizing, budgeting, directing, coordinating, evaluating, and improving administrative operations.

The Spina Bifida Health Care Program provides reimbursement for services and supplies for Vietnam and Korea Veterans' birth children diagnosed with spina bifida.

- Enrolls eligible beneficiaries in the program. (Eligibility is established by the Veterans Benefits Administration.)
- Processes claims for reimbursement of medical care.
- Manages all Spina Bifida Health Care Program activities, including planning, organizing, budgeting, directing, coordinating, evaluating, and improving administrative operations.

The Children of Women Vietnam Veterans (CWVV) Health Care Program provides reimbursement for medical services and supplies for children with VBA-adjudicated birth defects born to women Vietnam Veterans.

- Enrolls eligible beneficiaries in the CWVV Health Care Program. (Eligibility is established by the Veterans Benefit Administration.)
- Processes claims for reimbursement of medical care related to the adjudicated birth defect.
- Manages all CWVV activities, including planning, organizing, budgeting, directing, coordinating, evaluating, and improving administrative operations.

The Foreign Medical Program (FMP) is for Veterans who reside or are traveling outside the United States (excluding the Philippines). Under FMP, VA assumes payment responsibility for certain necessary medical services associated with the treatment of Veterans' service-connected conditions.

- Verifies Veteran eligibility for FMP benefits.
- Processes claims for reimbursement of medical services and supplies.
- Manages all FMP activities including planning, organizing, budgeting, directing, coordinating, evaluating, and improving administrative operations.

National Non-VA Medical Care Program Office (NNPO) provides administrative support and guidance to the VHA CBO on the business aspects of Non-VA Medical Care Operations. NNPO assists with the development of non-VA medical care related regulations located in Title 38 CFR Part 17, and provides concurrence and comment as requested by other entities within and outside of VA regarding policy, regulation, or statute pertaining to fee. NNPO disseminates business process guidance and is responsible for the VistA Fee, Central Fee, Fee Payment Processing System, and Fee Basis Claims Systems (FBCS) with regard to business development and maintenance.

- Provides administrative support to VHA CBO for purchased care.
- Assists with the development of non-VA medical care.

- Oversees and coordinates VistA Financials enhancements and automation tools, including coordination with supporting organizations such as Central Fee, Allocation Resource Center, Fee Basis Claims System, and Decision Support System (DSS).

Field Assistance Unit (FA) supports efforts to improve internal controls for field sites regarding fee basis claims processing activity.

- Provides field assistance to VA facilities in an effort to improve claims processing practices, which includes financial management, FBCS processing oversight and data analysis.
- Provides assistance with training programs in training of new processes and guidance of oversight tools.
- Provides facility site reviews to assess claims processing.

Project Health Care Effectiveness through Resource Optimization (HERO) is a pilot program that helps Veterans get the care they need when it is not readily available at their local VAMC via competitively awarded contracts.

- Implements care management strategies proven valuable in public and private sectors.
- Ensures care purchased for enrollees from community providers is cost-effective and complementary to the larger VHA system of care.
- Preserves and sustains partnerships with academic affiliates.
- Establishes at least three care management demonstration programs through competitive award.
- Collaborates with industry, academic and other organizations to incorporate a variety of public-private partnerships.

Business Systems Management (BSM) is responsible for the re-engineering, implementation, and management of innovative business solutions to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Purchased Care and enhance Veteran health care. BSM comprises three Departments: Program Management Office (PMO), Business Process Re-engineering Office (BPRO), and Clinical Business System Office (CBSO).

The Program Management Office (PMO) centralizes and coordinates the management of projects supporting Purchased Care business systems utilizing a comprehensive project management framework to support standard project management practices.

- Provides project management functions to include scheduling, risk and issues management, stakeholder management, business-oriented software development life-cycle support, product and process deployment, return on investment analysis and benefits realization.
- Develops and establishes a comprehensive project management framework and training programs to support standard project management practices.

The Business Process Re-engineering Office (BPR) is responsible for improving business processes to align all aspects of the organization with Purchased Care to promote business effectiveness and efficiency, while striving for innovation, flexibility, and integration with technology.

- Business Standards and Requirements Management.
- Development of Decision Support Tools.
- Management of User Acceptance Testing.
- Change Control Management.

Clinical Business Systems Office (CBSO) is responsible for the delivery of innovative and patient-centric business solutions to ensure high quality, coordinated, and equitable delivery of non-VA patient care.

- Clinical Business Process Re-engineering.
- Manages Clinical Projects.
- Liaises with non-VA Care clinical field personnel and clinical VHA offices.
- Provides oversight and support of clinical elements of BSM projects.

Program Oversight and Informatics (POI) Division ensures that VA health care program dollars do not pay for fraudulent or abusive services and supplies. POI reduces operating costs resulting in more benefits and better quality of care for Veterans and their dependents by establishing specialized programs to monitor all related business operations.

- Department of Program Integrity provides reports on fraud detection, research, and operations.
- Department of Audits and Internal Controls (DAIC) assures health care dollars are spent on appropriate community resources for the respective services. DAIC ensures controls are in place to reinforce financial integrity in our programs. DAIC manages extensive audits and Quality and Corrective Action Plans (QCAP) to assure audit findings result in changes to business practice, policy and technology.
- Department of Informatics is responsible for monitoring, reporting, and managing the vast amount of health care payment data associated with the Purchased Care Programs. These program functions afford VHA insight into the health care purchasing trends, assure appropriate care is purchased and provide key indicators concerning service delivery to our beneficiary population. These also serve as key data sets to assess proper payments and appropriate use of Government funds.

Purchased Care Operations provides a systematic process for eligibility and enrollment decisions as well as medical claims processing for Standard CHAMPVA, Caregiver CHAMPVA, Spina Bifida Health Care Program, CWVV Health Care Program, and the Foreign Medical Program. Operations is also responsible for payment of the Caregiver stipend. To accomplish this mission,

the Operations Directorate has an eligibility and claims processing system that utilizes document imaging technology, optical character recognition, and EDI.

- Images documents received through the mail and processes through workflow and optical character recognition (OCR) to appropriate Departments.
- Adjudicates medical claim benefits and fee schedules.
- Utilizes automated business and COTS claim scrubbing software for proper payment.
- Provides a robust pharmacy management program to include cost-effective options to beneficiaries through a retail pharmacy benefits management (PBM) contract and through a mail order program developed in partnership with the VA PBM.
- Monitors and maintains a current file of commercial and government health insurance plans to determine appropriate coverage for beneficiaries.
- Provides ongoing quality review of eligibility and medical claims.
- Mitigates or resolves risks and continually focuses on process improvement.

Project Access Received Closer to Home (ARCH) is a pilot program that helps eligible Veterans get the care they need closer to where they live through competitively awarded contracts.

- Similar to Project HERO, implements care management strategies proven valuable in public and private sectors.
- Ensures care purchased for eligible enrollees from community providers is cost-effective and complementary to the larger VHA system of care.
- Establishes at least five care management demonstration programs through competitive award.
- Collaborates with industry, academic, and other organizations to incorporate a variety of public-private partnerships.

Indian Health Service (IHS) and Tribal Health Programs (THP) support implementation and program management of the Reimbursement Agreements for IHS and THP. This program implements a key objective of a 2010 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between VA and IHS to establish a reimbursement program for all tribal health care facilities that provide direct care services to American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Veterans.

- Ensures the needs of eligible AI/AN Veterans are met at VA or tribal health care facilities.
- Works in partnership with VA Office of Rural Health and VA Office of Tribal Government Relations to implement MOU objectives.
- Facilitates agreements and local implementation plans with IHS and THPs.
- Resolves policy and operational issues.
- Provides communication and training to internal and external stakeholders.
- Analyzes and audits claim data and financial processes.

Patient-Centered Community Care (PCCC) is an effort to provide Veterans coordinated, timely access to quality care through a comprehensive network of non-VA medical providers who meet VA quality standards when VA cannot provide the care in-house.

- Enhances care coordination through required medical documentation sharing opportunities.
- Improves access to care.
- Reduces the variability across medical documentation sharing, contract administration, authorizations, and claims payment.
- Ensures efficient purchased care through centralized and high volume negotiated contracting.
- Improves operational processes based on audit findings and establishes controls for ongoing monitoring and improvement of results.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapter 73 and applicable Subchapters I-IV

### **4.4.3 VHA Office of Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Clinical Operations (ADUSH/CO)**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Clinical Operations (ADUSH/CO) strives to provide clinical services to Veterans and their families that serve as the benchmark for health care excellence and value.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

The primary function of the Office of the ADUSH/CO is to monitor and ensure the integrity, quality, and value of clinical services at VHA facilities. It implements new policies to improve clinical services, integrates new and revised clinical services with other components of the health care organization, and executes clinical processes to improve health care delivery. These responsibilities are executed by core staff and program offices that address Veteran homelessness, surgical services, primary care, geriatrics and extended care, mental health, sterile processing services, dentistry, and disability and medical assessment.

VHA Homeless Programs Office advises VHA leadership on homeless Veteran issues.

- Represents VHA leadership on issues of Veteran homelessness when coordinating VA efforts with other Federal agencies, community partners, and other VA offices.
- Reviews reports, prepares correspondence, and disseminates pertinent information concerning homeless Veteran issues.
- Integrates Departmental efforts in addressing the needs of homeless and at-risk Veterans.
- Coordinates VHA homeless program operations with VA's OPIA Homeless Veteran Initiative Office.

- Develops and implements programs and associated national policies to address the needs of the homeless Veteran population.
- Oversees the development of VISN and Medical Center Fiscal Year Synchronized Plans.
- Provides Homeless Veteran Program funding and guidance in support of ending homelessness among Veterans.
- Develops and implements national policy and guidance on existing and proposed statutes, regulations and directives, and other VA and non-VA policies relating to homeless services.
- Conducts regular training and continuing education programs to ensure competencies in clinical areas related to the needs of homeless Veterans
- Monitors homeless Veteran clinical services.
- Develops and maintains a Homeless Veteran Registry, which tracks and monitors homeless program expansion, operation, and treatment outcomes.
- Conducts routine medical center site visits by subject matter experts to review and advise on homeless programs.
- Integrates homeless clinical services with other components of VHA's clinical initiatives.
- Monitors the integrity, quality, and value of homeless Veteran programs and services.

National Surgery Office develops and implements policy, executes clinical oversight and provides guidance for all VHA surgical programs.

- Oversees the delivery of surgical care by VHA to enhance operations.
- Maintains clinical oversight of the established VHA surgical programs, surgical outcomes and surgical outcomes' data analyzed for research purposes.
- Develops and implements national policy and guidance for surgical programs.
- Provides support for the national delivery of transplant and related services.

Office of Primary Care Operations facilitates the delivery of quality-oriented, efficient, timely, safe and effective primary care within VHA facilities.

- Assesses new, revised, and existing primary care clinical services.
- Integrates and coordinates primary care clinical services with other components of the health care organization.
- Deploys and executes processes that enable and enhance the delivery of primary care.
- Measures and monitors the integrity, effectiveness, quality and value of VHA primary care.
- Investigates and identifies barriers impacting primary care delivery that are then brought to medical center and VISN leadership for action.

Office of Geriatrics and Extended Care (GEC) Operations facilitates the delivery of care for Veterans with serious chronic diseases and disabling conditions through a comprehensive

spectrum of facility-based (institutional) and home- and community-based care (noninstitutional care) programs.

- Facility-based Care (Institutional Care Programs):
  - Manages contract of State Veterans Homes (SVH) to ensure compliance with VA's rules and regulations regarding nursing home care, domiciliary, and/or adult day health care.
  - Reviews and responds to SVH issue briefs, surveys report reviews and close outs, and survey appeals.
  - Contracts with Community Nursing Homes (CNH) to provide care for Veterans in community nursing homes.
  - Provides monitoring and follow-up services for Veterans in the CNH Program.
  - Supports Community Living Center (CLC) operations to transform the culture of care in VA CLCs to refined communities of Veterans living together as comfortably and independently as possible in a setting reminiscent of the homes they defended with their service.
  - Provides clinical and quality oversight through unannounced surveys, standardized action plans, trending data, reports, policies, and issue briefs.
- Home- and Community-based Care (Noninstitutional Care Programs):
  - Oversees Comprehensive End-of-Life Care services, such as bereavement care, and hospice and palliative services with an interdisciplinary team of health care providers, and creates individualized plan of care to meet medical, social, spiritual, and psychological needs.
  - Operates and purchases Adult Day Health Care, which provides therapy with activities, socialization, health services, and caregiver respite in a safe, group setting.
  - Coordinates Veteran-Directed Services, which provides Veterans and their caregivers with more access, choices, and control over their community based long-term care services.
  - Coordinates Homemaker and Home Health Aide care, which assists Veterans with personal care, chores or other activities of daily living.
  - Provides respite care in the home and in other community settings in adherence with the Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act.
  - Coordinates Community Residential Care, which provides health care supervision and personal assistance in a residential care facility to eligible Veterans who are unable to live independently.
  - Coordinates Medical Foster Homes (MFH), a form of Community Residential Care that provides health care supervision and personal care assistance in a personal family home to Veterans who meet nursing home level of care need.
  - Coordinates Geriatric Evaluation and Management, which provides comprehensive interdisciplinary evaluation and management of Veterans with multiple chronic

- diseases and disability conditions, through primary or consultative services in outpatient and inpatient settings.
- Coordinates Geriatric Primary Care, which provides medical care, nursing care, therapy, mental health, disease treatment and prevention, health maintenance and education, referral for specialty care, and overall care management for elderly Veterans in an outpatient clinic setting.
  - Collaborates with Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Centers (GRECC) to increase health care providers' basic knowledge of aging, and improve the quality of care through improved models of clinical services, and a wide variety of educational activities targeting VA staff and trainees from the full range of health disciplines.
  - Coordinates Alzheimer's and dementia care through a full range of VA health care services depending on Veterans' needs.
  - Manages the Home-based Primary Care (HBPC) program, which provides comprehensive, longitudinal primary care by an interdisciplinary team through home visits in urban, rural, highly rural and Native American land. HBPC coordinates care and incorporates nutritional, cultural, mental health, rehabilitative, spiritual and clinical needs of the Veteran through individualized Veteran-centered holistic care plans and ongoing assessments for Veterans.
  - HBPC serves as a major site for health profession trainees, research projects and clinical initiatives. When Veterans are no longer able to reside in their own home and seek alternative living options, HBPC can assist Veterans who want to avoid nursing home care through identifying a qualified caregiver in the VA MFH program, which continues to expand throughout VA.
  - HBPC has been established as a Medicare demonstration based largely on the experience and successful outcomes of the VA HBPC model.
  - Special Population Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT); Geriatrics and Extended Care integrates with PACT through the operation of special population PACTs in Geriatric Primary Care and HBPC.

Office of Mental Health Operations executes, monitors, implements and integrates mental health services as developed by policy in VHA Mental Health Services.

- Works with VISN and facility leadership to identify areas of anticipated growth and unmet Veteran needs, and to implement programs to meet these demands.
  - Monitors access to effective mental health clinical services through its Comprehensive Information Monitoring System, executed by three Mental Health Program Evaluation Centers.
  - Conducts assessments of best practices and service gaps to provide reports and recommendations back to facilities, VISNs, and VACO.
  - Facilitates action plans and timelines for quality improvement projects.
  - Provides technical assistance in the deployment of new mental health services.
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- Develops models, guidance, and assistance to decrease variability in existing services.
- Provides clinical services through the operation of the National Veterans Crisis Line and the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans.
- Provides oversight and management of the Therapeutic and Supported Employment Services Program and the National Clozapine Coordinating Center.

National Program Office for Sterile Processing ensures the safety of Veterans by developing national policy and oversight of all sterile processing and high-level disinfection activities for critical and semi-critical reusable medical equipment.

- Program office subject matter experts conduct facility site visits to review and advise on sterile processing activities, and to provide special assistance when failures in sterile processing activities pose potential risks to Veterans.
- Identifies risks to Veterans when sterile processing activities are not performed correctly through analysis of process failures and potential for harm to Veterans. Experts recommend corrective actions to the Facility Director, VISN Director, and VHA leadership.
- Provides guidance and policies for facility and VISN-led inspections of sterile processing activities, collects, and analyzes data to identify trends and address frequently occurring problems across facilities, and recommends corrective actions to the ADUSH/CO.
- Conducts training and continuing education programs to ensure competencies in the sterile processing workforce.
- Develops national policy and guidance for sterile processing activities, including technical specifications, competency assessments, oversight of sterile processing functions at the facility level, and integration with other clinical services.

Office of Dentistry establishes and deploys policy for VA Dental Services to ensure uniform and consistent national procedures for providing oral health care to eligible Veterans.

- Fields and maintains the Dental Encounter System, and client-facing Dental Reporting and Analytics System (complementary business intelligence systems) to assess and improve evidence-based and data-driven organizational and individual performance.
- Develops evidence-based clinical quality indicators that ensure eligible Veterans receive a primary care dental provider, regular exams, cleanings, and appropriate fluoride treatments to drive improvement in Veteran oral health.
- Maximizes access to dental care for additional homeless Veterans by continually refining and monitoring distribution of Homeless Veteran Dental Program funds.
- Maintains Central Dental Laboratory services to support the needs of eligible beneficiaries. Services include, but are not limited to, dental crowns, bridges, and removable partial denture frameworks.

Office of Disability and Medical Assessment (DMA) is responsible for providing executive leadership to VHA's disability programs worldwide, including traditional compensation and

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pension (C&P), Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES), and overseas programs. These responsibilities include budget estimates and execution, performance improvement, contract management, clinician training and certification, analytics, and the development of national policy. DMA works closely with VHA, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), and the Department of Defense (DoD) to project future workload and requirements needed to meet the demands for services in response to new initiatives and legislation. DMA works with DoD, VBA, Office of Policy and Planning (OPP), and Health Affairs (HA) to manage and monitor programs to provide disability examinations for Servicemembers, including IDES and separation health assessments.

- Develops strategic objectives to effectively manage IDES initiatives.
- Facilitates program relationships with the DoD.
- Develops near-, short- and long-term plans to support the ongoing operation and expansion of DoD/VA initiatives by developing policies, best practices, and extending VA tools and systems.
- Supports implementation of policies through regularly scheduled conference calls and in-person training and meetings.
- Manages the distribution of IDES funding to field sites in support of disability examinations.
- Establishes and implements reporting to affect data-driven management principles.

In collaboration with VBA, DMA develops, implements, oversees, and provides education and training on disability evaluation policy and procedures.

- Maintains engagement with field-based clinicians and VBA to revise and update existing Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs). DBQs standardize and focus medical evidence required for a VBA disability benefits determination.
- Drafts new DBQs based on changes in VA laws, regulations, and policies.
- VBA's primary point of contact for VHA compensation and pension-related issues.
- Provides medical authority for medical evaluation components of the VA C&P disability evaluation and reporting process.
- Provides communication to the field regarding national policy and guidance for the disability evaluation process.
- Provides expert medical opinions on complex issues when requested by VBA and BVA.
- Facilitates contracts for disability evaluations nationwide and overseas.
- Provides analytic and reporting services to gather and manage data related to disability evaluations.

DMA monitors monthly and quarterly disability evaluation scores to assess national performance measures, and reports national quality review scores monthly and VISN quality review scores quarterly.

- DMA oversees VHA quality assurance reviews of disability evaluations.
  - Provides monthly and quarterly reports on VISN performance.
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- Monitors national timeliness standards for both disability evaluation.
- Provides feedback and training to disability evaluation field staff targeting clinical areas of concern identified in monthly quality review audits.
- Performs quality audit reviews of VHA disability evaluations to identify those issues that would generate a VBA determination of an insufficient evaluation and generate rework on any type of examination or evaluation.

**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. 73 Subchapters 1-14

38 U.S.C. 2011-2013

38 U.S.C. 2022

38 U.S.C. 2031

38 U.S.C. 2033-

38 U.S.C. 2034

38 U.S.C. 2044

38 U.S.C. 2061

38 U.S.C. 2065

38 U.S.C. 1710B

38 U.S.C. 1717

38 U.S.C. 1720C

38 U.S.C. 1718

21 U.S.C. 321

42 U.S.C. 362

38 U.S.C. 1712

42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(19)

P.L. 111-8, Title II (123 Stat. 961)

P.L. 112-154 § 304

P.L. 99-166, Title II

VHA Directive 2008-005, 2008-71, 2010-024, 2010-027, 2012-011, 2012-025, 2013-002, and 1602.01

VHA Handbooks 1030.02, 1102.01, 1601.01 and VHA Handbook (to be published), “Patient Aligned Care Teams”

P.L. 106-117, The Veterans Millennium Health Care Benefits Act

45 CFR 164.512

VHA Handbook 1004.1, 1160.01, 1160.02, 1605.1

38 CFR 17.160-17.166

VHA Executive Decision Memo of March 7, 2011, “Activation of the Office of Disability and Medical Assessment”

#### 4.4.4 VHA Patient-Centered Care and Cultural Transformation

##### Overview

The Office of Patient-Centered Care and Cultural Transformation (PCCCT) leads the transformation of health care from primarily reactive, sporadic and physician-centered care to personalized, patient-centered care that is based on relationships built on trust and committed to positive results over the Veteran's lifetime. The PCCCT office has defined patient-centered care as an approach to health care that prioritizes Veterans and their values, and partners with them to create a personalized, proactive strategy to optimize their health and well-being, and minimize and manage disease.

Patient-centered care "practice" begins with the Veterans' vision of health and their goals. It links Veterans' personalized health plans to what matters to them in their lives, and it supports them in acquiring the skills and resources they need to succeed in making sustainable changes in their health and life. The "experience" establishes continuous healing relationships and provides optimal healing environments. The ultimate results are better health outcomes, improved quality of care, greater patient and provider satisfaction, and greater cost effectiveness.

##### Functions and Tasks

PCCCT partners with VISNs, medical centers, and program offices to develop strategies and plans that implement patient-centered care nationally.

- Hears, informs, and represents the Veterans.
- Partners with nine Centers of Innovation in the field to pilot new practices, and integrate and align current programs with the elements of patient-centered care.
- Implements a national foundational rollout of patient-centered care in partnership with VISNs and medical centers.
- Enhances collaboration among program offices, VISNs, medical centers, Vet Centers, and other community organizations to integrate innovative programs and services, and share strong practices with the vision for transformation.
- Co-chairs the National Leadership Veteran Experience Committee, which reports to the NLC.
- Takes a leadership role in advising the NLC and USH on a wide range of issues related to the enhancement of Veterans' experience of care in VHA.

PCCCT develops education and training for staff and Veterans as part of the VHA-integrated curriculum.

- Imbeds elements of patient-centered care in all forms of education.
- Provides personalized health planning and health coaching training as integral components of the planned curriculum related to the practice of health care.

- Assists Veterans in identifying areas for skill development to successfully change behaviors and achieve personal health goals using a Health and Well-Being tool.

PCCCT captures innovation, analyzes outcomes, and deploys best practices nationally.

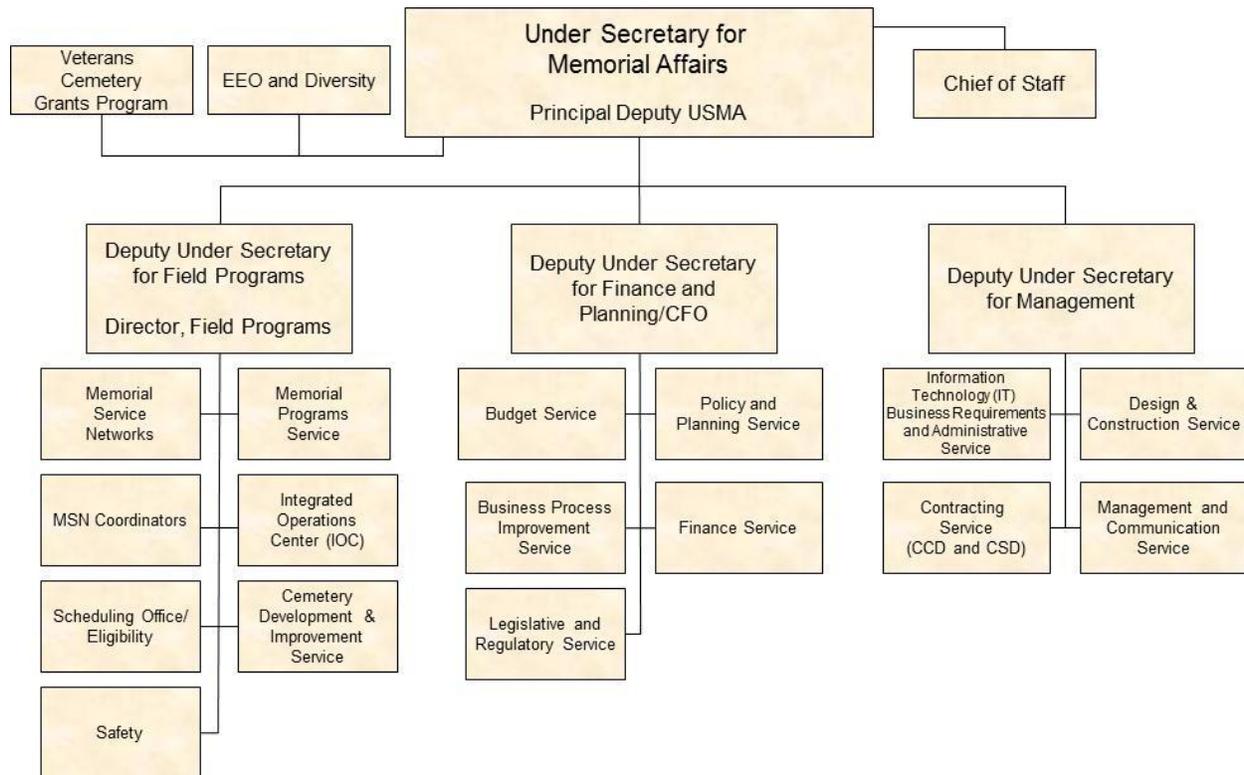
- Establishes pilot programs in Centers of Innovation, VISNs, VAMCs, Vet Centers, and other environments across the continuum of care.
- Develops partnerships with measurement and research program offices to effectively evaluate outcomes.
- Deploys best practices and innovations nationally.

PCCCT communicates to Veterans, staff, and other stakeholders in order to support the office's activities, and further the progression and success of transforming VHA to a culture of patient-centered care.

### **Authorities**

Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 73 and applicable Subchapters I-IV

## 5. NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION (NCA)



### Mission Statement

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) honors Veterans and their families with final resting places in national shrines, and with lasting tributes that commemorate their service and sacrifice to our Nation.

### Functions and Tasks

Administers U.S.C. Title 38 benefits.

- Ensures a burial option exists for eligible Servicemembers, Veterans, Reservists, National Guard members and eligible family members in VA national cemeteries within a reasonable distance of their residence.
- Processes applications, procures and delivers headstones, markers, and medallions for the graves of Veterans throughout the United States and the world.
- Administers the Veterans Cemetery Grants Program, which provides grants to states and tribal organizations for establishing, expanding and improving state Veterans' cemeteries.
- Provides Presidential Memorial Certificates to honor the service of honorably discharged deceased Servicemembers and Veterans.
- Maintains VA national cemeteries as national shrines.

Manages the National Cemetery Administration.

- Develops and administers an annual budget for cemetery operations.
- Provides leadership and program direction to NCA's employees who are fulfilling NCA's unique mission functions nationwide.
- Formulates plans that lead to recommendations for Secretary of Veterans Affairs (SECVA) approval in regards to the establishment of new national cemeteries, and expansion and improvement of existing cemeteries.
- Encourages high-level customer services standards as recognized by the national cross-industry American Customer Satisfaction Index (which measures satisfaction with the quality of goods and services available in the United States), such as courtesy, easy access to gravesite and benefits, prompt delivery of service and benefits, accuracy, and cemetery appearance that is befitting a national shrine.
- Effectively and efficiently serves Veterans, their families, NCA employees, and key stakeholders through crucial business functions, such as human resources, Equal Employment Opportunity and diversity, budget/finance, construction, safety, emergency preparedness, information technology, outreach and communications.

Operates and maintains VA national cemeteries.

- Ensures adherence to National Shrine Operations standards at national cemeteries. National Shrine standards are set by NCA and are used as a benchmark by other Federal and state cemetery organizations.
- Provides policy and plans required for the development, operation, and administration of all VA national cemeteries.
- Plans for and acquires resources needed to ensure VA national cemeteries are maintained as national shrines to honor service to the nation.

Advises the SECVA.

- Advises on the development, adoption, and implementation of NCA programs and policies affecting overall operations of VA national cemeteries, and burial benefits administered by NCA.
  - Represents the SECVA on the congressionally-authorized Advisory Committee on Cemeteries and Memorials.
    - The Committee advises the SECVA, through the Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs (USMA), with respect to the administration of VA national cemeteries Servicemembers' lots and plots.
    - Advises the SECVA on the erection of appropriate memorials and the adequacy of Federal burial benefits.
    - Examines the full spectrum of available benefits and services and makes reports and recommendations on how to resolve issues involving the operations of the NCA, the Veterans Cemetery Grants Program, the provision of headstones, markers, and
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- medallions, the provision of Presidential Memorial Certificates, and related burial benefits.
- Assists the SECVA in ensuring that plans and programs are meeting the needs of the Nation's Veterans and their eligible family members, and in meeting the mandate to maintain our national cemeteries as national shrines.

#### Stakeholder Engagement.

- Manages relationships with NCA's diverse and varied stakeholder population, including Veterans and their family members, Veterans Service Organizations (VSO), and professionals in the funeral and mortuary industry.
- Includes environmental groups, historical groups, and genealogical organizations in stakeholder management activities, such as reviewing plans to establish or expand VA national cemeteries.
- Coordinates activities with various components of the DoD and members of Active-Duty and Reserve forces.
- Partners with DoD, American Battle Monuments Commission, U.S. Military Academies, and National Park Service to ensure accurate and dignified burial of the Nation's heroes.
- Coordinates with states and tribal organizations to establish state and Tribal Veterans Cemeteries.
- Represents the SECVA and/or the VA at congressional hearings and in ceremonial activities relating to VA national cemeteries.

#### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. 2306

38 U.S.C. Chapter 24

38 CFR Parts 38-39

### **5.1 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR FIELD PROGRAMS**

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Provides interment benefits.

- Establishes policies and procedures for administering the statutorily based Interment Benefit Program.
- Determines eligibility for burial benefits in VA national cemeteries.
- Operates the national scheduling office to determine eligibility and schedule committal services at VA national cemeteries. A family may choose to hold a committal service at a VA national cemetery before the interment is made. A committal service is a brief pre-burial service held in a shelter located away from the gravesite.
- Manages gravesite assignment policies and operations.

Administers headstone and marker program.

- Manages the Memorial Programs Service, which provides headstones, markers, medallions, and Presidential Memorial Certificates to eligible Veterans and family members. NCA provides these benefits for Veterans' gravesites worldwide.
- Establishes policies and procedures for providing statutorily based headstone, marker, and medallion benefits.
- Determines eligibility for receipt of headstone, marker or medallion benefit.
- Operates national customer call center operations to provide direct customer service for inquiries related to headstone, marker, and medallion benefits.
- Reviews and determines appropriate action on requests to make new Emblems of Belief (EOB) available for inscription on Government-furnished headstones and markers. An EOB is an emblem or symbol that represents the sincerely held belief of the decedent during his or her life that constituted a religion or the functional equivalent of religion.
- Arranges for the production and delivery of headstones, markers, and medallions to eligible recipients, and ensures appropriate quality control of products.

Administers Presidential Memorial Certificate Program.

- Through the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) Program, NCA provides next of kin and loved ones with an engraved paper certificate signed by the current President to honor the memory of honorably discharged, deceased Veterans. NCA staff determines eligibility and oversees the production, inspection, and delivery of PMCs to eligible recipients annually.

Provides executive oversight of Memorial Service Network (MSN) Offices and national cemeteries.

- Works with the USMA, the Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs (PDUSMA), MSNs, and national cemeteries to determine appropriate policies, plans, and procedures to guide the development, operation, and administration of all national cemeteries under VA's jurisdiction.
- Oversees donation of commemorative works to NCA for placement in national cemeteries.
- Monitors all aspects of national cemetery operations, evaluates procedures for effectiveness, initiates improvements, and makes appropriate adjustments to accommodate changing program demands.
- Ensures efficient and effective operation of cemeteries by providing a management perspective on program-planning actions, such as forecasted rates of interments, feasibility of new cemeteries, further development of existing cemeteries and availability of resources.
- Recommends acquisition of new sites for future VA national cemeteries and the expansion of existing cemeteries based on evaluation of location of sites, Veteran population,

topography, access to property, historical significance of the site, and the potential for gravesite yield.

- Oversees the research and design of new products and procedures to improve burial operations and equipment for the future.
- Maintains VA national cemeteries as national shrines of honor and dignity.
- Works with NCA Business Process Improvement Service to establish operational standards and measures to quantify the levels of appearance and services required of national shrines.
- Oversees ongoing assessments of progress in achieving national shrine status.
- Determines resource requirements necessary to maintain outstanding interment and memorialization operations, and grounds and equipment maintenance.

Provides executive oversight of Safety Program.

- Oversees NCA Occupational Safety and Health program designed for specific needs and concerns related to administrative functions performed in an office setting and cemetery operations, such as grounds maintenance, grave digging, and headstone or marker installation.
- Encourages return of employees injured on the job to work status through education programs and mitigation of workplace hazards unique to NCA job functions.

Ensures effective and efficient management of the field programs support facilities.

- Oversees funding requirements/distribution for field operations components and ensures funding allocations are consistent with operations budget plans.
- Conducts operational analyses and review of operations of cemeteries and support staffs, and adjusts allocation of resources and manpower requirements to ensure the effectiveness of systems and procedures.
- Determines appropriate changes in field programs organizational structure, including the establishment or elimination of functions or offices. Develops and implements plans to improve specific procedures, systems or policies.
- Initiates studies and develops plans to meet future needs of NCA, such as green burials, and Department-level direction to increase burial options in urban and rural regions.
- Coordinates NCA-specific responsibilities related to VA initiatives, such as the Veterans Relationship Management program and Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER) activities.

Advises USMA and PDUSMA.

- Serves as headquarters senior official who communicates with NCA field programs concerning operational decisions impacting VA national cemeteries.
  - Serves as Principal Advisor on field program issues to the USMA.
  - Furnishes information and solution options on critical issues affecting current operating year activities and future plans.
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- Participates with the USMA in discussions concerning policies, programs, procedures, and legislation that may affect Veterans, their families, or VSOs.
- Assesses and revises policies and procedures to accommodate changing Federal requirements related to eligibility for benefits, operations, etc.
- Represents the USMA at meetings with other VA officials, members of Congress, private enterprise, VSOs, and representatives of other Government agencies on matters pertaining to NCA.
- Represents the USMA at congressional and state briefings on topics and program activities related to NCA.
- Ensures prudent judgment by Field Programs Managers when exercising delegated authorities related to procurement of emergency supplies/services, specifications and policies related to headstone/marker inscriptions, and acceptance of donations made to the cemeteries and NCA's Cemetery Gift Fund.
- Manages use of uncompensated workforce individuals to obtain goals (e.g., volunteers, work study students, summer youth programs, court-ordered details, and prisoners).
- Oversees succession planning for key field positions and interface with VACO.

#### Initiates VA First Notice of Death Actions.

- Updates electronic files to ensure timely termination of benefits and next-of-kin notification of possible entitlement to survivor benefits. In 2009, NCA assumed responsibility of VA's First Notice of Death Program, previously administered by the VBA.
- Ensures appropriate distribution of Presidential Memorial Certificates to eligible recipients as triggered by the First Notice of Death Program.

#### Stakeholder Engagement.

- Informs Veterans, eligible dependents, DoD members, VSOs and other stakeholders about burial and memorial benefits.
- Collaborates with state and tribal government Veterans cemeteries, DoD cemeteries and National Park Service cemeteries to ensure Federally administered cemeteries operate efficiently and effectively.
- Provides guidance and training to DoD and National Park Service in the operations of national cemeteries.
- Works with VHA on compensated work therapy opportunities and annual workplace valuations.
- Establishes agreements with VBA and National Personnel Records Center for assistance in locating military documents.
- Collaborates with DoD and other providers to ensure that military funeral honors are provided at the committal services of Servicemembers and Veterans.

**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. 2306

38 U.S.C. Chapter 24

38 CFR Parts 38-39

**5.2 Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Finance and Planning****Functions and Tasks**

Business process improvement.

- Ensures that national cemeteries have a current and validated set of operational standards and measures that describe and quantify national shrine operations in the areas of interment, grounds maintenance, headstone/marker operations, facility and equipment maintenance.
- Manages the NCA Organizational Assessment and Improvement (OAI) Program for national cemeteries and Central Office components. This includes developing or updating all program materials, selecting and training site visit teams of NCA employees, scheduling site visits, and overseeing and documenting site visit results through timely reports.
- Ensures NCA leadership has current, valid, and relevant client satisfaction data for all major benefits and programs that NCA delivers. Collects and maintains all client/customer and employee satisfaction data. Plans, develops, and executes strategies to improve client/customer and employee satisfaction with NCA products and services.
- Plans, develops, and maintains procedures and systems for assessing the effectiveness of operational and business practices throughout NCA Central Office, Memorial Service Network (MSN) and VA national cemeteries.
- Evaluates processes and makes recommendations for effective organizational changes. Processes are linked to NCA strategic goals and objectives leading to improved mission performance.
- Analyzes management techniques, processes, and styles for opportunities to improve organizational effectiveness. Develops, implements, and evaluates programs to prevent and correct unsatisfactory conditions and elements that influence the regulatory correctness and responsiveness of transactions and services.
- Performs special projects related to the strategic goals of NCA.
- Represents NCA on Departmentwide groups and business process initiatives.

Financial operations/accountability.

- Oversees and manages Governmentwide card programs (purchase cards, fleet cards, etc.) for staff at all levels and all NCA locations by determining appropriate policy, administration, and audit activities to meet facility-specific needs.

- Provides agent cashier functions for NCA field offices that include the deposit and proper accounting of official and unofficial funds for all NCA appropriations, including the NCA Operations and Maintenance Fund and the Agriculture Lease Fund.
- Oversees NCA Cemetery Gift Fund activities, including accepting and spending donated funds and materials. This fund was established in 1989 as a trust fund financed from gifts and bequests from donors.
- Serves as the NCA liaison with the OIG and the Independent Financial Statement Auditors for all financial matters related to NCA audits, and develops NCA-specific remediation activities as necessary.
- Manages and monitors user access and permissions for all NCA-specific transactions in the Centralized Administrative Accounting Transaction System (CAATS), as well as NCA systems administration of Fed Traveler, which is a service to plan, book, track, approve, and request reimbursement for travel services for Federal employees.
- Analyzes and applies NCA-specific internal controls and data on improper payments, financial statements and Government purchase cards.
- Manages the financial aspects of NCA's real property, including financial oversight of construction projects, works in process, asset capitalization, and any financial reporting of deferred maintenance and environmental liabilities.
- Provides formal NCA-specific training program for field staff with financial responsibilities at the NCA Training Center or via distance learning. Develops and maintains NCA-specific financial management systems unique to cemetery operations and memorial benefits. Determines system specifications and software requirements to ensure interconnectivity with the Department's core accounting system and compliance with Federal financial standards.

#### Policy.

- Plans and directs nationwide demonstration programs for managing and improving service delivery, including future projections and management practices, organizational modifications, resource utilization and communication networks.
- As NCA's Chief Financial Officer, contributes to the overall improvement of financial management throughout the Department.
- Conducts organizational analyses, studies, and reviews within NCA to develop operational plans that affect the future needs of the Administration.
- Conducts NCA-wide manpower planning activities, including the development of policies and systems for measuring productivity and evaluating manpower utilization.

#### Strategic and business planning.

- Ensures implementation of the Government Performance and Results Act requirements, including managing strategic and tactical planning processes that set forth the future direction of NCA.
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- Consults with all elements of NCA to develop NCA strategic goals and objectives.
- Consults with other external stakeholders that have a vested interest in NCA programs, such as OMB, congressional committees, state Government officials and VSOs.
- Works with planning officials throughout the Department and other executive branch agencies to ensure NCA strategic and tactical business plans are integrated with the plans of the SECVA and outside entities.
- Determines the strategies and performance measures NCA will employ to achieve its goals and objectives to measure success.
- Defines the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of NCA programs and directs NCA efforts to capture and report needed data utilizing automated information systems and customer survey instruments.

#### Budget formulation/execution.

- Formulates, justifies, and monitors budget requirements, funding, obligations, and expenditures for all NCA programs, including unique requirements related to cemetery operations and maintenance, major and minor cemetery construction projects, capital asset investment, historic properties, grants to states and tribal organizations to establish and maintain Veterans cemeteries, multiple burial benefits as established by Congress (interment, graveliners, outer burial receptacles, headstones, markers, and medallions), and NCA's Gift Fund (separate from VA Gift Fund).

#### Capital and performance budgeting.

- Monitors NCA's capital asset investment budget and plan, which includes construction and maintenance repair projects at the national cemeteries.
- Analyzes, develops, and justifies cemetery expansions and the asset repairs and improvements portion of the VA construction budget.
- Manages NCA's annual review of facility condition assessments.
- Provides NCA-specific data for the VA construction budget related to cemetery expansions and asset repairs and improvements.
- Manages NCA's annual review of facility condition assessments.

#### Budget execution.

- Monitors and tracks the status of NCA operations and maintenance accounts, grants for Veterans cemeteries, benefits such as graveliners, outer burial receptacles, headstones and markers, and the Gift Fund.
- Oversees NCA's nationwide managerial cost accounting function.

#### Congressional relations and legislative development.

- Coordinates the review and analysis of proposed and final legislation related to burial and memorialization, and responses to congressional oversight and inquiries related to NCA unique activities.
- Analyzes new or proposed amendatory legislation affecting NCA programs, providing technical assistance to VA/congressional members as required. Determines the administrative costs of implementing legislative changes.
- Advises NCA senior executives on all congressional and legislative issues. Coordinates and prepares SES staff for testimony on burial benefits and related matters before Congress and briefings to congressional members and staff.
- Develops legislative proposals related to NCA provision of burial benefits.

#### Policy and regulatory development:

- Serves as NCA liaison with the VA Office of General Counsel, provides subject matter expertise and coordinating research, review, and action/advice on all legal issues related to national cemetery operations and memorial and burial benefits for Veterans and dependents.
- Ensures that NCA regulatory analysis, development, and review actions meet the regulatory and rule-making requirements imposed by statutory provisions specific to VA and NCA unique operational functions that affect the public.
- Establishes and maintains NCA's formal policy/procedures publications program that supports all NCA offices/programs by identifying the need for and developing nationwide policy and procedural guidance.
- Plans, develops, executes, and promotes new policies that improve or enhance the completion of the NCA mission.

#### Internal controls and reporting.

- Develops processes and mechanisms that ensure NCA can assess, report, and improve compliance with VA and Federal internal controls reporting.
- Conducts regular evaluations of NCA's internal controls systems and provides reports, findings, and recommendations to NCA's CFO.
- Reports, internal audits, and internal abatement plans are conducted to ensure compliance with the Federal Managers Financial Integrity Act.
- Serves as the NCA subject matter expert and liaison with the OIG and the GAO to determine appropriate NCA actions for all matters related to studies, audits, and investigations involving NCA programs and functions, and ensures that NCA action plans and other required follow-on actions are completed and reported in a timely manner.

#### Program evaluation.

- Identifies the need for and directs the accomplishment of special studies and investigations that report on the status and effectiveness of burial and memorial benefits and services
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provided by NCA, the impact of external public and private activities and conditions on burial and memorial services and benefits, and the effect of burial and memorial services and benefits on other Federal, state and local activities.

- Evaluates burial and memorial programs and operations for quality and effectiveness, and proposes development, coordination, and implementation of new or revised programs or policies that are specific to the delivery of burial and memorial benefits and services.

Demographic analysis.

- Conducts statistical research to develop demographic characteristics of Veterans and their dependents to serve as the basis for recommendations for optimum locations of proposed national cemeteries.
- Directs, develops, and produces recurring and special statistical and management reports covering all facets of NCA unique operations to include analyses of interment activities, gravesite usage, acreage usage and other cemetery performance data.
- Serves as the Systems Administrator for the NCA management decision and support system that ensures the accuracy and integrity of workload and performance information.

#### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. 2306

38 U.S.C. Chapter 24

38 CFR Parts 38-39

OMB Circular A-123

### **5.3 Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Management**

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Ensures effective and efficient administration of NCA management and communications functions (e.g., executive correspondence, human resources, employee development, and training, emergency preparedness).

- Oversees NCA's correspondence program and acts as NCA primary point of contact with the VA's Office of the Executive Secretariat on matters concerning executive correspondence management.
  - Develops and implements policy and procedures for the Central Office and various facilities around the country (e.g., Memorial Service Networks, Memorial Processing Sites and national cemeteries) concerning standards, timeliness, and processing of correspondence.
  - Manages NCA's delegation of signature authorities for statutory and regulatory actions that USMA and NCA staff are authorized to make.
  - Administers and manages all delegated human resources authorities, including activities associated with NCA-unique employment requirements affecting recruitment and
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placement; position classification and management; employee and labor relations; and benefits administration.

- Monitors, evaluates, and meets NCA obligations to report on HR performance metrics in order to identify trends, address process issues, and improve the HR process within NCA.
- Operates an NCA-specific training program that encompasses all activities performed by NCA staff in locations nationwide, including job functions ranging from manual and/or skilled physical labor to financial management to labor relations to performance and analysis functions.
- Oversees operations of the NCA National Training Center, and through the NCA Chief Learning Officer, provides NCA-specific training for Cemetery Directors, field personnel and VACO personnel to establish uniform operating procedures and standards.
- Establishes, monitors, and administers the NCA nationwide emergency preparedness program to ensure site-specific risks and hazards affecting national cemeteries and office locations are adequately planned.

#### Communications and outreach.

- Oversees the writing of official statements, press releases, speeches, biographies, fact sheets, and other materials for NCA.
- Plans major NCA special ceremonies and activities, such as dedications and groundbreaking ceremonies for the opening of new national cemeteries, and the annual national conference.
- Manages activities of the VA Advisory Committee on Cemeteries and Memorials, such as arranging meetings and presentations, and coordinating the Administration response to Committee recommendations.
- Submits NCA Weekly Cabinet Report to the White House.
- Develops outreach training programs, materials, and displays for presentation at national and regional Funeral Directors' conferences, VSO conferences, and various other stakeholder conferences and meetings.
- Maintains NCA Web site content and monitors social media sites.

#### History program.

- Undertakes and oversees historical research about Administration, cemetery, gravemarking, and cultural resources in response to inquiries from NCA, VA, other Government offices, and the public; develops or reviews content of correspondence, technical studies, exhibits, interpretive signage, and outreach related to the history of NCA and its predecessors; initiates documentation projects about historic resources, including National Register of Historic Places nominations per Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA).
- Maintains the NCA History Collection encompassing textual records, ephemera, a library, architectural, and gravemarking artifacts, maps/drawings, photographs and electronic

media; assures collection contents are properly documented, secured and organized; and develops artifact loan agreements as part of mitigation and educational efforts.

- Manages conservation projects requiring specialized preservation treatments as Contracting Officer's Technical Representative; advises other NCA offices about preservation requirements per Section 106, NHPA; provides NCA historic preservation accomplishments and activities to the VA Federal Preservation Officer for Departmental reporting.
- Produces oral history interviews of senior leadership, long-time employees and other persons of interest whose personal recollections of NCA activities and decision-making serves to complement and enhance the written records.
- Designs and provides training to all levels of NCA about the origins of national cemeteries, monuments, gravemarking, and Veterans, as well as how to identify and preserve historic resources in the cemeteries.

#### Design and construction.

- Oversees and collaborates on cemetery design and construction for all phases and aspects of minor construction and expansion projects in NCA. Authorizes release of funds and increases or adjusts funds based on project deliverables. Negotiates on behalf of VA/NCA in generating proposals regarding land planning, construction of new cemeteries, and the expansion and improvement of established national cemeteries.
- Oversees strategic efforts for systematic expansion of national cemeteries and interment space for eligible Veterans and dependents. Advises NCA senior executives on utilization of appropriate methods to resolve construction-related issues. Serves as a technical resource in developing criteria to the Veterans Cemetery Grants Program and in the establishment, development, and expansion of state and tribal Veterans cemeteries.
- Forecasts planning efforts in land acquisition, fund allocation, construction estimates, project justification, design and construction activities, and environmental compliance. Manages and monitors projects related to the construction program; issues delegation authorities for all minor construction projects.
- Conducts studies and develops operational plans in anticipation of future expansion and construction needs of NCA. Supports NCA strategic planning processes by analyzing plans in order to accomplish construction management requirements.
- Develops and evaluates annual minor construction operating plans, and establishes and monitors milestones and monthly obligation budget target compliance. Supports the capital investment proposal process required for NCA construction in support of the annual VA planning and budget submissions.

#### Contracting services.

- Administers supply, acquisition, and contracting activities in compliance with Federal and VA acquisition regulations to meet the unique needs of NCA's national cemeteries,
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Memorial Service Networks and headquarters elements. Analyzes and evaluates markets for unique supplies and services needed to meet NCA operational needs (such as grounds maintenance for cemeteries that are several hundred acres in size, outer burial receptacles or crypts, headstones, markers, and medallions production and delivery), develops procurement sources, and maintains relations with vendors. Advises NCA staff on planning, developing, and implementing statements of work, specifications, and strategies for standardization of items used at multiple locations and consolidated buys.

- Coordinates implementation of legislation and executive orders affecting national cemetery operations related to energy conservation, recycling, “greening the Government” and related initiatives to ensure full NCA compliance.
- Assures SECVA’s goals are met in regard to small and Veteran-owned businesses.

Information technology and records management.

- Ensures development of systems necessary to support NCA-specific programs and missions, and advises NCA officials on system specifications, installation, and modifications to ensure appropriate information resources are available. Ongoing efforts include (1) the electronic Burial Operations Support System/Automated Monument Application System that supports real-time eligibility determinations, interment scheduling, and ordering of headstones and markers, and serves as the official permanent record of interment for all individuals receiving interment or memorialization benefits, (2) the Management and Decision Support System used to track detailed cemetery workload and administrative data, (3) placement of information kiosks in all VA national cemeteries, and (4) the Nationwide Gravesite Locator.
- Advises and provides technical advice and guidance to NCA senior management and other Federal and state agencies, such as DoD, Arlington National Cemetery and various state Veterans’ cemeteries, on new data management systems for future needs. Evaluates automated equipment resources and use at all NCA locations to plan appropriate procurement and maintenance activities to ensure timely and effective operation of NCA functions and provision of NCA-administered benefits.
- Ensures that NCA management and staff in all locations plans for and complies with Federal and VA requirements, policies, and procedures concerning records management and access to records under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts.

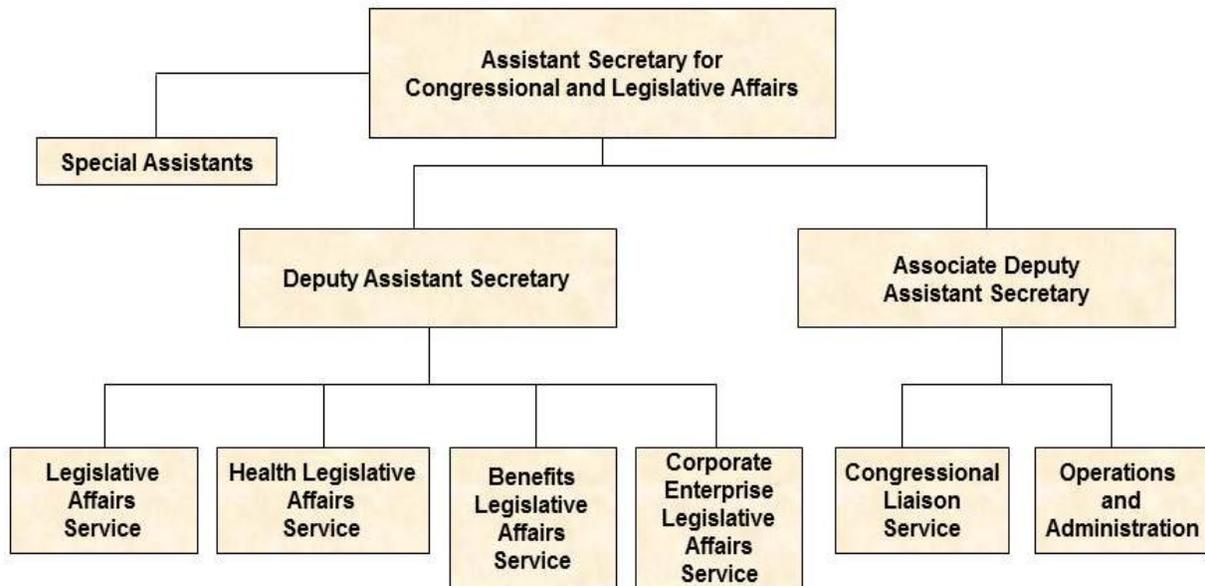
### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. 2306

38 U.S.C. Chapter 24

38 CFR Parts 38-39

## 6 OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CONGRESSIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS (OCLA)



### Mission Statement

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs' (OCLA) mission is to improve the lives of Veterans and their families by advancing pro-Veteran legislation and maintaining responsive and effective communications with Congress.

### Overview

OCLA coordinates the Department's activities with Congress. It is the Department's focal point for interactions and engagements with members of Congress, authorization committees, and personal staff. Additionally, the Office is the Department's liaison with the Government Accountability Office (GAO). OCLA also provides administrative and management support to the Department's advisory committees. VA's 24 advisory committees solicit advice and recommendations from outside experts and the public concerning programs for which the Department is responsible for by law.

### Functions and Tasks

Coordinates the Department of Veterans Affairs' relations and activities with Congress.

- Maintains responsive communications with Congress through briefings, hearings, correspondence, reports, site visits, requests for information, and other requested services from members of Congress.
- Develops and executes the Department's legislative strategy.
- Manages the Department's involvement in congressional hearings.
- Leads the preparation for hearings and briefings on oversight matters and legislation.

- Provides advice, prepares and accompanies VA personnel in meetings with members of Congress, congressional committees or staff.

Develops legislative priorities and monitors and champions them before Congress.

- Coordinates the development of Veteran legislation to benefit Veterans and improve the operations and efficiency of the Department.
- Coordinates requests for the views and technical support of the Department on pending or proposed legislation.
- Manages the Department's Title 38 congressionally mandated reports process.
- Advises VA senior leadership, in coordination with program office and legal staff, on legislative matters.

Provides congressional liaison support to members of Congress and staff.

- Maintains liaison offices in Senate and House office buildings.
- Receives and processes member requests for assistance with constituent and policy inquiries.
- Receives, resolves, and responds to Veteran case inquiries from congressional offices.

Serves as the Department's liaison with the GAO, monitoring GAO activities affecting VA and Veterans.

- Notifies Department of all GAO engagements.
- Prepares responses to GAO draft and final reports, and ensures responses are provided to GAO in a timely manner.
- Keeps VA leadership apprised of GAO recommended implementations.

Provides administrative and management support for VA's advisory committees.

- Responsible for the oversight and management of VA's 24 advisory committees.
- Ensures compliance with advisory committee regulations.
- Provides administrative support to advisory committee leadership.

### **Authorities**

Title 38 Part I, Chapter 3

## **6.1 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CONGRESSIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**

### **Functions and Tasks**

The Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs is responsible for the oversight of four directorates, each focused on functional areas aligned with the Department's Administrations and Staff Offices, initiatives or major portfolios: health, benefits,

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legislative and corporate enterprise. The directorates focus on policy and legislative issues correlated to their functional areas and work with the respective program offices to support the SECVA's legislative agenda and priorities, congressional requests for information, and other related actions.

#### Legislative Affairs Service.

- Establishes goals, objectives, and priorities for the Legislative Affairs Service.
- Develops legislative priorities, monitors, and champions them before Congress.
- Coordinates the development of Veteran legislation to benefit Veterans and improve the operations and efficiency of the Department.
- Coordinates requests for the views and technical support of the Department on pending or proposed legislation.
- Manages VA participation in, and leads preparation for, legislative hearings.
- Manages the Department's Title 38 congressionally mandated reports process.
- Provides advice for, prepares and accompanies VA personnel in meetings with Members of Congress, congressional committees or staff regarding legislative matters.
- Provides strategic and policy advice to the Assistant Secretary of Congressional and Legislative Affairs regarding legislative matters.

#### Health Legislative Affairs Service.

- Establishes goals, objectives, and priorities for the Health Legislative Affairs Service.
- Develops health legislative priorities and monitors and champions them before Congress.
- Plans and executes proactive briefings to Veteran-focused congressional committees, as well as the entire House and Senate.
- Encourages and facilitates relationship building with congressional and intra-departmental staff concerning Veterans health activities and initiatives.
- Obtains information from Congress to assist the Department in preparing for congressional engagements.
- Contributes to the Department's Title 38 congressionally mandated reports process.
- Provides advice for, prepares, and accompanies VA personnel in meetings with Members of Congress, congressional committees or staff.
- Responds to congressional inquiries and requests for information.
- Plans, supports, and accompanies Members of Congress and committee staff on approved travel.
- Prepares senior VA officials to testify before Congress, and coordinates VA's message to Congress, identifying key points and risk areas.
- Coordinates VA's review of hearing transcripts and VA's responses to hearing questions for the record.

#### Benefits Legislative Affairs Service.

- Establishes goals, objectives, and priorities for the Benefits Legislative Affairs Service.
- Develops Veterans benefit legislative priorities and monitors and champions them before Congress.
- Encourages and facilitates benefits team relationship building with congressional and intradepartmental staff.
- Obtains information from Congress to assist the Department in preparing for congressional engagements. Manages congressional expectations to reflect realistic VA capabilities.
- Contributes to the Department's Title 38 congressionally mandated reports process.
- Provides advice for, prepares, and accompanies VA personnel in meetings with Members of Congress, congressional committees or staff.
- Responds to congressional inquiries and requests for information.
- Plans, supports and accompanies congressional Members and committee staff on approved travel.
- Prepares senior VA officials to testify before Congress. Coordinates VA's message to Congress, identifying key points and risk areas.
- Coordinates VA's review of hearing transcripts and VA's responses to hearing questions for the record.

#### Corporate Enterprise Legislative Affairs Service.

- Establishes goals, objectives, and priorities for the Corporate Enterprise Legislative Affairs Service.
- Develops corporate enterprise legislative priorities and monitors and champions them before Congress.
- Encourages and facilitates team relationship building with congressional and intra-departmental staff.
- Obtains information from Congress to assist the Department in preparing for congressional engagements.
- Contributes to the Department's Title 38 congressionally mandated reports process.
- Provides advice for, prepares, and accompanies VA personnel in meetings with Members of Congress, congressional committees or staff.
- Responds to congressional inquiries and requests for information.
- Plans, supports, and accompanies Members of Congress and committee staff on approved travel.
- Prepares senior VA officials to testify before Congress. Coordinates VA's message to Congress, identifying key points and risk areas.
- Coordinates VA's review of hearing transcripts and VA's responses to hearing questions for the record.

- Provides liaison services between senior Department officials on VA programs, policies, and legislation affecting the Department.

Serves as the Department's liaison with the GAO, monitoring GAO activities affecting VA and Veterans.

- Notifies Department of all GAO engagements.
- Prepares responses to GAO draft and final reports, and ensures that responses to GAO are provided in a timely manner.
- Keeps VA leadership apprised of GAO recommendation implementations.

### **Authorities**

Title 38 Part I, Chapter 3

## **6.2 OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CONGRESSIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**

### **Functions and Tasks**

The Office of the Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs is responsible for the business and congressional liaison functions of the office, including office operations and administration and the congressional liaison offices and staff functions located on Capitol Hill. There are two director-level reports: Director of Operations and the Director of Congressional Liaison Service.

Congressional Liaison Service.

- Provides congressional liaison support to Members of Congress and staff.
- Maintains liaison offices in Senate and House office buildings.
- Receives, processes, and resolves Member requests for assistance with constituent and policy inquiries.
- Receives and responds to Veteran case inquiries from congressional staffers in both Washington, DC, and district offices.
- Supports hearing preparation by providing accurate and timely information.
- Provides advanced notifications for SECVA, DEPSECVA, and COS travel.
- Provides administrative and operational support for Departmental activities on Capitol Hill.

Director of Operations (Executive Assistant).

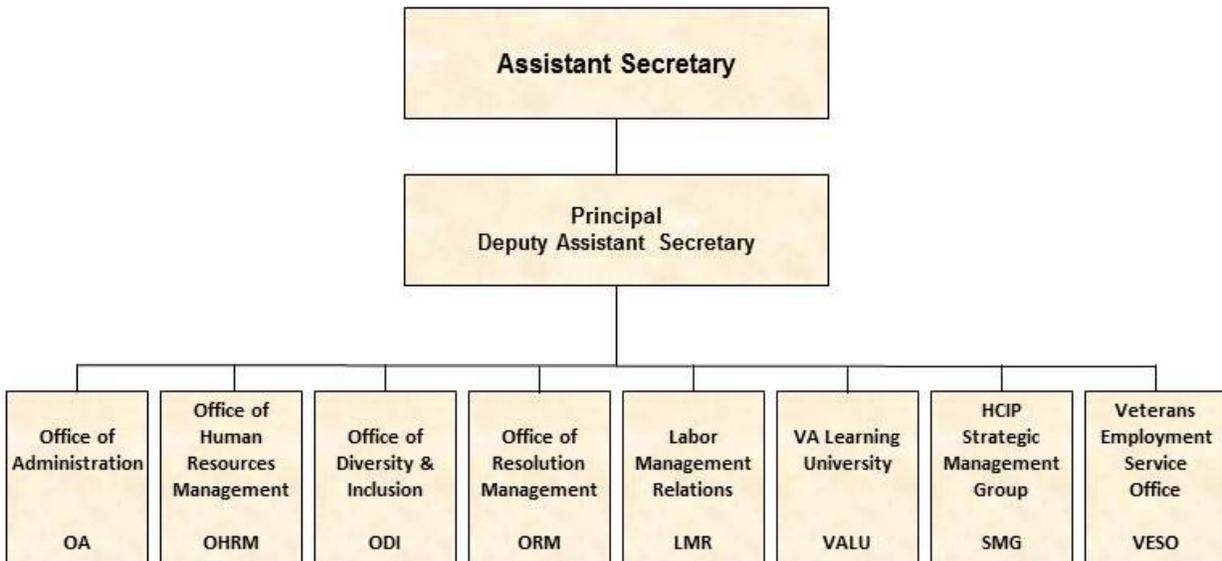
- Provides the Assistant Secretary with objective, independent assessments and recommendations regarding policy, initiatives, and program issues requiring the Assistant Secretary's decision and action.
- Provides front office management and operational continuity throughout the organization.

- Provides assessment, recommendations, and assistance to the Assistant Secretary, Deputy Assistance Secretary, and Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary in all phases of Veterans legislation and daily activities.
- Performs and oversees special studies and projects for the Assistant Secretary.
- Oversees completion of assignments from OSVA and other internal VA offices.
- Provides readiness support for the office.
- Oversees day-to-day activities of administrative staff assigned to OCLA.
- Processes executive correspondence/concurrence actions.
- Manages the Office's Congressional Knowledge Management System.

**Authorities**

Title 38 Part I Chapter 3

## 7 OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCE ADMINISTRATION (OHRA)



### Mission Statement

The mission of the Office of Human Resource Administration is to lead human capital management strategies, policies, and practices that cultivate an engaged, proficient, and diverse workforce to transform and continually improve services to Veterans and their eligible beneficiaries.

### Functions and Tasks

Provides exceptional human resources (HR) strategic consultation and guidance.

- Develops, disseminates, and maintains Departmentwide HR policy and guidance.
- Leads Departmentwide human capital planning, accountability, and merit system compliance.
- Administers the Employee Wellness Program.
- Implements and manages the Telework Program.
- Manages the Child Care Subsidy Program.
- Implements hiring reform.
- Implements and manages USAStaffing.
- Implements and manages e-Classification.
- Implements and manages Knowledge Management programs.
- Provide HR services for VACO organizations.

Supports VA's mission and business objectives through high-quality, cost-effective continuous learning and development that enhances leadership, occupational proficiencies and personal growth.

- Develops strategic leaders.
- Enhances occupational skills that contribute to organizational performance.
- Manages VA Nonclinical Training Evaluation and Accreditation.
- Operates and sustains state-of-art learning delivery systems, tools, and applications.
- Tracks performance and manages the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Evaluation (PPBE) Process within OHRA.
- Develops and manages outreach (communications) to the VA.

Provides timely and accurate labor relations support in order to further the mission to care for Veterans and eligible beneficiaries.

- Establishes a positive and effective labor-management relations (LMR) program.
- Plans and formulates policies and procedures for VA's LMR program.
- Provides LMR education and training at all levels.
- Appraises effectiveness of the VA LMR program and makes policy changes as required.
- Liaises with national headquarters of labor organizations and represents VA in national-level negotiations and consultations.
- Represents VA before the Federal Labor Relations Authority and the Federal Service Impasses Panel (FSIP) on LMR matters.

Fosters a diverse workforce and an inclusive work environment that ensures equal opportunity through national policy development, workforce analysis, outreach, retention, and education.

- Supports Departmentwide diversity, inclusion training, and communication.
- Supports Departmentwide outreach and retention.
- Supports Departmentwide workforce analysis.

Promotes a discrimination-free work environment focused on serving Veterans by preventing, resolving, and processing workplace disputes in a timely manner.

- Ensures managers and employees understand the characteristics of a discrimination-free work environment in order to prevent allegations of discrimination.
- Provides consultative services and resources for resolution of workplace disputes and equal employment opportunity (EEO) complaints.
- Manages and implements an efficient and effective EEO complaint process from EEO counseling through the completion of EEO investigation.

Provides innovative and forward-looking fiscal investment planning, programming, and budget execution (PPBE) oversight for the entire HRA organization.

- Develops annual HRA fiscal year operations plans.

- Provides program and project management oversight, financial tracking and budgetary oversight, and contracting and acquisitions support of HRA/Human Capital Investment Plan (HCIP).
- Reports progress of HRA/HCIP to VA leadership.
- Leads HCIP program transition to sustainment.
- Manages post-HCIP MIs as operational programs.

## **7.1 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION**

### **Overview**

The Office of Administration (O/A) provides support services to VACO organizations and employees. Local services include audiovisual, transportation, personal property, space management, mail, operation of the VACO building, as well as administrative support to all VACO employees in satellite locations. Nationwide, O/A oversees the Department's Occupational Safety and Health, and Worker's Compensation programs; provides guidance and assistance to facilities with their audiovisual needs; oversight and responsibility in the transit benefit program; the processing of executive correspondence (White House bulk mail); and protocol matters affecting the VA.

### **Functions and Tasks**

Office of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH).

- Manages VA's OSH and Workers Compensation (WC) programs nationwide. Provides oversight of the VA's OSH programs, development of education and administrative programs that enhance workplace safety and health, WC case management, and liaises between VA and other organizations for OSH and WC matters.
- Oversees VA's OSH and WC programs in support of VA's Designated Agency Safety and Health Office (DASHO). The Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration serves as the DASHO.
- Provides education and administrative programs to enhance workplace safety and health and appropriate WC case management.
- Represents the DASHO as Chair of VA's Safety Steering and the Workers' Compensation Steering committees, which facilitates communication and dialogue.
- Encourages the creation and establishment of new Departmentwide programs, such as the Pharmacy Benefits Program, to benefit VA employees and reduce costs to VA.
- Oversees resolutions of safety and WC issues.

Transit Benefit Program.

- Directs VA Transit Benefit Program policy nationwide.
- Coordinates application submission and fare media distribution nationwide. Directly oversees fare media distribution in the National Capitol Region (NCR).

- Conducts periodic nationwide audits. Provides advice and recommendations to field transit managers and administrators on cases of fraud and abuse.
- Serves as Contracting Officer's Technical Representative for the contract with the Department of Transportation (DOT) for nationwide fare media distribution.
- Implements fare increases and program operational changes in the NCR through the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, DOT and VACO Organizational Transit managers.

#### Office of Protocol.

- Provides direct support to the Office of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs in coordination of events and special meetings.
- Provides support and protocol services to executive leadership at VACO-supported events.
- Maintains an official gift program for the SECVA and DEPSECVA to present to foreign and domestic dignitaries.
- Provides advice and guidance to the VACO and field facilities on protocol matters.

#### Space and Renovation Service.

- Responsible for all electrical work, painting, construction, and related alterations work in VACO space.
- Responsible for all of the Steelcase workstations, conventional furniture, and seating in the VACO building. Services include cleaning, repairs, replacement, reconfigurations, modifications, and new purchases.
- Provides appropriate signs.
- Manages the space needs of VACO organizations within the NCR and the space inventory. This includes leasing additional space and renewing leases through General Services Administration (GSA).

#### Facilities Service.

- Oversees the GSA contract for buildings management in VACO, including interior and exterior building maintenance and janitorial services (mold remediation, elevator repairs and maintenance), recycling program, conference room scheduling, lock and key control, exterior signage, and VACO safety monitoring.
- Administers Emergency Preparedness Program for VACO and provides emergency support to VACO campus facilities, which includes continuity of operations planning (COOP), emergency liaison for VACO, and VACO operations status telephone number with 24-hour availability to employees.
- Provides simplified acquisition services (up to \$150,000 in value) for VACO procurement of goods and services in support of VA's socioeconomic procurement goals.

- Serves on the Board of Directors for U.S. Kids Child Development Center (the primary daycare center for VACO parents) in association with the Department of Justice, Office of the White House, Department of Treasury, and the Export-Import Bank.
- Operates the Client Service Center (VACO).
- Provides records management support, oversight and guidance, including set-up, close-out, and disposition (packaging, shredding, archiving) of official records and files.

#### Support Service.

- Manages the subsidized parking program, coordinates parking spaces in local garages, serves as COTR and conducts quarterly audits between transit benefit program and VACO subsidized parking program.
- Oversees the Interagency Agreement with Federal Occupational Health, which includes six health units, the VACO fitness center and the Employee Assistance Program Counseling.
- Property Management Division oversees VACO's asset management program (equipment inventory listing of nonexpendable non-IT property); assigns survey officers/board for lost, stolen or damaged property; manages accountability and control of VACO non-IT assets from acquisition through disposal; and property passes; transportation support; processes White House/executive correspondence, mail operations, warehouse operations (receiving) and labor support.
- Media Services Division provides audiovisual, photography, graphics/exhibit design and video support for VACO organizations.

#### **Authorities**

P.L. 103-3

5 U.S.C. 8101, et seq.

VA Directive 5810

P.L. 91-956

E.O. 12196, Sect. 2-201 (c)

Title 29 CFR 1960.6 (a)

VA Directive 7700 3 a (2).

Presidential POWER Initiative: Protecting Our Workers and Ensuring Reemployment (FR Doc. 2010-18176)

VA Directive/Handbook 0633

E.O. 13150

P.L. 103-172

5 U.S.C. 7905

Title 18 U.S.C. 1001

26 U.S.C. 132(f)(2)

Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR)

VA Directive/Handbook 7002, 7002-1

VA Directive/Handbook 7240, 7241

VA Directive 6103  
VA Directive/Handbook 6301  
VA Directive 6340  
VA Directive 6609  
FMR Subchapter B  
FMR Subchapter G  
FAR Part 13  
VA Acquisitions Regulation  
Federal Code Regulation  
OMB Circular A-11  
5 CFR  
VA Handbook 5011  
Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA)  
VA Directive 7700, 7710  
NSPD -51 National Continuity Policy  
HSPD 20 National Continuity Policy  
41 CFR PART 102-74  
NARA Directive 1571  
FMR Subchapter C  
FMR Subchapter G  
FMR Subchapter C, Real Property  
FMR Subchapter B, 102-42

## **7.2 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (OHRM)**

### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) provides exceptional human resources, strategic consultation and guidance to customers enabling VA to attract, recruit, develop and retain high-performing employees resulting in quality services to Veterans and their families.

### **Functions and Tasks**

Develops, disseminates, and maintains Departmentwide HR policy and guidance.

- Develops directives, handbooks, human resources management letters and other guidance on all HR functional areas, including employee relations, performance management, compensation, classification, hours of duty and leave, benefits, accountability systems, etc., based on new public laws and regulations.
- Negotiates new or revised HR policies with labor unions as appropriate.
- Consults with other organizations (such as VHA) to determine HR policy needs.
- Conducts training on major new policy initiatives as necessary.

- Provides timely guidance to field HR community on monthly HR conference calls and through e-mails, flyers, notices, etc.
- Maintains current policies and guidance on the OHRM Web site.

Leads Departmentwide human capital strategic planning.

- Develops and maintains Human Capital Strategic Plan.
- Publishes VA's annual Human Capital Management Report (HCMR) as required by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to better understand the state of human capital management in the Federal Government.
- Identifies VA-wide workforce planning needs.
- Builds workforce planning capabilities that may be leveraged throughout VA to inform decision-making.
- Establishes and maintains HR communities of practice in support of knowledge sharing and generation of ideas to improve HR products and services.

Provides leadership for VA Human Capital Accountability and Merit System compliance.

- Assesses the effectiveness of Departmentwide HR programs and policies.
- Conducts onsite evaluations of field HR programs and reports findings to Administrations.
- Identifies examples of excellence in HR programs, procedures, and policies that can be shared within VA.

Administers Employee Wellness Program.

- Develops and provides educational materials to all VA employees.
- Provides 24-hour access to health information, education seminars, challenges, and coaching.
- Improves absenteeism rate.
- Increases employee awareness of health risk behaviors.

Implements and manages Telework Program.

- Increases telework in the Department.
- Implements revised telework policy.
- Determines eligibility of employees to telework.
- Revises telework indicator codes.
- Updates employee telework indicator codes in PAID system.

Manages Child Care Subsidy Program.

- Automates records processing.
- Expands coverage to regulated child care providers.
- Simplifies enrollment process.

- Increases customer satisfaction.

#### Implements Hiring Reform.

- Improves the recruitment and hiring process.
- Streamlines job opportunity announcements.
- Eliminates narrative essay questions.
- Strengthens recruitment outreach.
- Involves managers and supervisors in the hiring process.

#### Implements and manages USAStaffing.

- Implements a Web-based recruitment and hiring solution.
- Issues user licenses.
- Implements category rating.
- Trains USAStaffing users.
- Trains managers and supervisors.

#### Implements and manages e-Classification.

- Customizes VA position classification system.
- Automates position classification.
- Increases consistency of position levels across VA organizations to promote pay equity.
- Increases compliance with OPM classification standards.
- Conducts Web-based training.

#### Implements and manages Knowledge Management programs.

- Establishes a collaborative knowledge sharing environment.
- Catalogs HR knowledge across HR community.
- Establishes communities of practice.
- Implements and manages HR Academy.
- Develops curriculum.

#### Provides HR services for VACO.

- Provides classification, recruitment, employee and labor management, and performance management services.
- Provides strategic consulting services for managers.
- Provides HR transactional processing, including maintenance of personnel files.
- Provides HR information management systems support VA-wide.

**Authorities**

Chief Human Capital Officers Act of 2002

P.L. 107-296

Title 5 U.S.C. §§1401 and 1402

Title 5 U.S.C. § 512

**7.3 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (ODI)****Mission Statement**

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) fosters a diverse workforce and an inclusive work environment that ensures equal opportunity through national policy development, workforce analysis, outreach, retention, and education to best serve our Nation's Veterans.

**Overview**

ODI advises and supports the Assistant Secretary for HRA in workforce diversity and workplace inclusion issues. The office also supports the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Under Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries in their actions to achieve and sustain a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace.

**Functions and Tasks**

Develops training and communications programs pertaining to EEO, diversity, and inclusion.

- Produces standard and customized diversity and inclusion training, and assesses impact of learning on organizational performance.
- Delivers strategic diversity and inclusion communications.
- Manages and provides administrative support for the VA Diversity Council to address cross-cutting initiatives, and produces and disseminates communications products.
- Provides consultative services and integrates organizational development initiatives.
- Issues annual updates to policy statements and directives, and VA's Strategic Plan.

Develops and monitors outreach and retention initiatives and programs.

- Creates and disseminates affirmative employment policies and provides consultant services for managers of VA Special Emphasis Program (e.g., Hispanic Employment Program, Black Employment Program, Disability Employment Program).
- Develops consolidated VA-wide reports for Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Programs (FEORP) and reports on reasonable accommodations and people with targeted disabilities for the White House and the OPM.
- Performs barrier analyses (a process of reviewing VA's policies and procedures to identify and eliminate impediments in selection, promotion, recruitment, and retention of protected class individuals) in conjunction with the Workforce Analysis Team, and develops barrier

statements and action plans for the VA MD 715 Equal Employment Opportunity Plan/Report.

- Promotes the Diversity Intern Program and coordinates the Workforce Recruitment Program for college students with disabilities, and provides funding for both programs.
- Announces and promotes special emphasis program events and initiatives while supporting affinity groups at national conferences.
- Tracks reasonable accommodation requests and provides the funding.
- Develops consolidated VA-wide outreach plans and reports for the White House, OPM, and the EEOC.

Analyzes trends in workforce characteristics and demographics, and workforce transactions (e.g., hiring, retirement, separations).

- Performs statistical analyses of workforce data to identify triggers leading to barrier analysis, and establishes strategies and guidance for assessing and minimizing or eliminating the identified barriers to equal opportunity in VA workforce.
- Provides technical assistance and training, and creates analytical applications for managers and supervisors to evaluate diversity initiatives.
- Develops additional diversity and inclusion metrics, and prepares ad hoc analysis and reports for Staff Offices.
- Facilitates the collection, analysis, and publication of information for the Department's annual MD 715 report.

### **Authorities**

5 U.S.C. 7201

5 CFR Part 720, Subpart B

E.O. 13171

EEOC Management Directive 715

E.O. 13515

5 CFR Part 720, Subpart C

E.O. 13270

E.O. 13532

VA Directive 5975, 5975.1

E.O. 13583

## **7.4 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR RESOLUTION MANAGEMENT**

### **Mission Statement**

Office of Resolution Management's mission is to promote a discrimination-free work environment focused on serving Veterans by preventing, resolving, and processing workplace disputes in a timely and high-quality manner.

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**Overview**

The Office of Resolution Management (ORM) is responsible for the timely processing of complaints of employment discrimination filed by VA employees, former employees, and applicants for employment. ORM accomplishes its responsibilities through a network of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) professionals, which include full-time EEO counselors and investigators. ORM is also responsible for managing the Department's alternative dispute resolution (ADR) program.

**Functions and Tasks**

Prevention of workplace disputes and EEO complaints.

- Offers programs that ensure employees and managers understand the characteristics of a healthy work environment and have the tools to prevent and effectively manage workplace disputes and allegations of discrimination.

Early resolution of workplace disputes and EEO complaints.

- Provides consultative services and resources, such as neutral third-party facilitators, mediators, and coaches, to assist the workforce in resolving workplace disputes and EEO complaints. ORM has been designated as the lead organization for workplace ADR within VA.
- Offers Resolution Support Center to inform and discuss options for resolving workplace disputes and offers advice to managers on issues that often lead to EEO complaints.

Efficient and effective processing of EEO complaints.

- ORM provides EEO discrimination complaint processing services to VA employees, applicants for employment and former employees. These services include counseling, investigation, and procedural final agency decisions. ADR is encouraged through all phases of the complaint process.
- Develops programs to improve the overall management of EEO discrimination complaint processing services within VA.
- Designs and delivers training for employees, managers, and supervisors on the EEO complaint process, conflict management, and ADR.
- Ensures VA compliance with final decisions on EEO complaints and settlement agreements, and fully investigates claims for compensatory damages. It is also responsible for the preparation of Federally and congressionally mandated reports, such as the No FEAR Act and the Senior Managers Report.
- Coordinates the receipt and referral of allegations of discrimination raised by Veterans with respect to Federally conducted or Federally assisted programs and activities under Title VI and Title IX of the Civil Rights Act, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

**Authorities**

P.L. 105-114

P.L. 107-174

29 CFR 1614

EEOC Management Directive 110

Administrative Dispute Resolution Act

VA Directive 5977

VA Directive 5978

38 CFR 15.170

**7.5 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS****Mission Statement**

The mission of the Office of Labor-Management Relations (LMR) is to provide timely and accurate labor-management relations support to our VA clients in order to further the Department's broad mission to care for Veterans and VA beneficiaries.

**Functions and Tasks**

Executes a positive and effective LMR program at all levels of the Department.

- Assigns LMR specialists to geographic locations for complete Department coverage to promote cooperation among employees, unions, and managers.
- Advises customers on resolving and preventing grievances, unfair labor practices, and other labor litigation.
- Co-chairs the VA National Partnership Council, which advises the SECVA on initiatives that impact employees, and serves as an exemplary partnership council to promote cooperative LMR across the Department.
- Recognizes local labor-management partnership successes in areas such as cost saving, increased productivity, better working conditions for VA employees, and improved health care services to Veterans.
- Promptly and accurately responds to labor-relations questions from Central Office, facility management, and HR offices, including questions on the interpretation of national collective bargaining agreements, labor statute, and related case law.

Promulgates and interprets Department policies and procedures for the VA LMR program.

- Evaluates VA Directives, handbooks, program guides, information letters, or other policy issuance to determine whether a bargaining obligation or notification is triggered.
- Advises policy subject matter experts of obligations resulting from new policy initiatives and acts as a liaison during the notification and negotiation process with national union representatives.

- Provides policy notifications for information-only or bargaining to national union representatives.
- Maintains VA Handbook 5023.

Provides LMR education and training at all levels.

- Increases the amount of information and guidance available on the LMR Web site.
- Increases the quantity and quality of training modules available to all VA employees on the Talent Management System Web site.
- Develops labor-management master agreement training for VHA, VBA, and NCA facilities.
- Develops E.O. 13522 training in partnership with the Federal Labor Relations Authority.
- Develops 38 U.S.C. 7422 training to ensure knowledge, understanding, and consistent use of the statute.

Appraises the effectiveness of the VA LMR program throughout the Department.

- Makes site visits to gather data and evaluate partnership breakdowns at facilities.
- Ensures compliance within VA of E.O. 13522 through the establishment of labor-management forums.
- Collaborates with National Center for Organization Development (NCOD) to collect data on the implementation of E.O. 13522 regarding labor-management forums and their related metrics.
- Establishes a tracking system for facilities to input data related to 7422 determination requests.

Acts as the liaison with the National Headquarters of Labor Organizations and represents VA in national-level negotiations and consultations, as appropriate, under consolidated unit recognitions or national consultation rights.

- Leads negotiation teams on national collective bargaining agreements that cover approximately 245,000 bargaining unit employees.
- Leads negotiation teams on national mid-term bargaining in response to changes in working conditions for bargaining unit employees.
- Coordinates logistics for term and mid-term bargaining sessions.
- Provides national notification to labor unions on changes to working conditions.
- Responds to national grievances filed by labor unions.

Represents VA before the Federal Labor Relations Authority and the Federal Service Impasses Panel (FSIP) on LMR matters.

- Assists VA OGC in responding to Unfair Labor Practices filed by national labor unions.
- Represents VA in mediation and before the FSIP in national contract negotiations.

**Authorities**

VA Directive 5023

E.O. 13522

38 U.S.C. 7422

**7.6 OFFICE OF THE DEAN VA LEARNING UNIVERSITY (VALU)****Mission Statement**

Veterans Affairs Learning University (VALU) serves the learning needs of dedicated employees who deliver the VA mission.

VALU is VA's corporate university that supports the Department's mission and business objectives through high-quality, cost-effective continuous learning and development that enhances leadership, occupational proficiencies, and personal growth.

**Functions and Tasks**

Develops strategic leaders for a 21st Century VA.

- Develops leadership training through innovative and adaptive technologies.
- Assesses and plans solutions to VA "Strata" and "Breadth of Reach" leadership and supervisory training gaps.
- Designs and implements a fair and equitable leadership selection process.
- Focuses leadership training to accentuate core values.
- Designs and delivers certified, competency-based leadership development program for all levels of employees.
- Develops leaders that have the skills and networks to drive change by managing and supporting their training and development (SES Career Development Program, Leadership VA (LVA), aspiring leaders, Change Academy, Mentoring, and Presidential Management Fellows Program).
- Expands employee referent networks to a structured, online community of practice.

Enhances the skills of employees to contribute to organizational performance.

- Develops and delivers cross-cutting core competency training.
  - Develops and oversees enterprise education and training standards for technical competencies.
  - Builds and maintains an effective career-mapping program.
  - Researches and develops continuous, innovative training to retain and support GenX and Millennial employees.
  - Develops conference-specific technical training plans.
  - Develops and delivers updates to Labor Management Training.
  - Develops and deploys executive and administrative assistant training.
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Manages VA nonclinical training evaluation and accreditation.

- Develops audit and evaluation processes.
- Establishes evaluation standards and standard criteria for continuously evaluating training results.
- Continuously improves evaluation methodologies and processes.
- Establishes an effective accreditation process and develops accreditation standards for VA training.
- Participates in development and production of quantitative data to support HRA initiatives.
- Rolls out VALU Accreditation Program.

Operates and sustains state-of-art learning delivery systems, tools, and applications.

- Researches and pilots social learning for occupational training to support diverse populations.
- Researches and plans for tools and technology necessary to support right-time, right-place training.
- Develops sustainable iContent policy and procedure.
- Supports innovative learning through the Talent Management System (TMS).
- Establishes TMS as the single system of record for learning, education, and training.
- Supports VALU Performance Measurement Collection and Reporting from TMS.

Tracks performance and manages the development and training evaluation/assessment process for HCIP.

- Measures the return on investment for HCIP (ADVANCE).
- Establishes VALU policies and procedures based on standards.
- Develops and refreshes VALU strategy, and develops and assesses VALU metrics.
- Leverages fiscal resources to deliver VALU's mission.
- Manages VALU portfolio of programs, establishes, and maintain SOPs, and administers requirements and governance processes.

Develops and manages outreach (communications).

- Manages, integrates, and implements a VALU communications strategy across VA.
- Develops marketing campaigns to build awareness, inform, and educate VA's workforce on training and development opportunities.

### **Authorities**

Title 5

U.S.C. Chapter 14, 41

VA Directive 5015

VA Handbook 5015-1

## 7.7 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP (SMG)

### **Mission Statement**

The Strategic Management Group (SMG) provides innovative and forward looking HRA fiscal investment planning, programming, and budget execution (PPBE) oversight for the entire HRA organization. Additionally, SMG develops and validates metrics used to assess the performance of HRA in all financial and personnel initiatives and operations.

### **Functions and Tasks**

SMG is responsible for the development of the annual HRA Fiscal Year (FY) Operating Plan, and measures organizational performance against the operating plans and the HRA strategic plan.

- Designs, develops, and manages the annual requirements workshops with each HRA office to develop the HRA sustainment and development operating plans.
- Facilitates requirements development, including cost estimates from each HRA program office, to execute transformational HR changes for VA in support of the VA strategic plan.
- Conducts the annual FY Human Capital Investment Plan (HCIP) portfolio prioritization process. Designs, manages, and leads workshops with HRA senior leadership to refine and adjust HRA budget and investments, including HCIP, to meet budgetary ceiling.
- Evaluates and monitors program/project linkages across HRA to ensure coordination and integration of programs and alignment with the HRA strategic plan.

SMG conducts program and project management oversight for HRA to ensure proper accountability and delivery of services and goods.

- Develops and maintains HRA/HCIP portfolio consolidated master schedule.
- Facilitates bi-weekly project status meetings reviewing the HCIP efforts with HRA program offices, SMG and partnering Government Department ensuring proper oversight and management of HCIP projects.
- SMG Initiative Points of Contacts aligns with each HRA office to provide guidance, mentorship and programmatic evaluations for proper oversight of each HRA/HCIP project.
- Manages and operates the SMG change management process to ensure proper scope, schedule and budget execution of HRA/HCIP programs.
- Reviews contractor/vendor initiative management plans to ensure adherence to project requirements and cost.

SMG is responsible for HRA financial tracking and budgetary oversight, including HCIP.

- Tracks each FY's proposed, adjusted, committed, and obligated HRA/HCIP monies (e.g., contract, payroll, nonpayroll, travel, and other budget categories).
- Develops and manages FY HRA spend plan(s), tracking budgeted and actual expenditures.
- Coordinates with HRA and VA budget/finance representatives to provide monthly, quarterly and FY budget execution/expenditure reports.

SMG manages and provides oversight for HRA contracting and acquisitions efforts.

- Develops and manages FY acquisition plan.
- Coordinates, reviews, and refines procurement inputs from HRA program offices for submission to VA and other Federal Department contracting offices.

SMG coordinates, collates, and manages HRA/HCIP performance reporting to VA leadership.

- Collects, analyzes, and submits data for the VA monthly performance review (MPR).
- Collects, analyses, and submits data for the VA operation management review (OMR).
- Participation and representation of HRA in VA transition synchronization reporting.

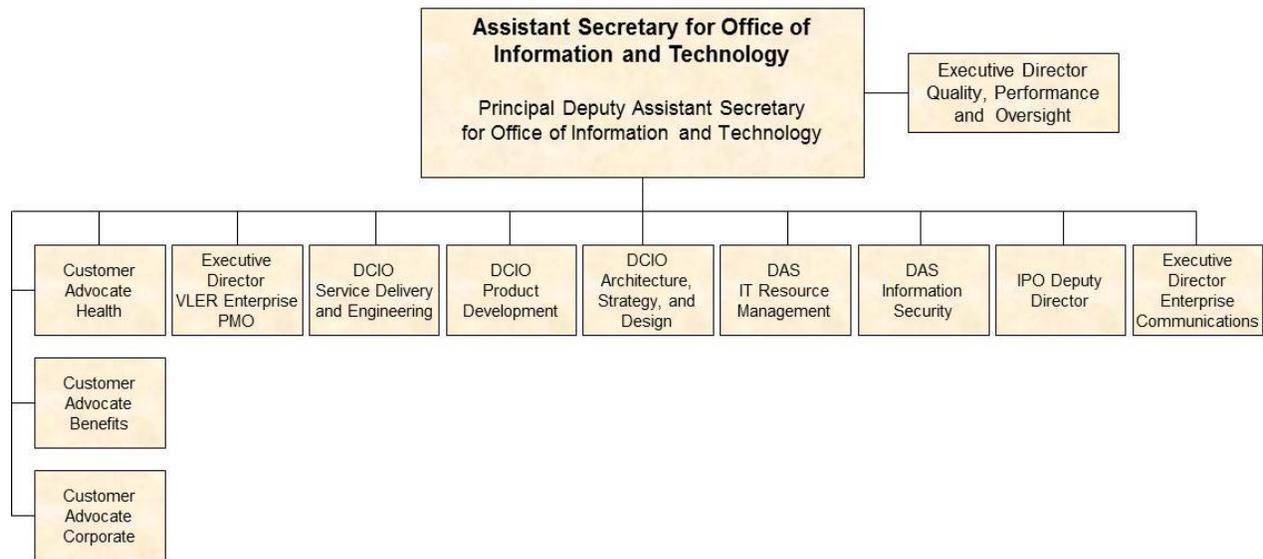
SMG analyzes and develops the HRA path for the HCIP transition to operational sustainment.

- Defines transition readiness criteria and evaluation process.
- Assists strategic sustainment environment planning and programming by HRA functional divisions.
- Facilitates project readiness evaluation workshops.
- Manages post-implementation review evaluation process.

SMG manages post-HCIP MIs as operational programs. The SMG office provides enterprise development and leadership of continuous HRA innovation and transformation.

- Provides PPBE oversight for HRA.
- Coordinates, reviews, and refines procurement inputs from HRA program offices for submission to VA and other Federal Department contracting offices.
- SMG Program Management Office, aligned with HRA offices, provides guidance, mentorship, and programmatic oversight of HRA projects.

## 8 OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (OIT)



### Mission Statement

The mission of the Office of Information Technology (OIT) is to provide and protect information necessary to enable excellence through client and customer service.

### Overview

OIT delivers available, adaptable, secure, and cost-effective technology services to the VA, transforming it into an innovative, 21st Century organization and acts as a steward for all VA's IT assets and resources. OIT delivers the necessary technology and expertise to service Veterans and their families through effective communication and management of people, technology, business processes, and financial processes. The OIT is led by an Assistant Secretary and is composed of nine organizational elements: Quality, Performance & Oversight (QPO), IT Information Security (OIS), IT Resource Management (ITRM), Architecture, Strategy and Design (ASD), Product Development (PD), Service, Delivery and Engineering (SDE), Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER), Interagency Program Office (IPO), Enterprise communications, and customer advocates.

### 8.1 OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Quality, Performance & Oversight.

The office of QPO serves as advisor to the Assistant Secretary of Information Technology (AS/IT) on a wide range of complex and sensitive issues which cross organizational boundaries within the Department, and interfaces with external agencies, such as Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Government Accountability Office (GAO), Office of Inspector General (OIG) and Congress. The oversight component includes IT oversight and compliance, which is charged with Departmentwide compliance in the areas of Privacy, Records Management, Information Physical Security and Cyber Security.

#### Information Security.

OIS assures the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information and information systems, and works on matters related to information protection, including privacy, cyber security, risk management, records management, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), incident response, critical infrastructure protection, and business continuity. The office develops, implements, and oversees the policies, procedures, training, communication, and operations related to improving how the VA and its partners safeguard the personally identifiable information (PII) of Veterans and VA employees.

#### IT Resource Management.

ITRM links the budget planning, formulation, and execution processes with IT programs, as well as directing IT financial management, workforce development, acquisition strategies, facilities management, customer relationship management, and vendor management activities within OIT.

#### Architecture, Strategy, and Design.

The Office of ASD creates standards for implementation of IT solutions that best serve Veterans through the integration of technical, business, and data architecture, systems design, forward thinking IT strategy, and knowledge management, while exercising proper stewardship of resources and maintaining transparent operations.

#### Product Development.

The Office of PD is the Chief advisor to the AS/IT for all enterprise application development activities. Development consists of planning, developing (or acquiring), and testing applications that meet business requirements. It provides day-to-day direction and overall solutions developed by OIT for VA business units.

#### Service, Delivery and Engineering.

The Office of SDE directs all operational and maintenance activities associated with VA's IT environment on behalf of the Assistant Secretary. It oversees and manages the VA regional data centers, the IT network, and telecommunications; monitors production for all information systems and production services; delivers operations services (including deployment, maintenance, monitoring and support) to all VA geographic locations, and conducts all private branch exchange management and maintenance.

#### Office of Enterprise Communications.

The Office of Enterprise Communications (OEC) has the responsibility for all voice, data, and video systems, as well as network transport. Within this oversight, OEC monitors and manages the network down to the "facility edge," and is responsible for the budget, capacity planning, and

design (in conjunction with Enterprise Systems Engineering) of all communications systems and infrastructure enterprisewide.

Enterprise Program Management Office (ePMO) – Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record.  
The ePMO is responsible for development of office of the VLER.

Interagency Program Office – Integrated Electronic Health Record.

The VA/DoD IPO was established by the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008. This body serves as the single point of oversight and accountability for the Department in the development and implementation of the iEHR and VLER systems, capabilities, and initiatives with the goal of full interoperability between DoD and VA.

Customer Advocates.

Customer Advocates work with the VHA, VBA, NCA, and VA's Staff Offices at senior levels to ensure issues of mutual concern are resolved. The Advocates facilitate the resolution of issues resulting from the Program Management Accountability System (PMAS) and work across the VA to identify and facilitate the resolution of any IT issues relating to VHA mission support.

### **Functions and Tasks**

Quality, Performance, and Oversight (QPO) leads OIT's performance management, process improvement, and oversight efforts. The Office facilitates the establishment of performance measures and metrics related to the full range of IT program responsibilities and strategic objectives, and manages associated measurement efforts. It conducts analysis and evaluation of a variety of IT programs, processes, functions and facilities, and provides recommendations to the AS/IT. QPO leads and manages the Department's IT management system transition to a single IT leadership authority, serves as advisor to the AS/IT on a wide range of complex and sensitive issues that cross organizational boundaries within the Department, and interfaces with external agencies such as OMB, GAO, OIG and Congress.

- Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) provides the VA with an integrated enterprisewide risk management plan that ensures its IT investments are managed in an efficient and effective environment. ERM is focused on establishing a risk management framework that will drive transparency, accountability, and enrich public trust while improving service delivery to our Veterans.
- QPO provides support to the Chief Information Officer (CIO), facilitating activities relating to the CIO's highest priorities.
- QPO captures and reports performance information and conducts performance reviews of major IT activities.
- QPO coordinates and produces strategic communications, including press releases, media requests and interviews, and CIO messages.

- Executive correspondence/project coordination routes, monitors, and processes correspondence and document issues with key stakeholders, including GAO, IG, and OGC. Human Capital Management manages the SES program, GS-15 staffing actions, hiring incentives, pay setting options, evaluation and selection of applicants, Permanent Change of Station/Guaranteed Home Buy-Out requests, and dual compensation waivers.
- Provides advice on employee-labor management relation issues, disciplinary/adverse actions, administrative and negotiated grievances, appeals, performance management, and reasonable accommodations issues.

Office of Information Security (OIS) ensures the security and privacy of Veteran data. OIS is led by the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Information Security and works with organizations across VA to ensure that Veteran and beneficiary data security and privacy needs are accounted for in all aspects of VA business and services, including the administration of benefits, health care, and cemetery operations.

- Performs administrative functions required to support the organization's initiatives and programs.
- Oversees composition of executive-level correspondence, prepares congressional testimony and speeches, and responds to public relations inquiries.
- Directs, develops, and performs logistics management operations required to support OIS, such as identifying the specific requirements for funds, resources, facilities, and services needed to support the OIS mission.

Field Security Service (FSS) ensures the privacy, confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information assets in facilities and field offices across the country. FSS comprises Information Security Officers geographically dispersed throughout the Department, who contribute to and support the overall VA mission to deliver health care, benefits and memorial services by validating process, system, and procedural compliance, as well as ensuring cost-effective security controls are in place to protect automated systems from fraud, waste, and abuse.

Office of Business Continuity ensures that essential IT functions continue in the event of a disaster or business interruption. This effort also includes seeking ways to prevent interruption of mission-critical services. By developing and implementing a Comprehensive Emergency Management Homeland Security Program, the Office of Business Continuity helps ensure that VA can effectively respond to an event, and enables VA to quickly resume its mission of providing services to Veterans, their families, and its employees.

The Office of Cyber Security (OCS) sets policy and oversees the implementation and operation of the Department's IT security programs across all Administrations, Staff Offices, and field sites. OCS is responsible for oversight, management, and direction of activities for Audit Resolution and Readiness, the Certification Program Service, Security Architecture and Software Assurance, the

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Emergency Response Team, and Identity Access Management.

Office of Privacy and Records Management (OPRM) works across VA Administrations and Staff Offices to integrate privacy considerations, requests for information, manage official records, and ensure that the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of VA sensitive information and information systems are protected. OPRM is made up of three services: the Privacy Service, Enterprise Records Service, and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Service.

VA Network Security Operations Center (NSOC) protects VA information on a 24/7 basis by monitoring, responding to, and reporting cyber threats and vulnerabilities; managing Internet gateways; conducting enterprisewide network monitoring; and providing value-added network and security management services as requested.

Service, Delivery and Engineering (SDE) provides quality IT support and customer service to Veterans, employees, stakeholders, administrative, and Staff Offices, executed by six business lines as follows:

- Field Operations directs all operations and maintenance activities associated with field-based VA IT infrastructure, including overseeing security, operational policy, and the execution of the VA Continuity of Operation Plan (COOP). Field Ops is also responsible for ensuring the successful release and deployment of enterprise products to the field and actively promotes the adoption of best practices.
  - Enterprise Operations directs all operations and maintenance activities associated with the enterprise VA IT infrastructure, which encompasses all inherently corporate, mission-critical and other IT systems for which a high degree of standardization in operation and management is required.
  - Enterprise Systems Engineering (ESE) provides engineering services to all VA IT projects, applying a consistent architecture, planning the system life cycle, and managing all engineering aspects of a project from start to finish. ESE plays lynchpin roles in every stage of the system life cycle, including conceptual design, integration of standard components into a system solution, architecture validation, performance testing, capacity planning, bundling of instrumentation, release management, technical aspects of deployment, enterprise-level change and configuration management (including augmentation and tuning), and system refresh planning.
  - National Service Desk develops and manages processes for all VA IT service requests, changes, incidents and problems that must be categorized, prioritized, logged, and tracked to provide an enterprise-view of support.
  - IT Service Management (ITSM) provides a variety of services such as IT logistics, personal computer lease and commodity buy support, campus management, administration, resource planning, communications, analysis, performance, and human resource support across all aspects of IT operations.
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- VACO IT Support provides network connectivity and operations support to all VACO, OGC, and BVA users; directs and manages the integration of information technologies into VA, OIT requirements and program business lines; provides corporate project management services to VACO program offices; manages all telecommunications related services for VACO; manages the video teleconferencing and media services at the VACO program offices; administers and manages all IT assets from cradle to grave life cycle; and provides procurement, contract, PC lease, budget, and asset management life-cycles guidance.

Architecture, Strategy, and Design (ASD) provides a framework of policies, guidance, and governance to ensure IT programs and projects are designed and executed to satisfy current and future business needs of VA.

- Enterprise Architecture acts as a management tool to facilitate forecasting, delivering, and operating the VA information technology environment. The VA Enterprise Architecture program enables the Department to consistently make informed investment decisions to deliver an affordable Veteran-centric and technology-enabled IT infrastructure. This office includes IT strategy, which provides strategic planning, targets priorities, and formulates long range plans for OIT.
- Product Management (PdM) consists of four functional areas:
  - Product and Platform Management provides solution architecture and integration services to guide the engineering of IT systems in the VA.
  - Product Platform Engineering provides enterprise solution architecture and integration services for complex IT systems.
  - Technical Reference and Assessment provides the authoritative source for products and standards used in the VA computing environment to facilitate standardization and interoperability.
  - Data Management provides unified data architecture used to achieve data integrity, consistency and availability across the enterprise in order to streamline development activities.
- Process and Knowledge Management develops, implements, updates and oversees the overall process framework, mandated by the Assistant Secretary for OIT for use in executing the business of OIT. Knowledge Management and Communication Service establishes the methods to acquire and retain ASD knowledge to promote efficient and effective information sharing both internally and externally, and to enable actions and decisions.
- IT Governance and Policy develops plans and policies, which provide for effective IT governance within the Department. Assists in the synchronization of governance boards, groups, organizations, roles, responsibilities, and activities as they pertain to IT governance. Provides advice and assistance in compliance with public law, consistent with national standards, policy, and direction, and in accordance with VA and CIO decisions

and intent. Assists OIT offices to formulate and maintain IT governance in their respective areas of responsibility.

- IT Strategy (ITS) provides strategic planning, targets priorities, and formulates long range plans for OIT. ITS assists the CIO and the OIT executive leadership team to formulate and communicate an IT strategy that aligns with VA's strategy, business goals, and objectives to include VA CIO's priorities and the Department's Integrated Operating Model.

Product Development (PD) serves as the Chief Advisor to the AS/IT for all enterprise application development activities. PD reviews development plans and creates testing applications to ensure business requirements are met. The office also provides day-to-day direction over all solutions developed by OIT for VA business units.

- Program Management develops, tests, and provides high quality enterprisewide IT software products, which include new starts and upgrades to existing legacy systems delivered within budget and on time based on the defined requirements from our customers.
- Staff Development Management assesses staff competencies and skills; grows and sustains a highly-skilled cadre of Federal IT professionals; assigns IT staff to programs/projects based on their competencies and product complexity; conducts phase and needs research; and incorporates relevant leading-edge IT program management and systems engineering practices into standard processes.
- Product Support provides support to enterprise software applications and products that are already deployed and maintained by Product Development; maintains an inventory of all deployed software applications and products; provides customer support outreach and help desk services; maintains a central repository of users, and drafts technical and training manuals on all deployed products.
- Program Management Accountability System (PMAS) Business Office establishes and updates PMAS policies, guidelines, and processes; maintains a central repository of cogent information on program/project status in a PMAS dashboard or other format; reports periodically to OIT senior leaders; assesses and measures the efficacy of the PMAS Program; recommends improvements to the PD and OIT leadership; institutionalizes and updates PMAS artifacts and processes within ProPath; and educates program managers on value and application of PMAS.
- Product Development Business Office provides centralized Workforce Management Services for PD, including centralized Strategic Communication and Correspondence Control Services, Performance Measurement Services, Program, Planning and Oversight Services, Budget Planning and Execution Services, Acquisition and Contract Administration Services, Business Office, Administrative and Information Management and Special Study Services.

IT Resource Management plans, formulates, and executes OIT budget and provides financial management and cost accounting for OIT.

- Oversees the IT acquisition program as well as OIT's vendor management and facilities management programs, including the development of appropriate acquisition strategies.
- Prepares and conducts advanced IT workforce skill development programs.
- Provides customer satisfaction improvement framework, including developing appropriate customer service-level agreements and performance metrics.

The Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER) is a visionary, interagency Federal initiative created to ensure that health, benefits and personnel information for Servicemembers and Veterans, captured from accession to final rights, are electronically and securely available to efficiently and effectively deliver health and benefits entitlements.

The objectives of VLER are:

- To build the Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record.
- To empower Veterans to securely access and control the use and dissemination of their health, benefits and personnel information.
- To eliminate material and nonmaterial barriers to information sharing across the VA enterprise and with external partners.
- To exploit information sharing innovations to ensure that the VA proactively delivers services and benefits.
- To eliminate inefficiencies in VA information sharing IT infrastructure and business processes.
- To ensure Veterans, their families, and other stakeholders are engaged to better understand their needs and increase participation in the development and use of VLER-enabled services.

To achieve this synchronization, the ED VLER engages stakeholders, builds consensus, identifies barriers to information transparency, proposes solutions, and synchronizes similar business capabilities, requirements, and actions. ED VLER is responsible for leading the collaborative development and enforcement of business and technical requirements, plans, and policies related to VLER information sharing. ED VLER staff facilitates, brokers and coordinates VLER-related activities across the VA.

Interagency Program Office (IPO) leads DoD and VA to develop and implement the EHR and VLER health systems and delivers initiatives that provide information interoperability between the Departments to better serve Servicemembers, Veterans, and other eligible beneficiaries.

- Develops, proposes, and executes interagency budget and acquisition strategies to meet integrated interagency requirements.
- Serves as the integrated Program Executive Office for iEHR capabilities and systems, and provides direct oversight of all related EHR and VLER health legacy systems modernization, including open source investments in the DoD and the VA.

- Validates initiative success against interagency integration, testing, and implementation strategies.

Customer Advocates – OIT designates experienced customer Advocates to work with the VHA, VBA and NCA at senior levels to ensure information technology issues are resolved. They resolve issues resulting from the Program Management Accountability System (PMAS) and work across the Department to resolve IT issues related to VHA, VBA, and NCA mission support. Advocates act as an Ombudsman between OIT and its customers, providing a single access point for customers to senior IT leadership.

### **Authorities**

Information Technology Management Reform Act of 1996

Title 40 Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996

P.L. 104-106

38 U.S.C

Veterans Identity and Credit Security Act of 2006 (HR 5835)

E-Government Act of 2002

Federal Information Security Management Act 2002 (FISMA)

Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA) of 1998

Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) of 1993

Government Management Reform Act (GMRA) of 1994

P.L. 109-114

OMB Circular A-11, Part 7

OMB Circular A-130

OMB Circular A-130 Revised

OMB Circular A-11 Part 7 Section 300

OMB Circular A-11, Section 5

U.S.C. 44 § 3506

Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Veteran Benefits Improvement Act of 2008

Privacy Act of 1974

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

Annual VA Appropriations

P.L. 109-461 Title IX

## **8.2 OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY INTERAGENCY PROGRAM OFFICE**

### **Overview**

The VA/DoD Interagency Program Office (IPO) was established by the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 (NDAA FY08) and provides a single point of oversight and accountability for the Departments to develop and implement the integrated iEHR and VLER systems. The IPO was authorized by Congress and leads, oversees, and manages all VA/DoD joint development efforts, including planning, programming and budgeting, contracting, architecture, capability acquisition and development, data strategy and management, testing and evaluation planning, infrastructure requirements and funding, common services, implementation and sustainment related to iEHR and VLER.

### **Functions and Tasks**

IPO leads a combined VA and DoD effort to develop and implement the EHR and VLER health systems, capabilities, and initiatives that allow for full information interoperability between the Departments.

- Collaborates with the Health Executive Council (HEC) and Benefits Executive Council (BEC) to collect and integrate functional capability requirements, define interagency requirements, and produce program roadmaps and architectures.
- Prescribes technical approaches and directs system development.
- Identifies and validates solutions and integrates those with open source solutions where applicable.
- Develops and executes interagency integration, testing and system implementation, and reviews Departmental modernization plans for Departmental specific EHR capabilities and systems.

## **8.3 OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE, DESIGN, AND STRATEGY (ASD)**

### **Functions and Tasks**

Enterprise Architecture (EA).

The Office of Enterprise Architecture (EA) is responsible for end-to-end management of the One VA Enterprise Architecture, which describes the current and desired relationships among program/business, management processes, and IT. The Office facilitates forecasting, delivery, and operation of the VA IT environment and enables the VA to wisely invest in affordable Veteran-centric and technology-enabled IT infrastructure.

One VA EA provides strategic planning and programming support for the VA IT environment and defines the baseline, transition, and target capabilities necessary to optimize and maintain the IT

environment. EA operates a VA-wide centralized repository and provides standardized tools to support the Department's MIs. EA (DAS) chairs the Architecture and Engineering Review Board.

- IT Strategy (ITS) formulates strategy to align VA's overarching strategic plans, business goals and objectives. ITS' strategic plan includes VA CIO's Priorities, Integrated Operating Model (IOM), and helps to promote effective IT strategy formulation and execution. Collects, synthesizes, and publishes all EA artifacts and reference models.
- Creates and sustains Enterprise Transition Plan and GAO EA maturity assessments.
- Supports and participates in Architecture and Engineering (A/E) governance engagements.
- Provides EA support to MIs.
- Creates and publishes the VA IT strategic plan, IT performance plan, IT planning guide and publishes the IT strategy process.

Product Management (PdM).

PdM chairs and manages the OIT Business Intake and Review Board, which assesses all new business requests submitted to OIT. PdM guides the design of IT systems across VA and manages the Technical Reference Model (TRM).

Product Engineering (PE).

PE provides enterprise solution architecture and integration services for the VA MIs. PE leads system conceptual design and ensures maximum reuse of services and components among and between new development initiatives and current systems in operations/sustainment. PE serves an integral part of project management by actively participating in the technical design, systems analysis, and planning of the engineering effort. The engineering support provided by PE includes development of solutions architectures in compliance with the VA EA and provides strategic and tactical planning for development programs. PE ensures collaboration among interconnected components and ensures consistency of solutions among systems by establishing and maintaining effective communication among peer engineers assigned to the major development programs. PE participates throughout the life cycle of an IT product from initial planning to decommission.

Technical Reference and Assessments (TRA).

TRA manages and publishes the TRM, which is the authoritative source for products and standards used in the VA computing environment to facilitate interoperability. TRA chairs the TRM Management Group, manages the OneVA TRM, performs technical assessments of projects and programs to ensure compliance with the TRM, and chairs the Technical Review Board (TRB).

- Develops solution architectures and provides technical guidance to IT programs supporting formal VA MIs.

Process and Knowledge Management (PKM).

Process Management develops, implements, updates, and oversees all processes used to conduct business in OIT. PKM develops, executes, and maintains the OIT Process Asset Library (ProPath).

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It customizes core processes based upon industry and Government best practices to achieve OIT operational excellence.

Knowledge Management and Communication Service (KMCS).

KMCS manages and administers electronic communication environments such as the Internet, intranet, SharePoint, and DisGover sites. KMCS establishes policies and guidelines for effective knowledge management, and develops and maintains the electronic communication environments. In addition, KMCS tracks the inventory of reusable IT solutions.

- Designs, develops, and implements core processes within the ProPath Process Asset Library in accordance with Business Process Re-engineering Team decisions.
- Facilitates lockdowns and technical working groups to support process design, development, and implementation of standardized processes.
- Gathers and analyzes requirements to resolve issues related to acquisition, retention, transfer, and use of knowledge assets.
- Develops, tests, recommends, and implements Meta-Knowledge Repository and other KM tools and solutions.
- Establishes knowledge management sets of methods and procedures, and inventories reusable solutions.
- Provide training and assistance in the implementation of KM methods and procedures, and establishes a KM work group to encourage the adoption and promotion of KM practices.

IT Governance and Policy (ITG&P).

ITG&P develops, coordinates, synchronizes and maintains the VA IT governance plan to promote sound, effective IT governance and support senior executive decision-making.

- Advises and assists in developing and maturing IT governance areas and processes.
- Assists in executing IT governance pertaining to specific areas of responsibility within Architecture, Strategy and Design (e.g., the Business Intake Review Board, Enterprise Architecture Council).

Administrative Office (AO).

The Administrative Office manages essential day-to-day administrative and logistics activities of ASD. The AO plans, coordinates and monitors activity across the entire ASD organization acting as a liaison to OIT in areas related to workforce management, acquisition management, and the distribution of space and IT assets. The AO coordinates the solicitation, award, administration and closeout of all contracts and other acquisition instruments for ASD.

In addition the AO coordinates financial management of ASD program funding with regard to out-year budgets, and spend and execution plans. The AO further advises and assists the Deputy Chief Information Officer (DCIO) and senior ASD leadership with regard to communications management and official interoffice correspondence, including coordination of external reporting.

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The AO further contributes to the stability of ASD operations by coordinating the development of internal ASD administrative Standard Operating Procedures for:

- Workforce management.
- Acquisition management.
- IT asset management.
- Financial management.
- Communication management.

#### **8.4 IT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

##### **Functions and Tasks**

Plans, formulates, and executes OIT budget, and provides financial management and cost accounting for OIT.

- Oversees the effective execution and management of resources for OI&T within the Department.
- Delivers budgetary and financial policies, directions, and services by implementing best practices and fostering financial stewardship.
- Develops multiyear programs and budget plans.
- Reports budget performance and provides cost accounting of IT financial resources.

Oversees IT acquisition program, providing strategies as well as OIT's vendor management and facilities management programs.

- Provides acquisition program management oversight and interpretation of acquisition policies and procedures.
- Manages the OIT acquisition process and participates in change control boards.
- Provides customer liaison with internal/external customers and supports the President's Management Advisory Board and vendor management.
- Serves as OIT Small Business Representative for all socioeconomic categories.
- Plans and directs all OIT facility and space-related activities in support of the Department's strategic goals and objectives.

Prepares and implements skills and development programs.

- Designs, develops, and delivers IT specific training to the OIT workforce using various modalities.
- Evaluates industry-recognized IT certification course and provides the courses in strategic locations across OIT, including VA National IT Training Academy (NTA) headquarters and smart classrooms.
- Implements the OPM 2210 Competency Model in OIT.

- Coordinates the validation of each additional (e.g., ISO, CIO) with VA subject matter experts and implements the model in the VA Talent Management System (TMS).
- Provides FISMA compliance, privacy, and rules of behavior training for the VA.

Manages customer satisfaction improvement framework, including developing appropriate customer service-level agreements and performance metrics.

- Develops and implements an IT customer satisfaction improvement framework.
- Utilizes operational metrics related to IT customer service and satisfaction to provide operational awareness and an objective basis for improvements.
- Develops customer satisfaction evaluations and policies.
- Develops SLAs based on performance metrics.

## **8.5 OFFICE OF INFORMATION SECURITY**

### **Overview**

The Office of Information Security (OIS) is responsible for ensuring the security and privacy of Veterans' data. Led by the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Information Security, OIS it conducts and integrates a continuous cycle of performance measurement, risk assessment, threat mitigation, and oversight and compliance to ensure that vigorous information security is in place, complements VA business operations, and is integrated throughout the life cycle of VA operating systems and software.

### **Functions and Tasks**

The OIS Business Office performs administrative functions required to support the organization's initiatives and programs. OIS Business Office staff is also responsible for overseeing composition of executive-level correspondence, preparation of congressional testimony, and speeches and responses to public relations inquiries. The Business Office also interprets acquisition regulations, laws, and VA policy that govern security for IT acquisitions, and confirms that all IT products and services and non-IT products connecting to the VA network resources or that have the potential to store sensitive data, are entered into and approved.

Contract Management Team serves as the liaison between OIS and acquisition staffs, both internal and external to VA. Information Technology Acquisition Request System (ITARS) Support ensures security requirements are included in IT acquisition contracts.

The Field Security Service (FSS) ensures the privacy, confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information assets in facilities and field offices across the country. FSS is comprised of Information Security Officers (ISOs) geographically dispersed throughout the Department who contribute to and support the overall VA mission to deliver health care, benefits, and memorial services by validating process and system and procedural compliance, as well as ensuring cost-

effective security controls are in place to protect automated systems from fraud, waste, and abuse. FSS is organized into four divisions:

- Data Center Support Division (DCSD) provides ISO support to the National Data Centers.
- National Data ISO Division provides ISO support to VACO, VHA, VBA, NCA, and program offices. This is the largest division and is further broken down into five regions, each led by a Regional Information Security Director.
- Health Information Security Division (HISD) supports the security of medical devices and vendor access.
- Audit Resolution and Readiness ensures that VA IT systems security is managed in a compliant manner.

The Office of Business Continuity (OBC) ensures that essential IT functions continue in the event of a disaster or business interruption. OBC develops and implements a Comprehensive Emergency Management Homeland Security Program to ensure that VA can effectively use its IT systems when responding to an event and enable VA to quickly resume its normal missions.

The Office of Cyber Security (OCS) establishes policy and oversees the implementation and operation of IT security programs across the Department. OCS oversees, manages, and directs all activities for Audit Resolution and Readiness, the Certification Program Service, Security Architecture and Software Assurance, the Emergency Response Team, and Identity Access Management.

- Audit Resolution and Readiness ensures that VA IT systems security is managed in a manner that is compliant with all Federal laws, regulations and guidelines governing IT security; and ensures that Congress, OMB, GAO, OIG, and other OCS stakeholders are informed about VA's cyber security posture and associated risk. The mission of this group is accomplished through the management of two teams: The Oversight and Reporting Team, and the Reports and Accreditation Team. The Audit Resolution and Readiness service scans current and burgeoning Federal laws, regulations, and guidelines to determine its impact on VA's information security posture. It provides reporting service for VA's annual and quarterly FISMA reports to OMB and Congress, and conducts an annual assessment of the Department's security posture on more than 600 IT systems. The service ensures that deficiencies discovered through the OIG and GAO audits are incorporated into the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) vulnerability tracking database.
- Certification Program Service oversees and directs the development and operation of the Departmentwide IT system testing and certification program. This Office focuses on the certification testing necessary to determine the effectiveness of security controls as specified in National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publications (SP) 800-53, 800-53A, and Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 200. Certification results inform Department Authorizing Officials in making risk-based

decisions necessary to place development systems into production and allow production systems to remain in operation. The Office establishes long- and short-range plans for continuously monitoring and managing the Department's cyber security risk by setting policy for the Department's IT system security accreditation program. This team oversees the development of processes and security documentation to support the security certification and accreditation of all VA IT systems. This documentation includes but is not limited to privacy impact assessments, risk assessments, system security plans, configuration management plans and contingency plans.

- Security Architecture and Software Assurance oversees the identification, prevention, and remediation of IT security deficiencies. It ensures that VA technical security initiatives are integrated throughout VA organizations and IT infrastructure. The Policy Team establishes and promulgates Department-level cyber security policies, procedures, and guidelines to ensure compliance with Federal laws and regulations. The team reviews proposed policies from other areas of OIS responsibility to ensure issues are adequately addressed from a cyber security perspective and to ensure no contradictions exist within each policy developed and disseminated to the Department.
- Emergency Response Team deploys to sites within VA with approved management tasking by VA senior leadership to perform computer forensics on VA's IT assets or to perform external threat assessments, which consist of vulnerability scanning and penetration testing as a means to improve the enterprise security posture and to provide assistance in the event of a compromise. Proactively evaluates overall security program effectiveness at specific sites and provides technical advice needed to remediate deficiencies.
- Identity and Access Management combines processes, policies, and systems to ensure the security and privacy of identities, and to control access to resources. OIT coordinates IAM-related projects to ensure an integrated approach to IAM. The Office of Information Protection and Risk Management is the OIT business sponsor responsible for an integrated IAM program. The Office of Privacy and Records Management (OPRM) works across OIS to integrate privacy considerations, requests for information, manage official records, and ensure that the confidentiality, integrity and availability of VA sensitive information and information systems are protected. OPRM is made up of three services: the Privacy Service, Enterprise Records Service, and the FOIA Service.
  - Directs VA's privacy program including conformance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, COMSEC regulations, nondisclosure statutes, OMB guidance on computer cookies, OMB Circular A-130, Government Paperwork Elimination Act, user authentication, insider threat and identity theft. OPRM ensures VA policies are in compliance with regulatory requirements and legislated mandates governing those programs; promulgates Department-level privacy policy, procedures, and guidelines that implement Federal laws and regulations, and provides guidance on policy

- implementation; and reviews proposed privacy policies in its areas of responsibility to ensure issues are adequately addressed.
- Ensures that PIAs or appropriate validations are completed for all IT systems.
  - Manages the Department's computer matching program and systems of records programs required under the Privacy Act.
  - Works cooperatively across VA and each of the Administrations and Staff Offices in overseeing Veteran rights to inspect, amend, and restrict access to privacy-protected personally identifiable information.
  - Works with all Administrations and Staff Offices to determine appropriate measures to effectively reduce the use of Social Security numbers as mandated by OMB.

The Office of Risk Management and Incident Response (RMIR) identifies, communicates, and mitigates information security and privacy incidents across the Department. The Office conducts data breach analysis to discover what corrective action must be taken to safeguard protected information and responds immediately. RMIR applies risk management techniques to VA's security systems to alleviate loss of data. The RMIR Office of Identity Safety provides support for the other offices within RMIR to facilitate delivery of their services. Additionally, it directs compliance activities regarding identity safety.

- Develops and maintains an overarching information risk management framework for OIS.
- Facilitates the national Data Breach Core Team to review, discuss, and provide resolution for nationwide VA incidents.
- Establishes and maintains a formal incident response capability and provides pertinent information on incidents to the appropriate organizations.
- Prepares data breach reports provided to Congress by the SECVA.
- Coordinates communications and alerts about critical emergency incidents.

The VA Network Security Operations Center (NSOC) protects VA information on a 24/7 basis by monitoring, responding to, and reporting cyber threats and vulnerabilities; manages Internet gateways; conducts enterprisewide network monitoring; and provides value-added network and security management services.

- Deploys and manages enterprise security technologies throughout VA.
- Monitors and manages Internet gateways and the enterprise core backbone, and provides forensic analysis and investigation of malware and correlating events to determine cyber threat posture.
- Provides a 24/7 customer service center to triage and escalate, as necessary, events, incidents, and Tier 1 support for VA-supported technologies.
- Manages virtual private network infrastructure and provides IT support for internal VA-NSOC infrastructure.
- Conducts vulnerability and penetration testing of Internet gateways.

## 8.6 PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

### Functions and Tasks

#### Program Management.

- Develops, tests, and provides high-quality enterprisewide IT software (SW) products, to include new starts and upgrades to existing legacy systems, within budget and on time based on the defined requirements from our customers.
- Institutionalizes Program Management Accountability System principles and guidelines.
- Plans, manages, integrates, collaborates, and reports on the status of all IT projects associated with MI, including those that cross multiple domains and involve external partners.
- Implements disciplined program/project governance and review structures.
- Utilizes the VA EA data, systems, and technical standards as the basis for product development.
- Institutionalizes IT solution integration strategies based on industry based practices.

#### Staff Development Management.

- Assesses staff competencies and skills.
- Grows and sustains a highly-skilled cadre of Federal IT professionals.
- Assigns IT staff to programs/projects based on their competencies and product complexity, phase, and needs.
- Researches and incorporates relevant leading-edge IT program management and systems engineering practices for use as standard processes.

#### Product Support.

- Supports enterprise software applications and products that are already deployed and maintained by Product Development.
- Maintains an inventory of all deployed software applications and products.
- Provides customer support outreach and help desk services.
- Maintains a central repository of users, and technical and training manuals on all products currently in use at the VA.

#### Product Development Business Office.

- Provides centralized Workforce Management Services for PD.
- Provides centralized Strategic Communication and Correspondence Control Services for PD.
- Provides centralized Performance Measurement Services for PD.
- Provides centralized Program, Planning, and Oversight Services for PD.
- Provides centralized Budget Planning, and Execution Services for PD.

- Provides centralized Acquisition and Contract Administration Services for PD.
- Provides Business Office, Administrative, Information Management, and Special Study Services for PD front office.

#### Program Management Accountability System (PMAS) Business Office.

- Establishes, updates, and socializes PMAS policies, guidelines, and processes.
- Maintains a central repository of cogent information on program/project status in a PMAS dashboard or other format, and reports periodically to OIT senior leaders.
- Assesses and measures the efficacy of the PMAS Program and recommends improvements to the PD and OIT leadership.
- Institutionalizes and updates PMAS artifacts and processes within ProPath.
- Educates Program Managers on value and application of PMAS.

### **8.7 OFFICE OF QUALITY, PERFORMANCE AND OVERSIGHT**

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Enterprise Risk Management oversees the activities necessary to provide the VA with an integrated enterprisewide risk management plan that ensures its information technology investments are managed in an efficient and effective environment. Enterprise Risk Management is focused on establishing a risk management framework that will drive transparency, accountability, and enrich public trust by improving service delivery to our Veterans.

- Improves the efficiency of major IT business line processes.
- Improves tracking of acquisition packages and effectiveness of IPTs engaged in acquisition process.
- Provides oversight of SLA implementation between OIT, TAC, and VHA.
- Improves tracking and reporting of requirements from the time an OMB 300 is written until expenditure.

Quality and Performance provides support to the Chief Information Officer (CIO) through action officers and facilitating activities relating to the CIO's top priorities. Capture/report performance information and conduct performance reviews of major IT activities. Coordinates strategic communications, including press releases, media requests and interviews, and CIO messages.

- Provides action officers who scribe all executive-level meetings, briefings, and testimony recording all actionable topics discussed, disseminating meeting notes, ensuring synchronized flow of information, addressing tasks assigned by the Office of the Secretary, and accompanying the Assistant Secretary and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary to Capitol Hill hearings and offsite speaking engagements.
  - Coordinates and prepares reports and papers for the executive decision meetings, monthly performance reviews, Executive Leadership Board and IT Leadership Board.
  - Monitors updates to the Federal IT dashboard.
-

- Generates the E-Gov Act Report.
- Prepares CIO annual report, as well as internal and external strategic communications.
- Works within OIT to identify and monitor information for the Performance Accountability Report.
- Conducts independent analysis of various IT Programs, projects, and activities to prepare senior leaders for informed decision-making.

Oversight and Compliance conducts a comprehensive program of inspections designed to measure how well VA's nationwide facilities comply with legislative and Federal Government oversight and VA policies, procedures and practices. ITOC approves and presents final overall regional compliance and inspection reports to the CIO.

- Provides trend analysis and management reports to senior VA leadership on the information security posture of VA.
- Validates compliance and provide final reports.
- Provides compliance data extract for Plan of Action and Milestones (POAM) generation from the ITOC assessment to SMART database.
- Assesses confidentiality, integrity, and availability of VA information systems and data based on Federal laws, guidance, and VA policies.
- Performs security control assessments for VA certification and accreditation process.
- Works with sites pre-and post-assessment to ensure the least amount of disruption and offer guidance on compliance.

Executive Correspondence/Project Coordination routes, monitors, and processes correspondence and document issues reported to OIT.

- Prepares correspondence for CIO/DCIO signature.
- Coordinates logistics for congressional hearings.
- Reviews and submits HR issue packages for final processing.
- Works with IG and GAO issues processed through VAIQ/email.
- Manages CIO/DCIO calendar and travel.
- Coordinates OMB monthly meetings.
- Manages OIT intranet Web site and DisGover.
- Coordinates OIT transit benefits.

Human Capital Management.

- Manages OIT's SES program, GS-15 staffing actions, hiring incentives and pay setting options, evaluation and selection of applicants, PCS/GHBO requests, and dual compensation waivers.
- Provides advice on policy and workforce planning.

- Provides advice on employee-labor management relation issues, disciplinary/adverse actions, administrative and negotiated grievances, appeals, performance management, and reasonable accommodations issues.
- Provides policy on OIT awards.

Systems Quality Assurance performs independent verification and validation of VA financial systems and interfaces. Conducts system integration testing of functional requirements and quality assurance consisting of process and product reviews.

- Evaluates adherence to PMAS and provides reviews of project deliverables and processes.
- Supports customer program offices in the maintenance and development of their systems.

## **8.8 OFFICE OF SERVICE DELIVERY AND ENGINEERING (SDE)**

### **Overview**

The Office of Service Delivery and Engineering (SDE) comprises more than 5,500 IT professionals and administrative/support staff spread across six major components, and promotes productive cross-organizational collaboration and communication. The six components are: Field Operations, Enterprise Operations, Enterprise Systems Engineering, National Service Desk, IT Service Management, and VACO Support Services. SDE provides help desk support, system administration, field-based software development, network management, systems implementation, telecommunications, release and configuration management, and standardization and optimization from the earliest stages of system design, such as equipment, national-level data systems and manages the delivery of operations services to all VA geographic locations.

### **Functions and Tasks**

SDE provides quality IT support and customer service to Veterans, employees, stakeholders, administrative and Staff Offices, executed by its seven business lines.

#### **OIT Field Operations.**

Field Operation directs all operations and maintenance activities associated with the field-based VA IT infrastructure, including overseeing security, operational policy and the execution of the VA Continuity of Operation Plan (COOP).

- Regional Operations coordinates and manages the day-to-day IT operations and IT services across VA field installations. Field Operations supports the IT operational infrastructure, computing environment and data processing and management capabilities for all VA. Field Operations also ensures successful release and deployment of enterprise products to the field and actively promotes best practices adoption.
- Technology Management Office (TMO) provides oversight and facilitates field operations technology and process standardization in support of enterprise implementations.
- TMO provides technical and logistics expertise within SDE Field Operations.

- The Business Intelligence Office (BIO) directs the consolidation and standardization of information collection, database structures, and maintenance of central data warehouses.
- The BIO also maintains a focus on the front-end business requirements reporting and back-end authoritative data marts.

#### OIT Enterprise Operations.

Enterprise Operation directs all operations and maintenance activities associated with the Enterprise VA IT infrastructure, which encompasses all inherently corporate, mission-critical and other IT systems, for which a high degree of standardization in operation and management is required.

- National Data Center Operations (NDCO) maintains a highly available, scalable, and redundant data center infrastructure that substantially reduces the Government's risk and enables future IT service delivery growth.
- Enterprise Platform Support provides operational support of enterprise infrastructure, which hosts all enterprise applications. It has primary charge for operational aspects of corporate operating systems: Windows, Linux, UNIX, and VMS, and ensures 24/7 on-call support for all platforms on which Enterprise Solutions reside.
- Enterprise Platform Support also provides Tier 3 support to NDCO and support for non-enterprise systems in all VA facilities; utilities for system management; network analysis and troubleshooting, including system optimization recommendations for specific sites; and provides on-site support for infrastructure system upgrades on an as needed basis.
- Enterprise Application Support provides operational support, administration, 24/7 monitoring of all enterprise scoped clinical, benefits, management, administrative and financial production systems, applications and databases; and is responsible for the operational management of, but not limited to, FORUM, Station 116, Oracle, WebLogic, Cache, Crystal Enterprise, Exchange and Active Directory.
- Enterprise Architecture Management (EAM) works closely with Enterprise Program Management to ensure stability and availability are always in line. EAM provides Tier 3 support to NDCO and support for nonenterprise applications in all VA facilities, and utilities for database management, including database and application optimization recommendations for specific sites.
- Enterprise Telecommunications oversees delivery of national telecommunications services (voice, video, and data transport) and assures that highly available telecommunications services are delivered with appropriate privacy and security controls. Conducts network capacity planning analyses and network augmentations to assure sufficient bandwidth to support VA business applications. Continually integrates new technologies for enhanced telecommunications services.

#### Enterprise Systems Engineering (ESE).

ESE provides engineering services to all VA IT projects, applying a consistent architecture and planning the system life cycle, and managing all engineering aspects of a project from start to finish. ESE plays lynchpin roles in every stage of the system life cycle, including responsibility for conceptual design, integration of standard components into a system solution, architecture validation, performance testing, capacity planning, bundling of instrumentation, release management, technical aspects of deployment, enterprise-level change and configuration management (including augmentation and tuning), and system refresh planning.

National Service Desk (NSD).

NSD manages all IT Tier One Service/Help Desk functions within OIT, including service requests, incidents and problems, and functions as third-line support for resolution of issues related to enterprise applications, systems, and other resources; It continues to be responsible for outage reporting, information dissemination, and data collection. It provides support in emergency situations (i.e., hurricanes, data calls, etc.) in a timely manner.

- Ensures a high-level of service, and responds to customer requests, incidents, and problems.
- Develops and manages a single suite of IT service management tools and technologies to be used at all levels within the Department that are compatible with the IT Infrastructure Library framework. Self-help tools inherent in this system, in conjunction with documented processes supported by the system, will enable proactive support and improve service quality.
- Executes Help Desk/Service Desk functions within VA to operate as a single entity with consistent policies and procedures.

IT Service Management (ITSM).

ITSM provides a variety of critical services such as IT logistics, PC lease, and commodity buy support, campus management, resource planning, administration, communications, analysis, performance, and human resource support across all aspects of IT operations.

VACO IT Support.

VACO IT Support provides technical and operational IT support to the VACO campus. Provides network connectivity and operations support to all VACO, OGC, and BVA users; directs and manages the integration of information technologies into VA, OIT requirements and program business lines; provides corporate project management services to VACO; manages all telecommunications related services for VACO; manages the Video Teleconferencing and Media services at the VACO program offices; responsible for administering and managing all IT assets from cradle-to-grave life cycle; and provides procurement, contract, PC Lease, budget, and asset management life-cycles guidance.

- Operates and maintains office automation systems for local customers.

- Assembles service delivery team(s) from Information Technology Support Service (ITSS) service areas that support Negotiating Joint Automation Agreements for customers.
- Provides technical consultation and configuration assistance for customers' desktop and performs needs assessments for the automation of office environments.
- Plans and executes desktop systems replacements and upgrades, conducts technology assessment and customer support.
- Optimizes the VACO Corporate Office Automation server platforms that support customers in VACO with a variety of server-based IT resources, including shared network file and printer shares; electronic mail; database services; Web application servers supporting One-VA Virtual Private Network (VPN) for telecommuting or travel.

## **8.9 VIRTUAL LIFETIME ELECTRONIC RECORD ENTERPRISE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OFFICE**

### **Functions and Tasks**

Identifies and eliminates material and nonmaterial barriers to information sharing across VA and external partners.

- Facilitates and synchronizes agreement on information sharing business requirements across the VA and with external partners (e.g., Social Security Administration and DoD).
- Assesses and responds to information sharing, stakeholder needs and gaps.
- Collaborates with all MI to streamline and optimize programs, and processes for greater efficiencies and effectiveness regarding the VLER vision.
- Serves as a change agent to resolve complex, multi-faceted information sharing problems that cross internal and external organizational boundaries.
- Develops executive decision memoranda, policies, and guidelines regarding information sharing within the VA and external partners.

Engages Veterans, their families, and other stakeholders to better understand their needs and increase participation in the development and use of VLER-enabled services.

- Develops, updates, and executes the VLER strategic communication plan.
- Conducts engagement, outreach and educational activities designed to inform Veterans, their families, and VSOs regarding the benefits and use of LER-enabled services.
- Responds to White house, congressional, GAO, media, and other requests for VLER information.

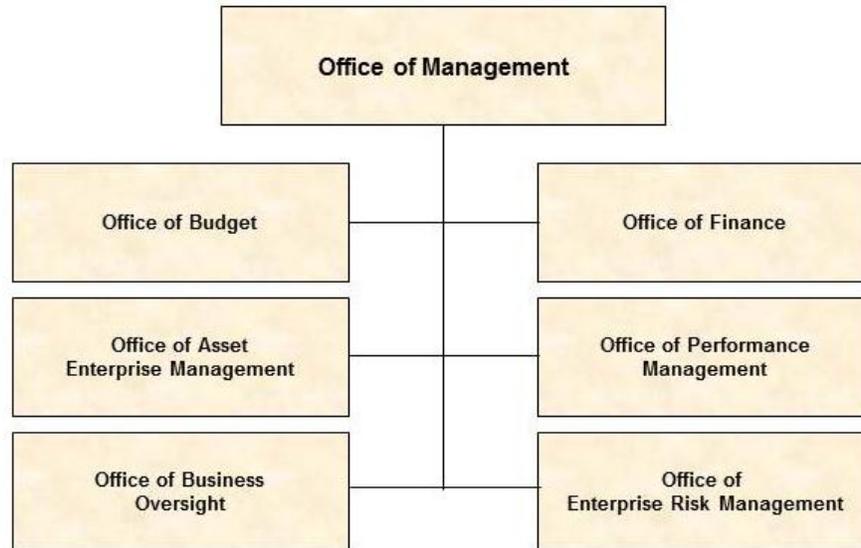
Manages Performance.

- Establishes high program performance goals, measures of performance and measures of effectiveness for VLER.
- Measures and reports on the status of attaining performance goals and objectives.

Leads and serves as functional steward for information sharing business activities, while synchronizing actions within the VA enterprise and external partners.

- Researches and proposes new and innovative solutions that eliminate information silos and lead greater information transparency across VA, such as the development of the VLER Data Access Services.
- Integrates and documents VLER information sharing goals, objectives, activities, and milestones across VA and with external partners.
- Develops comprehensive, fully integrated plans and concepts of operation with applicable MI and external partners.
- Leads efforts to standardize XML Schema hierarchy, formats, and standards.
- Develops and maintains the VLER Risk Management Plan.

## 9 OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT (OM)



### Mission Statement

The Office of Management (OM) enables VA to provide a full range of benefits and services to our Nation's Veterans by providing strategic and operational leadership in budget, financial management and asset enterprise management. It also promotes public confidence in the Department through stewardship business activities that are consistent with national policy, law, and regulation.

### Overview

OM supports the Administrations and Staff Offices through eight major service lines and has a number of activities and initiatives under way to help improve the Department's operations.

### 9.1 OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT

#### Overview

The Assistant Secretary for Management oversees all resource requirements, development and implementation of agency performance measures, and financial management activities relating to VA programs and operations. Responsibility also includes a Departmental accounting and financial management system that provides for management, cost, budgeting, and account information. In addition, the Office oversees the Department's capital asset management activities and business oversight activities, including development and implementation of policies and regulations.

## 9.2 OFFICE OF BUDGET

### Overview

The Office of Budget manages the strategic and policy decision-making processes to formulate, execute, analyze, justify, and prepare the Department's budget. It represents VA in budget deliberations with Congress, along with the Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs (OCLA) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The office also monitors the financial execution of the budget (to include examining actual expenditures and performance within the approved operating budget plan), manages the Secretary's Budget Review Cycle, which provides the Secretary with information on budget, performance, priorities, risks, and challenges, pre-year, mid-year and post-year reviews, and manages the Monthly Budget Review Process.

### Functions and Tasks

Manages and directs all budget formulation and execution activities for the Department.

- Ensures all funds are spent in compliance with the law, guidance, and directives from OMB and Congress, as well as Departmental policies and plans.
- Leads budget execution review processes and keeps VA leadership informed of key issues and trends.
- Issues guidance to VA administrations and Staff Offices to prepare, review, and analyze their internal budgets/performance plans, and develop analyses, options, and recommendations for budget decision-making.
- Manages all aspects of VA's annual budget request to OMB to defend and promote the Department's program plans and budget estimates, and negotiates/appeals the OMB passback decisions.

Represents VA in budget deliberations with Congress along with OCLA and OMB.

- Office of Budget is the Department's focal point for budget matters with OMB and Congress.
- Manages all aspects of VA's annual budget request to OMB to defend and promote VA's program plans and budget estimates, and negotiate/appeal the OMB passback of decisions.
- Develops testimony and supports the budget presentation to Congress, VSOs, and the media.

Budget Oversight and Execution.

- Manages SECVA budget review cycle that includes extensive preparation for pre-year, mid-year, and end-of-year reviews.
- Submits Quarterly Status Report to Congress.
- Manages monthly CFO budget execution reviews.

**Authorities**

OMB Circular No. A-11

OMB Circular No. A-19

OMB Circular A-129

Title 31

31 U.S.C. 1341 et seq.

P.L. 112-74

GAO Red Book

The Economy Act and the Account Adjustments Statute

**9.3 OFFICE OF FINANCE****Overview**

The Office of Finance maintains stewardship of Departmental resources; establishes Departmental financial policies, prepares financial reports, and information on VA's appropriations and funds (general, revolving, special, and deposit) for cost and obligation accounting; and oversees the management of VA's Franchise Fund, travel and purchase card programs, grants management program, and the performance and effectiveness of trusts established under VA's enhanced-use leasing program. The Office of Finance continually improves the quality of the Department's financial services, processes payments to vendors, as well as payments to employees for employee travel and relocation, develops and implements long-range financial systems initiatives, and manages and directs VA's financial operations at the Central Office and at the Financial Services Center in Austin, TX, and VA's debt management activities at the Debt Management Center in St. Paul, MN. The Office of Finance also provides Departmental leadership and assistance to VA Administrations and Staff Offices in financial process improvement and audit readiness services, as well as remediation of audit-related material weaknesses and significant deficiencies.

**Functions and Tasks**

Establishes financial policy and prepares Departmental financial reports.

- Provides guidance on all aspects of financial management for all VA financial entities.
- Prepares financial reports and VA's annual consolidated financial statements.

Directs and manages the Department's financial operations and systems support.

- Maintains VA's legacy core accounting system, the Financial Management System.
  - Maintains VA's Personnel and Accounting Integrated Data (PAID) payroll and human resources system and related self-service applications.
  - Manages the VA Franchise Fund, a full-service provider of common administrative support to the Department and other Federal Government clients on a fee-for-services basis in the areas of information, technology, financial management, and security and law enforcement.
  - Manages VA travel and purchase card programs, and the grants management program.
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- Manages the performance and effectiveness of trusts established under VA's enhanced-use leasing program.
- Processes vendor payments and VA-wide employee travel and relocation payments.
- Expands electronic commerce and electronic data interchange capabilities.
- Develops and implements long-range financial systems initiatives.

Provides Departmental leadership and assistance to VA Administrations and Staff Offices in:

- Financial process improvement.
- Audit readiness services.
- Remediation of audit-related material weaknesses and significant deficiencies.

The Debt Management Center (DMC), located in St. Paul, MN, provides services on a fee-for-service basis and receives no Federally appropriated funding. As an Enterprise Center of the VA Franchise Fund, the DMC:

- Collects debts resulting from individuals' participation in VA benefit programs.
- Manages VA's benefit debt portfolio.
- Oversees the entire collection process for VBA, employing every collection tool available to Federal agencies.
- Provides administrative offset services to VHA in order to refer delinquent first-party medical debts for internal offset against active VA benefits.
- Refers debts to Treasury for offset under the Treasury Offset Program on behalf of VHA.

The Financial Services Center (FSC), located in Austin, TX, provides services on a fee-for-service basis and receives no Federally appropriated funding. As an Enterprise Center of the VA Franchise Fund, the FSC:

- Provides a full range of financial and accounting services to both the VA and other Government agencies (financial reports and accounting, invoice payments, credit card payments, medical claims adjudication and payment processing, vendor file maintenance, discount subsistence purchases, payroll support services, and accounting training and consulting).
- Provides customer support help desks for travel and payment processing.
- Provides electronic commerce/electronic data interchange services.
- Oversees automated document management, audit recovery, permanent change of station, and temporary duty travel pay processing.

### **Authorities**

Government Management Reform Act of 1994

P.L. 103-356

Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2006

P.L. 109-114

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## 9.4 OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

### Functions and Tasks

The Office of Performance Management coordinates the performance management activities of VA in compliance with the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993. It plans, facilitates and documents performance measurement and reporting within the Department and with outside stakeholders.

- Performance Plan assists in articulating VA's desired performance expectations in the annual budget request.
- Monthly Performance Review Process administers the monthly senior leader meeting enabling VA leadership to review program progress, resolve performance problems, and to assist leadership in focusing on top priorities and problems within the context of performance, budget and workload results.
- Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) prepares VA's annual report card to Congress and the American public to communicate how well VA has performed over the past year. The PAR presents performance targets and results, as well as the audit opinion for a given fiscal year.
- Priority Goals oversees the development of specific, measurable, ambitious near-term goals chosen by VA leadership to communicate the performance improvements the Department is trying to accomplish according to its priorities, while using existing legislative authority and previously appropriated funds.
- Quarterly Status Report provides Congress with recurring summaries of the Department's key financial, performance, and workload information.

### Authorities

Government Performance and Results Act of 1993

Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010

## 9.5 OFFICE OF ASSET ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT (OAEM)

The Office of Asset Enterprise Management (OAEM) provides objective oversight and advice regarding the acquisition, management and disposal of VA capital assets. OAEM provides policy and business advice to the Assistant Secretary for Management and the SECVA. The OAEM Director is the VA Real Property and is also the Senior Sustainability Officer, which is the senior Department official for the Department's green management program (energy, environment, vehicle fleet and sustainable building). The office oversees capital asset (i.e., buildings and fleet) activities to ensure effective and prudent portfolio and asset performance management throughout the entire asset life cycle. OAEM develops and promulgates governance policies, processes, and performance measurement systems for the Department's capital asset management programs. OAEM coordinates the Department's strategic capital investment planning process and chairs the

VA Strategic Capital Investment Planning Panel. The office provides guidance, standards, and technical expertise with respect to individual investments, infrastructure-related programs and initiatives. It is also responsible for budget formulation, compiling, and producing VA's 5-year Capital Plan for Major and Minor Construction programs; Asset Management Plan; Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan; and 5-Year Disposal Plan.

### **Functions and Tasks**

Manages the Department's Strategic Capital Investment Planning (SCIP) Process.

- Prepares the VA Long-term Capital Investment Plan.
- Prepares VA's annual Capital Program Budget submission.
- Develops legislative analysis pertaining to capital programs and investments.
- Manages VA/DoD coordination on capital planning issues.

Executes the Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) Program.

- Deals with all issues associated with negotiations, terms, and amendments to a given lease.
- Responsible for trust oversight.
- Manages the Building Utilization Review and Repurposing initiative, designed to help provide housing for homeless Veterans.

Manages VA's real property portfolio.

- Performs disposal planning, reuse, repurpose, and other similar portfolio work.
- Using Federal Real Property Council performance metrics, it provides internal and external parties with performance information on the scope and condition of VA's portfolio.
- Represents the Department at various Federal Real Property councils and working groups, including those that are chaired by OMB, General Services Administration (GSA), and GAO.
- Participates in interagency task forces and working groups and is VA's Real Property Liaison with Department of Energy, Environmental Protection Agency, Council on Environmental Quality, GSA, and OMB.

Provides systems support for:

- Capital Asset Management System.
- Capital Asset Inventory System.
- SCIP Process and the Gap Analysis.
- SCIP Automation Tool.

Produces required reports.

- Produces the OMB-required Real Property Cost Savings Plan.
- Provides EUL Post-Transaction Compliance monitoring and oversight.

- Responsible for post-EUL transactions.
- Produces required reports on VA's progress in greening, energy, sustainability, and related activities.

Executes the Department's Green Management Program to include developing policies and monitoring key aspects of VA's sustainability efforts, such as:

- Energy management.
- Environmental management.
- Vehicle fleet management.
- Sustainable buildings.
- Greenhouse gas emissions management.
- Prepares VA's Climate Change Adaptation Planning Strategy as required by the Council on Environmental Quality.
- Prepares data for OMB's Sustainability/Energy Scorecard and related reporting and compliance.
- Develops VA's Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan and its Environmental Justice Strategy.

### **Authorities**

10 CFR 434

10 CFR 435

10 CFR 436

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)

P.L. 110-140, 121 Stat. 1492

P.L. 102-486, 106 Stat. 2776

P.L. 109-58, 119 Stat. 594

EP Act Transportation Regulatory Activities

E.O. 13327

E.O. 13423

E.O. 13514

FAR

Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1994

Title 40 U.S.C. § 471 et seq.

41 CFR Chapter 101, Part 101-18

Federal Management Regulation, 102-34

Federal Management Regulation, 102-5

GSA's General Reference Guide for Real Property Policy, April 1998,

<http://policyworks.gov/org/main/mp/library/policydocs/refguide.pdf>.

General Services Administration Regulations (GSAR)

48 CFR Chapter 5

Government Performance and Results Act of 1993  
P.L. 95-619, 92 Stat. 3206  
42 U.S.C. 8252 et seq.  
National Environmental Policy Act  
Title 16 U.S.C. § 470, et seq.  
Office of Management and Budget Capital Programming Guide  
OMB Circular A-11  
Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)  
Title 38 U.S.C. § 2405  
Title 38 U.S.C. § 8103  
Title 38 U.S.C. § 8104  
Title 38 U.S.C. §§ 8118, 8122  
Title 38 U.S.C. § 8122  
Title 38 U.S.C. § 8163(c)(4)  
Title 38 U.S.C. § 8122  
Title 38 U.S.C. § 8122(a)(3)  
Title 38 U.S.C. §§ 8161-8169  
Title 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4370d  
Title 42 U.S.C. §§ 9601-9675  
VA Directive 0011, 0055, 0057, 0059, 0062, 0063, 0064, 0065  
VA Handbook 0055.1  
VA Handbook 0055.2  
VA Handbook 0637  
VA EUL Handbook and Directive 7415

## **9.6 OFFICE OF BUSINESS OVERSIGHT**

The Office of Business Oversight (OBO) is the Department's primary quality assurance organization for finance, logistics, and capital-asset management activities. Other functions include improving internal review coverage of VA field activities, ensuring consistent application of policy, procedures, and regulations, and ensuring the integrity of VA financial operations. The OBO's Director's Office and two supporting services – Management Quality Assurance Service (MQAS) and Internal Controls Service (ICS) – are located in Austin, TX.

### **Functions and Tasks**

MQAS reviews the Department's financial, logistics, and capital asset management activities, and conducts financial analysis and monitoring to support the field station reviews as part of the Annual Review Plan.

- Conducts compliance/internal audit reviews of the Department's financial, logistics, and capital asset management activities, primarily at field stations.

- Ensures recommendations contained in reports are implemented by the field.
- Performs financial analysis and monitoring to support the field stations reviews.
- Provides advisory services for VA's Chief Financial Officer and other customer groups as requested.

ICS reviews internal controls over financial reporting.

- Performs internal control assessments of VA's internal controls over financial reporting, remediation activities, and the preparation of the Department's annual Statement of Assurance related to internal controls over financial reporting.
- Tests VA's internal controls over financial reporting.
- Remediates deficiencies found in the assessment and testing of VA's internal controls over financial reporting.
- Prepares the Department's annual Statement of Assurance related to internal controls over financial reporting.
- Coordinates the VA Senior Assessment Team's conduct of business on issues of enterprisewide importance, such as internal controls over financial reporting.

ICS tests and remediates VA's USAspending.gov submissions/program established to fulfill requirements of the Transparency Act, which requires all Government agencies to report all expenditures spending on the Web site.

- Tests VA's USAspending.gov submissions.
- Remediates deficiencies found in VA's USAspending.gov submissions and program.

### **Authorities**

OMB Circular A-123

OMB Circular A-123

P.L. 97-255

P.L. 109-282

## **9.7 OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT**

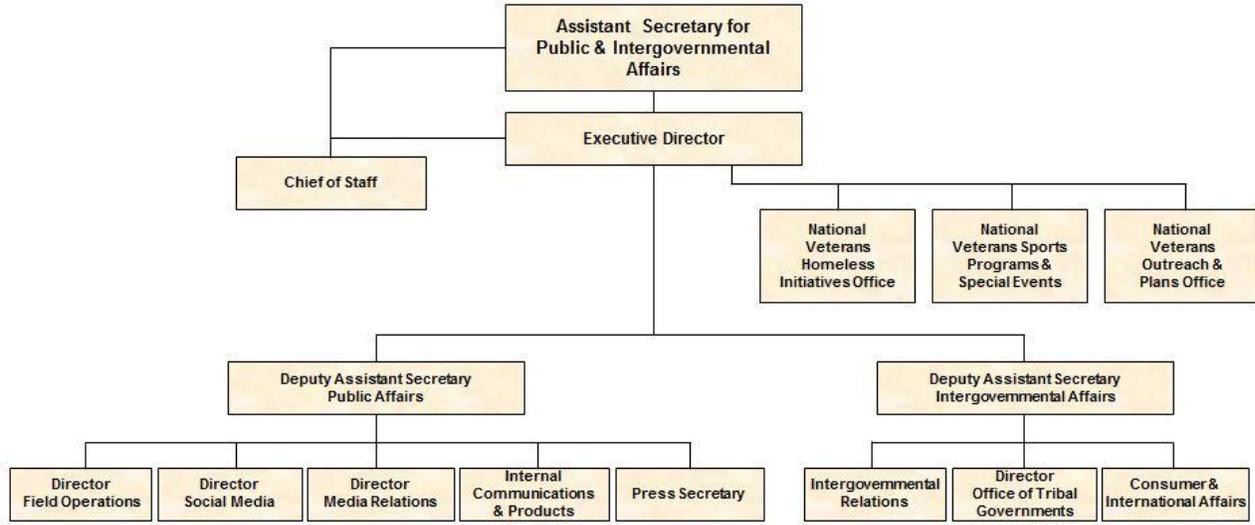
The goal of the newly established Office of Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) is to implement a VA-wide enterprise risk management program to effectively manage risks and obtain clear line of sight for critical risks in order to provide sustained performance improvement and improve the VA's ability to successfully accomplish its mission.

Key milestones for the Office for FY 2013 include:

- Establish an ERM Program Management Office to execute key activities of program coordination across VA.
  - Establish an ERM organizational framework with defined roles and responsibilities, and an ERM governance framework to provide direction, guidance, resources, and oversight.
-

- Develop and execute ERM communications and training to increase visibility with key stakeholders, and increase understanding, adoption and awareness of ERM policy and guidelines.
- Develop a Top 10 Risk Register to monitor critical risk issues for the department and serve as the benchmark for future ERM work and analysis.
- Conduct initial risk management projects from a cross-section of Administration and Staff Offices to further develop and refine ERM risk tools and practices.

## 10 OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS (OPIA)



### Mission Statement

The Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs (OPIA) builds and maintains public confidence in the Department of Veterans Affairs by positively reinforcing its commitment and readiness to serve America's Veterans of all generations. OPIA develops, updates, and communicates the Department's key messages to many audiences through media relations, public affairs, intergovernmental affairs, outreach, and Veteran engagement to reach Veterans and their families, other beneficiaries, and stakeholders.

### Functions and Tasks

Communications.

- Oversees the Department's communications with Veterans, the general public, VA employees and the news media.
- Develops, maintains, and communicates the Department's message through media relations, and public, intergovernmental, and Veteran engagement to empower Veterans and their families.
- Directs the Department's intergovernmental, international, and consumer affairs programs.
- Oversees the Homeless Veteran Initiative Office.
- Directs the Department's National Veterans Sports Program and Special Events Office.
- Directs the Department's National Veterans Outreach Office.
- Builds confidence in the VA and its readiness to serve America's Veterans of all generations.

## 10.1 HOMELESS VETERANS INITIATIVES OFFICE (HVIO)

### **Mission Statement**

The Homeless Veterans Initiatives Office (HVIO) will lead VA's efforts to prevent and eliminate homelessness among Veterans and their families by 2015. HVIO will guide policy, planning, and coordination by utilizing a comprehensive continuum of care focused on six pillars: Outreach and Education; Prevention; Treatment; Income, Employment and Benefits; Housing and Supportive Services; and Community Partnerships. There will be unprecedented Federal, state, and local collaboration.

### **Functions and Tasks**

HVIO develops policy, conducts inter- and intra-agency coordination, and develops and maintains strategic external partnerships to implement VA's plan to end Veterans homelessness. HVIO represents the Department to the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) and provides the designated Federal official who leads the VA's congressionally mandated Advisory Committee on Homeless Veterans.

Provides strategies to transform homelessness solutions from temporary and shelter-based options to prevention and permanent housing solutions.

- Coordinates with HUD to release point-in-time (PIT) data on homelessness among Veterans.
- Works with the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness to obtain commitments from other Federal partners to assist Veterans.
- Works with VHA and Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to ensure Veterans are provided permanent housing and comprehensive VA case management through the HUD-VASH (VA's Supportive Housing) Program.
- Develops and coordinates critical legislative authorizations and program re-authorizations to advance the program.
- Administers a national homeless outreach campaign to increase awareness of VA services for homeless and at-risk Veterans.
- Operates the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans hotline.
- Participated in the grant review, award development and notification for Special Needs Grants for Homeless Veterans Service Providers to continue providing enhanced services for homeless Veterans who are seriously mentally ill, women Veterans, including women with children, the elderly, or those who may be terminally ill.
- Develops and fields special programs such as the Homeless Veteran Supportive Employment Program (HVSEP) to hire homeless or formerly homeless Veterans as Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists (VRS).

- Participates in the grant review, award development and notification for Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) grants to prevent homelessness among Veterans and their families.
- Works with HUD to complete Housing Inventory Count (HIC) of available VA-funded homeless beds. This assists with accurate assessments of homelessness among Veterans and informs communities about available local resources.
- Enhances “no wrong door” philosophy as Veterans access an increasing array of Federal-state, local, faith-based and community programs and services by exploring ways to make VA foreclosed properties and commercially owned properties available to Veterans and community partners for permanent housing.

**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 2066

**10.2 OFFICE OF NATIONAL VETERANS SPORTS PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS****Mission Statement**

The Office of National Veterans Sports Programs & Special Events’ (NVSP&SE) mission is to motivate, encourage, and sustain participation and competition in adaptive sports among disabled Veterans and members of the Armed Forces through partnerships with VA clinical personnel as well as national and community-based adaptive sports programs. The office achieves this mission by providing information and resources to disabled Veterans, their support networks and those in the adaptive sports community.

**Functions and Tasks**

Manages national Veterans special events programs at a fixed-site, the Summer Sports Clinic, the Winter Sports Clinic, and the Training-Exposure-Experience (TEE) Tournament.

- Organizes broad spectrum of rehabilitative activities for Veterans and disabled members of the Armed Forces to meet event goals and objectives.
- Coordinates with host facilities to arrange the full spectrum of services (facilities, lodging, medical support, financing, communications, and other requirements) to properly prepare for and execute events.
- Generates and maintains cooperative relations and sponsorship with Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), adaptive sports organizations, and other relevant entities.
- Establishes media relations and information networks to publicize and support adaptive sports events campaigns.
- Integrates all activities to complement other adaptive sports and special programs and manages resources in a cost-effective manner.

Manages national Veterans special events programs rotating host facilities: Creative Arts Festival, Golden Age Games, and Wheelchair Games.

- Organizes a broad spectrum of rehabilitative activities for Veterans and disabled members of the Armed Forces to meet event goals and objectives.
- Coordinates with each host facility to arrange the full spectrum of services (facilities, lodging, medical support, financing, lodging, communications, and other requirements integral to preparation and execution of event).
- Generates and maintains cooperative relations and sponsorship with VSOs, adaptive sports organizations and other relevant entities.
- Enacts media relations and information networks to support event and adaptive sports strategic information campaign.
- Conducts all activities in an integrated fashion to complement other adaptive sports and special programs and manage resources in a cost effective manner.
- Conducts annual comprehensive site survey and selection programs to determine host location for each event.

Manages VAs' national observance and special events functions, such as Veterans Day and Memorial Day observances and products.

- Coordinates and orchestrates event activities such as the National Veterans Day Observation at Arlington National Cemetery.
- Composes and publishes event products such as the Teachers Guide, distributed nationwide, and media products such as posters and Web-based information presentations.
- Maintains the Veterans Day Regional Site program.
- Oversees the National Veterans Day Committee and interaction of VSOs in special events.

Manages VA's Paralympic Program to create awareness, opportunities, and sustained participation in adaptive sports among Veterans and disabled members of the Armed Forces.

- Manages the Paralympic Program grant in partnership with the U.S. Olympic Committee's U.S. Paralympics to enhance and expand local community-based adaptive sports programs.
- Administers the monthly assistance allowance program for Veterans in connection with U.S. Paralympics.
- Develops public-private partnership sponsorship of adaptive sport and special event programs.
- Develops strategic communication programs to support adaptive sport and grant programs.
- Manages grant monitoring and reporting processes to ensure compliance with congressional guidance and VA goals and objectives.

Provides VA clinicians with informational tools and resources to assist them in promoting the benefits of adaptive sports.

- Creates programs to educate and disseminate knowledge of adaptive sport programs to VA clinicians, such as the Rehabilitative Adaptive Sport Conference.
- Delivers strategic communications campaigns to inform and educate, using Web-based tools and traditional media-based products.
- Creates new products to inform the public such as the Adaptive Sports Toolkit.

**Authorities**

P.L. 110-389 §703

P.L. 106-579 § 3181

**10.3 NATIONAL VETERANS OUTREACH OFFICE****Mission Statement**

The National Veterans Outreach Office coordinates outreach program activities and related communications efforts throughout the Department of Veterans Affairs to increase Veterans' awareness and confidence in VA's health care, benefits, and services.

**Functions and Tasks**

Coordinates outreach program activities.

- Produces bi-annual outreach report.
- Develops and maintains Outreach Guide, the Outreach intranet page, and the centralized Outreach Database.
- Conducts outreach training for VA employees who serve in designated outreach duty assignments.

Coordinates outreach program communications.

- Develops advertising policy.
- Administers/supports VA advertising board.
- Develops and enforces graphic standards.
- Develops and administers national advertising plans.

Increases Veterans' awareness and confidence in VA's health care, benefits, and services.

- Conducts pro-active outreach to military Servicemembers before they transition to the Veteran population. Participates in military service organization national events (e.g., AUSA, Air Force Association, Navy League) to educate Veterans and their eligible beneficiaries about the Department.
- Develops partnerships with government, non-government, and private organizations to enhance outreach activities.

Coordinates communication planning activities.

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- Develops centralized planning calendar of outreach activities.
- Develops and distributes themes and messages.
- Coordinates communications to promote common VA goals.

**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 6301-6308

**10.4 OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS****Mission Statement**

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) provides Veterans and their families' information through various media channels about VA benefits and programs. Through the preparation and dissemination of various communications materials, the Office provides essential information on program eligibility and operations to a variety of public entities. It maintains close liaison with media representatives and monitors print and broadcast news activity. It provides responses to inquiries concerning data and information about Department operations and policy.

**Functions and Tasks**

Manages VACO's media relations program.

- Responds to media inquiries.
- Produces external media products (media releases, media advisories, fact sheets).
- Coordinates media responses with VACO staff, VA Directorates and VA Administrations.
- Builds and maintains relationships with news media to facilitate ongoing dialogue and balanced news coverage.

Provides field public affairs support to Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN), Memorial Service Networks (MSN), and benefits centers nationwide.

- Coordinates regional press inquiries with VACO and supported VISNs, MSNs and benefits centers.
- Provides event support packages.
- Provides on-site public affairs support to traveling senior VACO leadership as required.
- Trains VISN, MSN, and benefits center public affairs personnel in their respective regions.
- Provides public affairs advice and counsel to VA regional leadership.
- Provides public affairs training and pre-event media preparation/coaching for senior VA personnel.

Educates and informs internal audiences and key stakeholders through production and distribution of internal media products.

- Produces, films, and distributes timely video stories and products, including "The American Veteran."

- Composes and publishes the “Vanguard” magazine for VA and key stakeholder organizations.
- Maintains timely and up-to-date photographic records of major VA activities and publishes them for key stakeholder use.
- Provides subject matter expert-level training and video production expertise to VACO and the directorates.

Manages the VA’s main online and social media presence to educate and inform key stakeholders via digital technology.

- Maintains the Department’s flagship blog, “Vantage Point.”
- Manages VA’s main Web governance and oversight process.
- Manages VA’s Facebook, Twitter, and social media policy.
- Provides online stories to complement internal media products.
- Provides subject matter expert-level training to VACO and directorates for online and social media interaction.

Provides public affairs advice and support to the SECVA and Office of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (OSVA).

- Briefs the SECVA and OSVA daily on media reports and trends concerning VA.
- Provides senior advice and counsel to the SECVA and OSVA.
- Synchronizes the Department’s messages with the OCLA.
- Provides direct support to the SECVA while on official travel.

#### **10.4.1 Office of Field Operations**

##### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Field Operations provides Department-level public affairs support throughout the United States and Puerto Rico to ensure that VA’s public and internal messages are provided to key stakeholders in the regions it supports. Field Operations provides public affairs advice and expertise via seven regional offices in New York, Washington, DC, Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, and Los Angeles.

##### **Functions and Tasks**

The Office of Field Operations is OPIA’s regional presence that:

- Facilitates interviews and responses to media queries in coordination with VACO Office of Media Relations and regional subject matter experts in their area of support.
- Distributes OPIA-generated media releases, media advisories, and internal field support packages for designated VA events to ensure synchronization of messages and effectiveness of information distributed to Veterans and key stakeholders.

- Provides on-site support as requested to senior regional and national VA leadership for press interviews and public engagements, including support to the SECVA as required.
- Plans and executes training for VA facility public affairs personnel on a periodic basis to ensure presence of a cadre of competent VA public affairs personnel nationwide.
- Provides senior advice and counsel to VA facilities and leaders throughout the country to ensure synchronization of VA's message.

## **10.5 OFFICE OF MEDIA RELATIONS (OMR)**

### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Media Relations (OMR) serves as the Department's main conduit with the news media.

### **Functions and Tasks**

OMR plans and directs the Department's public affairs program. OMR employees help plan issue-driven public affairs campaigns, manage, and execute media events (press conferences, interviews, roundtables, media support to major VA events, etc.); coordinate public affairs events with the Department's three Administrations and key program offices; draft, distribute, and maintain news releases and fact sheets, communications plans, white papers, and similar products; and train subject matter experts and Public Affairs Officers to develop their skills and improve their interactions with the news media.

Specific functions and tasks.

- Drafts, coordinates, and implements communications plans.
- Composes, coordinates, and distributes news releases, talking points and related documents.
- Identify key news media personnel appropriate for an event, establish communications, and provide targeted written products to the news media.
- Provide detailed after-action reports and lessons learned to continuously improve the Department's public image.

Coordinates with VA's three Administrations, Staff Offices, and major programs.

- Maintains a full roster of public affairs professionals and subject matter experts.
- Supports public affairs training for VA offices.
- Establishes protocols and tools to ensure key offices are kept informed of printed articles, broadcast reports, and news queries/responses provided by OMR personnel.

Drafts, distributes and archives written products.

- Establishes protocols and relationships with program offices and provides accurate, timely and comprehensive information to enable them to create quality written products.

- Identifies key news media outlets and appropriate personnel and provides them with VA's written products.
- Contracts with commercial subject matter experts to archive written products, distribute news releases and gather news clippings.

#### Training.

- Plans and administers an annual national public affairs training conference, which trains more than 250 Public Affairs Officers and outreach specialists.
- Provides period training for facility- and regional-level Public Affairs Officers. Develops written products for public affairs training and provides tailored training for the Department's Public Affairs Career Specialists.

#### **Authorities**

VA Handbook 8500

### **10.6 OFFICE OF ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Online Communications leverages existing and emergent Web-based technologies to provide the right information to the right VA stakeholder at the right time.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Online Communications creates and maintains a coordinated Web culture across the enterprise to enhance the end-user experience on all of the Department's Web sites.

#### Outreach via social media.

- Provides multiple, daily Facebook, and Twitter updates with valuable VA information, and connects with Veterans through comments, blogs, and discussions.
- Creates and posts YouTube videos that highlight the work of VA employees and provides important information about the benefits and services that VA offers.
- Updates and maintains VA's Flickr site, which contains more than 11,000 photos and more than 1.1 million views.
- Researches and updates VA information posted on the blog Vantage Point.

#### Social media enforcement and standardization.

- Monitors and maintains the standards of VA's Web-based social media tools.

#### Web Governance.

- Manages the Web Governance Board, which is responsible for training, standardization, and enforcement for VA's expansive Web properties.

- Creates enterprisewide Web 101 training courses to enable Web Managers across the Department to update and maintain VA's Web sites.
- On behalf of the Board and with the input and participation of VA's three main Administrations, Online Communications leads the standardization of VA's Web presence. Online Communications enforces VA's minimum requirements for specific Web properties and ensures compliance with mandated standards.

**Authorities**

VA Directive 6515

VA Web Governance Board Charter (as of March 2012, awaiting SECVA signature)

**10.7 OFFICE OF MEDIA PRODUCTS AND INTERNAL COMMUNICATION (OMP AND IC)****Mission Statement**

The Office of Media Products and Internal Communication (OMP and IC) creates and distributes various communication products designed through video, print, and online media to inform external and internal audiences of the many benefits, services, and programs available to Veterans and how they may access those benefits. It provides Departmentalwide technical guidance, editorial expertise, and production standardization for internal media products released by the VA.

**Functions and Tasks**

OMP and IC produces audio, visual, and textual products for print, broadcast, and digital formats, and distributes them to VA facilities, offices, and sites for use by employees, Veterans, family members, VSOs, and community partners. The products are also used to highlight the daily work, as well as the special achievements of VA employees in delivering care and benefits to our Nation's Veterans.

Publishes VAnguard, the national employee magazine of VA, which communicates leadership's priorities to employees and shows how employees can individually contribute to mission success.

- Produces VACO daily broadcast messages, which are internal messages that run up to two weeks and are used to inform VACO employees of upcoming events, deadlines, retirements, etc.
- Produces a weekly televised news program, VA News, to highlight news, activities, recognition, and program information of interest to VA employees and Veterans.
- Provides the official VA biographies for Senior Executive Service (SES) employees.
- Distribute key all-employee messages on individual Earnings and Leave statements.

Produces field support packages to support facility involvement in special events, activities, and programs, such as national commemorative programs (Veterans Day) and program events (VA Research Week).

- Produces the Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors (English and Spanish editions), which is an annually updated handbook that provides a digest of all VA and other Federal benefits for Veterans as well as directory of all VA facilities and benefits access points. Annually ranked by Government Printing Office (GPO) as one of Top 5 “best-selling” Federal publications.
- Develops and publishes SECVA messages.
- Produces “Hey VA,” a brief message intended for all VA employees distributed daily through various VA intranet sites, VistA, and VA email networks. Focuses on employee and facility achievements, important policy changes, and Departmental initiatives.
- Produces the Department’s monthly TV news magazine, “The American Veteran,” for Veterans, Servicemembers, and their families.

## **10.8 OFFICE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS (IGA)**

### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA) provides VA leadership (Office of the Secretary and Under Secretaries for Health, Benefits and Memorial Affairs, as well as other Staff Offices to the Secretary) with strategic advice, guidance and information by fostering partnerships, and acting as liaison between state, local, tribal, insular, and international governments.

### **Functions and Tasks**

Manages VA’s Intergovernmental Affairs program.

- Advances an extensive relationship with the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and pertinent offices in other Federal Government agencies.
- Establishes partnerships and builds relationships with state and local government officials and the associations that represent them.
- Develops memoranda of understanding to formalize relationships between VA and the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs and other organizations.

Manages VA’s International Affairs program.

- Coordinates foreign visits with other Federal agencies, such as Department of State and DoD.
- Coordinates SECVA and Deputy Secretary visits to foreign countries.
- Coordinates visits by foreign dignitaries to the SECVA and Under Secretaries.

Manages Consumer Affairs Program.

- Serves as the VACO advocate for Veterans and their families.
- Provides consultation services for patient representatives and consumer affairs programs at VA field locations, state, and local governments, and other Federal Government agencies.
- Resolves individual and organizational consumer complaints.

- Responds to queries and comments from VA's Internet Web page, emails, letters, phone, and fax.
- Analyzes trends and issues for leadership to ensure the Department responds to various issues and events in a timely and effective manner.

**Authorities**

E.O. 12372

E.O. 12160

**10.9 OFFICE OF TRIBAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS****Mission Statement**

The Office of Tribal Government Relations consults with American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments to develop partnerships that enhance access to services and benefits by Veterans and their families.

**Functions and Tasks**

The Office of Tribal Government Relations (OTGR) ensures VA maintains open dialog and has positive relations with American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments. OTGR seeks to have American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments view VA as an organization of integrity that advocates for their needs. The VA demonstrates its commitment to Veterans by being culturally competent, respecting the unique sovereign status of Tribes, and by reaching Veterans in Indian country to ensure that all Veterans know how to access VA services and benefits.

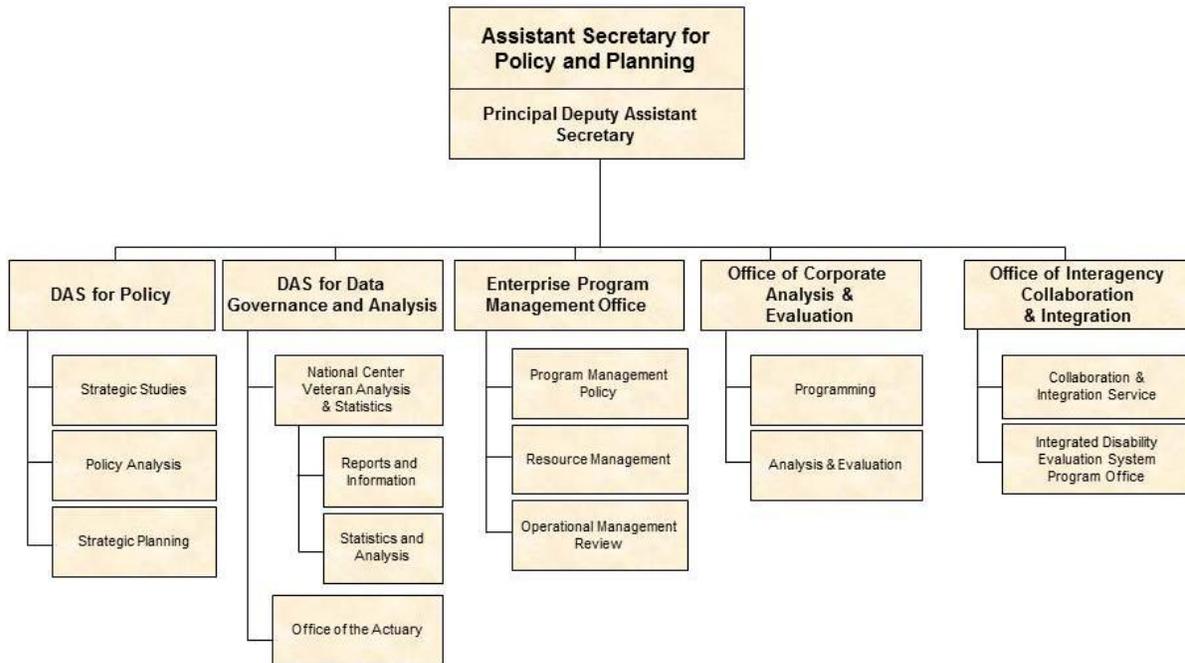
- Increases access to health care.
- Promotes economic sustainability.
- Establishes and implements the VA Tribal Consultation Policy.

**Authorities**

E.O. 13175

VA Tribal Consultation Policy

## 11 OFFICE OF POLICY AND PLANNING (OPP)



### Mission Statement

The Office of Policy and Planning (OPP) serves as the principal advisor to the SECVA for policy and strategy, enabling the Secretary to make well-informed resource allocation and policy decisions based on verifiable data; sound program management principles; and validated analytical, programmatic, and strategic projections.

### 11.1 OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POLICY AND PLANNING

#### Mission Statement

The Office of Policy and Planning's (OPP) mission is to be the principal advisor to the SECVA for policy and strategy, leading the Departmental efforts in matters of:

- Strategy and strategic planning.
- Governance.
- Policy development and analysis.
- Data governance.
- Transformation and innovation.
- Program management.
- Multi-year programming.
- Program analysis and evaluation.
- VA/DoD coordination.

**Functions**

- Provides comprehensive, coherent, forward-leaning mechanisms for strategy development, strategic planning, and governance that foster balanced decision-making across the Department.
- Develops forward-looking, proactive, and integrated policy capability.
- Serves as an authoritative clearinghouse for Veteran data and statistics, statistical analysis, and modeling.
- Provides effective oversight of the planning and execution of the Department's major transformational initiatives, to include the long-term integration of those activities into the routine operations of the Department.
- Develops Departmentwide world-class program management that leads to improved services to our Veterans and their eligible beneficiaries.
- Provides strategic planning and multi-year, enterprise programming functions of the Department. OPP coordinates with the Office of Management, which is responsible for the Department's overall budgeting processes and enterprise performance evaluation, to facilitate a robust VA Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) system that supports decision-making, strategic resource allocation, and stewardship of resources.
- Identifies and coordinates the implementation of enterprise business process improvements based on major initiative and pilot project implementation, with emphasis on human resources, acquisition, and information technology processes.
- Fosters interoperability, alignment, and joint policy development between DoD and VA resulting in implementation and execution of high priority programs and initiatives that improve outcomes for Veterans.

**Authorities**

Title 38 Part I, Chapter § 308

**11.2 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POLICY****Overview**

The Office of Policy provides forward-leaning strategic development and concept analysis capabilities that identify long-range issues and drive innovation and transformation across the Department.

**Functions and Tasks**

Manages planning and governance capabilities focused on strategic outcomes that influence strategies, programs, and resources.

- Develops and maintains the Department's strategic plan.
- Develops bi-annual Department priority goals.

- Manages the development, refinement, and execution of the Department's Quadrennial Strategic Planning Process.
- Chairs the Department's cross-organizational Strategic Planning Team to collaboratively execute VA's Quadrennial Strategic Planning Process.
- Provides guidance, support, and expertise to assist the Administrations' and Staff Offices' internal strategic planning efforts so that they align to and implement the Department's strategic plan.

Conducts proactive policy analysis that is externally engaged and internally aligned.

- Establishes and maintains a 5-year VA policy agenda identifying those policies that need to be assessed and analyzed to ensure VA addresses emerging needs and is postured flexibly for the future.
- Establishes and encourages a national Veteran policy field of study, to include establishing long-term relationships with both Governmental and non-governmental organizations.
- Identifies, examines and "incubates" emerging policy issues and special projects.
- Chairs the Veteran Policy Working Group to collaboratively address emerging policy issues and the 5-year VA Policy Agenda.

Develops long-term insights and perspectives on emerging Veterans' issues.

- Performs environmental scans to acquire and use information about events, trends, and relationships in the Department's external environment.
- Performs alternate futures analysis to lay out a representative spectrum of different future worlds that illustrate the possible environments in which the VA will need to operate in the future.
- Performs scenario-based analyses to analyze possible futures by considering alternative possible outcomes, and determines the most flexible strategies for the Department to operate within that future environment.
- Coordinates with other agencies, especially DoD, to align environmental scan and strategic studies activities to inform VA's efforts and ensure they are consistent with partner agencies.
- Performs issue-based analyses and reporting on long-range issues judged by key leaders, subject matter experts, environment scan participants, or strategic studies team members, to be most influential to future operations within the VA.

Manages Departmental governance processes.

- Develops, maintains, and facilitates VA's governance process to improve SECVA/DEPSECVA/COS decision-making.
- Administratively supports the conduct and reporting of the Department's Senior Review Group (SRG), Strategic Management Council (SMC), and VA Executive Board (VAEB).

- Establishes, maintains, and supports integrated, cross-Department synchronization of activities and information to aid timely senior leadership planning and decision-making.

### **Authorities**

Government Performance Results Modernization Act of 2010, Section 2

Strategic Planning Amendments, Section 5

Federal Government Agency, Priority Goals, Section 10

Title 38, § 308(b)(3)

## **11.3 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR DATA GOVERNANCE AND ANALYSIS**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Data Governance and Analysis is to be the authoritative organization for data governance, Veteran data and statistics, statistical analysis, and modeling to support planning, analysis, and decision-making activities.

### **Overview**

The Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Data Governance and Analysis provides a robust data analysis and predictive modeling capability to support strategic and programmatic planning, as well as policy development, with empirical analysis.

### **Functions and Tasks**

The Office is the authoritative organization for data governance, Veteran data and statistics, statistical analysis, and modeling.

- Documents high-level business processes to identify authoritative data sources and systems.
- Establishes an enterprisewide data governance and stewardship program that assigns roles and responsibilities for data quality and data refresh standards.
- Develops statistical models that are capable of supporting business model and service delivery options and analysis.
- Develops interactive mapping tools and products that illustrate current and future Veteran demographic and socio-economic status.

Manages the Department's business intelligence tools and processes.

- Facilitates collaborative efforts that result in the formulation of processes to identify authoritative data sources and systems.
- Leads the Department's effort to implement and manage VA's data governance and data stewardship programs.
- Manages enterprise collaboration and coordination of services necessary to develop statistical models.

Manages the resources required for developing interactive mapping tools and products, manages the Department's data, and performs statistical analysis.

- Produces and disseminates data and statistical analysis products.
- Establishes and documents business rules to identify authoritative sources for data elements contained in U.S.VETS. Validates raw data sources prior to integration into U.S.VETS.
- Thoroughly documents all validation findings and corrective action.

Performs actuarial analysis.

- Constructs predictive models to support data-driven decision making about capital investments, financial modeling, and cost estimation.
- Plans and conducts quarterly actuarial valuations of the compensation, pension, and burial programs.

### **Authorities**

Title 38, U.S.C. §§ 308, 512

Title 38 U.S.C. § 527

P.L. 108-454 § 805

## **11.4 ENTERPRISE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OFFICE**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Enterprise Program Management Office is to improve overall program management in VA through the development and implementation of program management doctrine, standards, and methodologies across the Department.

### **Functions and Tasks**

Provides effective oversight of the planning and execution of the Department's major transformational initiatives, including the long-term integration of those activities into the routine operations of the Department.

- Employs program assessment to gauge program maturity and, when appropriate, to recommend transition to sustainment.
  - Migrates selected MI to the Administrations and Staff Offices for long-term sustainment and routine operations.
  - Provides world-class program management leading to improved services to our Veterans and their eligible beneficiaries.
  - With OALC, develops comprehensive certification and/or credential requirements for program managers assigned to the MI.
  - Provides specific guidance for certification of MI program managers at the appropriate level per VA guidance.
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- Develops VA acquisition program management life-cycle doctrine, a set of governed, repeatable processes for formally creating, managing and closing acquisition programs that deliver new or enhanced business capabilities.
- Establishes requirements development and management doctrine that aligns the VA strategic plan, PPBE, and enterprisewide solutions.
- Transforms reporting and data systems into mechanisms to ensure success of the MI.
- Identifies and coordinates implementation of enterprise business process improvements that result from major initiative and pilot project implementation, with emphasis on human resources, acquisition, and IT processes.
- Captures and documents best practices, lessons learned and process improvements with potential high returns on investment.
- Communicates proposed business process improvements to process owners and VA leaders.
- Monitors process and/or business owner implementation of appropriate process improvements.

**Authorities**

P.L. 111-252

OMG Circular A-11

Government Performance and Results Act, 1993

Clinger-Cohen Act 1996

**11.5 OFFICE OF CORPORATE ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION (CA&E)****Mission Statement**

The mission of Corporate Analysis and Evaluation (CA&E) is to be the independent assessment organization that provides VA leadership with objective analysis to inform strategic decision-making.

**Overview**

The Office of CA&E embeds a planning, programming, budgeting, and evaluation (PPBE) process in the Department that improves strategic decision-making and aligns resources to achieve Department and Administration priorities.

**Functions and Tasks**

Executes a PPBE process in VA to facilitate decision-making, strategic resources allocation, and stewardship of the Department's resources.

- Manages VA's programmatic alignment.
- Administers VA's programming database.

- Facilitates VA's corporate programming governance structure for vetting resource allocation recommendations.
- Executes analyses to inform the strategic resource allocation recommendations with rigorous requirements analysis, cost analysis, cost-benefit analysis, and analysis of alternatives.

Conducts program evaluations.

### **Authorities**

38 U.S.C. § 308(b)

11 U.S.C. § 527

## **11.6 OFFICE OF INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION AND INTEGRATION**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Office of Interagency Collaboration and Integration is to facilitate the development of joint policies and programs between VA and DoD, and other agencies as required.

### **Overview**

The goal of this Office is to work collaboratively with DoD and other agencies to avoid duplication between the Departments, remove organizational barriers, and produce better outcomes in health care delivery and benefits services for Servicemembers and Veterans.

### **Functions and Tasks**

Fosters interoperability, alignment, and joint policy development between DoD and VA resulting in implementation and execution of high priority programs and initiatives that improve outcomes for Veterans and Servicemembers.

- Provides planning and support for multiple VA/DoD governance bodies, such as the joint VA/DoD Secretarial Meetings, VA/DoD Joint Executive Committee (JEC), and the Executive Steering Committee of the Veterans Employment Initiative Task Force.
- Serves as the program office for implementation of the VA/DoD Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) and for streamlining the VA/DoD disability evaluation process through continual process improvements.
- Provides oversight for the development and implementation of the integrated Electronic Health Record (iEHR) and Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER).
- In coordination with DoD, develops and monitors the execution of the VA/DoD Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) to synchronize these activities.
- In coordination with DoD, develops and publishes the VA/DoD Annual Report to Congress on VA/DoD collaboration issues.

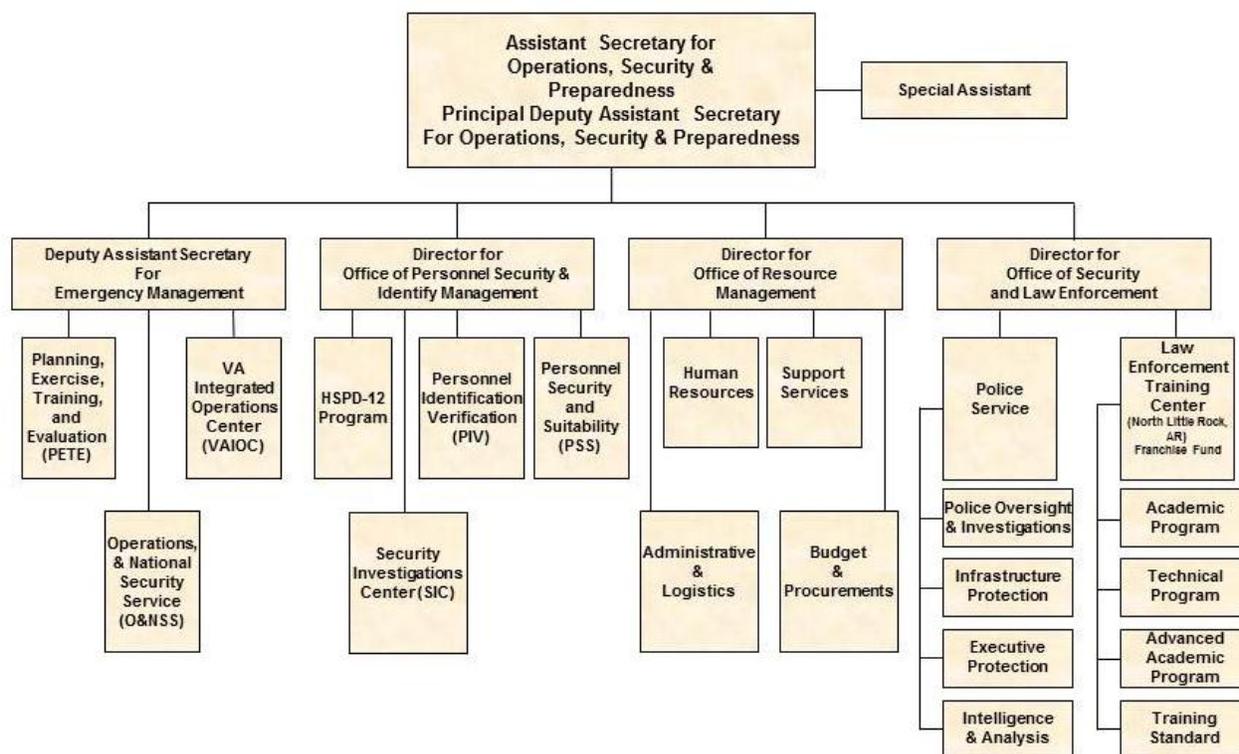
- The Office is also responsible for coordinating VA responses to external requirements and mandates, and for coordinating a VA-wide perspective in all VA/DoD collaboration activities and initiatives.

**Authorities**

Title 38 Part I, Chapter 3 § 320.

Department of Veterans Affairs/DoD Joint Executive Committee

## 12 OFFICE OF OPERATIONS, SECURITY, AND PREPAREDNESS (OSP)



### Mission Statement

Office of Operations, Security, and Preparedness (OSP) will raise preparedness of the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide services and protect people and assets continuously and in time of crisis.

### Overview

The Assistant Secretary for OSP coordinates VA's emergency management, preparedness, identity management, physical security, personnel security and suitability, police services and law enforcement activities, and ensures compliance and resource management in the OSP so the Department can continue to perform mission-essential functions under all circumstances across the spectrum of threats. OSP directs and provides oversight for VA's overall operations for planning, response, and security and law enforcement programs in support of the National Response Framework, Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 12, and other related executive orders and Federal regulations.

### 12.1 OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR FOR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (ORM)

#### Mission Statement

To ensure compliance with VA policies, directives, laws, and Executive Orders in the OSP by effectively managing human resources, budget and financial accounting and reporting, procurements, administrative and logistical, and support service activity.

**Functions and Tasks**

The Office of Resource Management (ORM) facilitates the execution of Human Resources Management, Financial and Budget Formulation and Execution, Procurement of Goods and Services, Administrative, Logistical and Support Services for OSP.

**Human Resource Management.**

- Provides classification, recruitment, employee and labor management, USA Staffing and performance management support services.
- Manages employee personnel files.
- Manages the Talent Management Systems (TMS) mandatory training, compliance, and deficiencies.
- Manages all submissions to HRA for hiring, accountability, and recruitment.
- Manages and ensures compliance with Alternative Workplace Arrangement/Agreement (AWPA) telework.
- Provides assistance for labor management, discrimination complaints, EEO complaints, investigation processes and diversity and inclusion activities.
- Ensures human capital processes.
- Manages OSP emergency shutdown furlough.
- Manages all recruitment and hiring reform for OSP employees, to include the franchise fund employees of the Security Investigation Center and the Law Enforcement Training Center employees.

**Administrative and Logistics.**

- Manages non-IT inventory and IT inventory.
- Manages the OSP Transit Benefit Program.
- Provides oversight for the OSP payroll processing.
- Provides procurement and contract management support in reviewing requisitions, supply systems, purchase orders, contracting modifications, waivers, letters, vouchers, invoices, and pre-award documents, such as amendments, purchase requests, invitations for bid, or requests for quotation or proposal.
- Manages space management and allocations in the organization.
- Manages publications control for OSP.
- Provides support to property passes, purchase cards, time and attendance, fair act inventory, BCAG Management and FOIA.
- Manages the time and leave units in OSP and provides oversight for timekeepers.
- Manages the OSP Travel Card Agency Organizational Program.
- Manages the FED Traveler Program.

#### Management of Budget and Financial Accounting and Procurements.

- Provides formulation, preparation, submission, and execution of the OSP internal budget, operating plans, OMB submissions and President's Budget.
- Identifies specific project goals and objectives, and determines the work resources, funding requirements, reporting requirements, and methodology necessary to complete the project.
- Ensures proper execution of OSP operating budget to include budget requests with justifications.
- Ensures prompt payment and oversight for monthly obligations for all billings.
- Provides monthly execution of the monthly performance review.
- Provides oversight for mid-year and internal budget formulation.
- Executes procurement of goods and services.

#### Support Services.

- Coordinates, disseminates and responds to all requests for information from internal and external stakeholders, to include members of Congress, the general public, and other Federal agencies.
- Ensures that OSP's communications are clear, concise, and accurate with VA's position and strategic direction.
- Manages OSP's executive correspondence.
- Ensures usage of technology to enhance processes and decision-making.
- Ensure Privacy Verification Tracking System (PVTs).
- Manages and provides oversight for OSP privacy and records management.
- Manages the OSP FOIA Officer and liaisons to ensure OSP is compliant with all FOIA requests.
- Manages and provides oversight for the correspondence in the VA Intranet Quorum system.
- Reviews internal and external program and policy issues affecting the Office.
- Conducts executive review of correspondence in assigned areas requiring concurrence and/or signature of the Assistant Secretary or top management officials.
- Ensure OSP intranet and Internet policies; manage social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube; serves as OSP liaison between intra- and inter-requests; and communicates Web site policy issues.
- E-Governance requirements for information architecture and ensure 508 compliance.

#### **Authorities**

31 U.S.C. Title 5

31 U.S.C. Title 31

OMB Circular A-11, 76, 50, 123  
Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990  
Federal Managers Integrity Act of 1982  
Government Performance and Accountability Act  
AFGE Master Agreement  
OMB Circular A-127,  
OMB Guidance Memo M-12-09  
OMB Circular A-76  
Office of Federal Procurement Policy Letter 11-01,

**Directives**

0000, 0003, 0004, 0007, 0055, 0062, 0063, 0700, 0633, 4085, 4100, 4900, 5001/1, 5001/3, 5007, 5011, 5975, 5975.1, 5977, 5978, 6300, 6330, 6340, 6371, 6508, 6509, 7002, 7345  
VA Handbooks (0011 – 7816)

**12.2 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT****Mission statement**

To ensure preparedness to meet emergent national needs is one of the 13 major initiatives (MI) in the VA Strategic Plan for FY 2011-2015. VA's third integrated objective is to build our internal capacity to serve Veterans, their families, our employees, and other stakeholders efficiently and effectively by ensuring that VA environments for care and administration are safe, secure, and as free as possible from the threat of physical danger or property loss.

**Functions and Tasks**

VA Integrated Operations Center.

The VA Integrated Operations Centers (VAIOC) ensures the coordinating emergency management and crisis response activities both VA-wide and with other Federal, state, and local agencies. The VAIOC is the Department's focal point for the fusion of information for timely senior leadership decision-making and interagency coordination. The VAIOC is staffed 24/7, and serves to support VA's Comprehensive Emergency Management Program. Within VA, the VAIOC serves as the principal point of contact with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and other Departments and agencies pertaining to emergency management, continuity of operations, domestic incident management, and national security emergency programs.

- The VAIOC is the Department's single office that integrates and fuses all data and provides timely situational awareness and potential recommendations to the Secretary and senior leadership to enable them to properly respond to events and incidents that have the potential to impact VA.
- Receives, integrates, analyzes, disseminates, tracks, and archives information concerning continuous operations and emergent situations/incidents, interagency information,

intelligence, and threat communications that have the potential to effect VA operations, facilities or Veterans.

- Manages and maintains proficiency in VA emergency management operations in support of the SECVA and provides the core staff of Incident Command System (ICS) teams.
- Provides accurate, timely, and complete reports on various incidents in accordance with VA guidance.
- Initiates emergent incident event notification, coordination (and disaster response actions as directed by appropriate ICS authority in accordance with the National Incident Management System).
- Maintains the VAIOC Common Operating Picture.

#### Office of Planning, Exercises, Training, and Evaluation.

- Develops Department policy and plans for emergency management.
- Serves as the Department lead for all emergency management, Homeland Security, and National Security issues.
- Serves as a Department representative for all emergency management, Homeland Security, and National Security issues within the Federal interagency (White House, HHS, FEMA, etc.)
- OSP leads the VA Continuity Program to ensure that the VA can continue essential functions in case of a natural or manmade disaster. The Assistant Secretary for OSP is the Department's Continuity Coordinator, and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Emergency Management is the Department's Continuity Manager. OSP develops Department policy and guidance for Continuity of Operations, Reconstitution and Devolution, and COOP.
- Maintains the Department's presence at the continuity of Government site.
- Manages the Department's line of succession program.
- Serves as lead for emergency management and DHS national-level exercise and training. It is the lead VA office for coordinating emergency management and DHS exercises among the Federal interagency environment including senior official exercises and national-level exercises among others.

#### Office of Operations and National Security Services.

- Maintains the Department's continuity of operations sites.
- Manages VA's secure communications systems and sites.
- Serves as the Department lead for all national security issues.
- Serve as a Department representative for all national security issues within the Federal interagency (White House, DHS, HHS, etc.)
- Manages operational security and insider threat program.

- Coordinates emergency preparedness communications requirements to ensure compliance with national communication system 3-10.
- Develops polices and manages the special security programs including the Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility.
- Coordinates with other agencies and exchanges security information with the Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, DoD, the State Department, and various other agencies.
- Receives and manages intelligence and classified information, and manages classified Government systems for the Department.
- Educates and trains VA employees in classified programs. Develops and disseminates education and training materials (handbooks, pamphlets, newsletters, articles, briefing materials, etc.) for all VA employees involved in classified programs.
- Facilitates the rapid exchange of classified information both within the Department and throughout a large network of key partners and agencies to include the White House, National Archives Records Agency and all members of the intelligence community.
- Verifies and exchanges personnel security clearance information with other Departments and agencies.
- Provides procedures and processes for the proper control and accountability of classified documents.

**Authorities**

32 CFR Part 2001

Title 18 U.S.C. § 793, 794, 798

E.O. 10450

E.O. 12968

E.O. 13555

E.O. 13526

E.O. 13587

HSPD-5

HSPD-7

NSPD-51

HSPD-20

Federal Continuity Directive 1, Federal Executive Branch National Continuity Program and Requirements, February 2008

PPD 8

National Communications Directive 3-10

Intelligence Community Directives (ICD) and Director of Central Intelligence Directives (DCID)

The National Security Act of 1947, as amended

National Communications System Directive (NCSD) 3-10, Dec. 8, 2006.

National Continuity Policy Implementation Plan (NCPIP), August 2007

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National Strategy for Homeland Security

National Incident Management System, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, December 2008

National Response Framework, January 2008

VA Directive 0320, 0321, 0322, 0323.3

VA Strategic Plan FY 2011-2013

### **12.3 OFFICE OF SECURITY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Security and Law Enforcement, through polices and program inspections, protects the people, assets, and properties of VA. Our mission is to provide safe and secure environments for care and service; ensure the maintenance of law and order by ensuring professional law enforcement services; and provide state-of-the-art physical protection of Veterans and the staff who serve them while under the jurisdiction of the Department.

#### **Police Services**

Criminal Investigations and Oversight Compliance.

- Identifies and writes policy, guidance, and regulatory documents that govern VA's security and law enforcement programs.
- Maintains policy guidelines and requirements to properly implement statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Represents the Department on intergovernmental committees and work groups that address physical security, and law enforcement issues and requirements.
- Provides police program inspection, monitoring, and technical advice.
- Develops standards to ensure proper inspection of facility security and law enforcement programs.
- Conducts police program inspections for each VA facility at least once every two years.
- Provides inspection results and findings to VHA leadership regarding their facilities and recommends mitigations and countermeasures to resolve shortfalls and risks.
- Ensures that appropriate corrective action is taken within established time frames.
- Conducts on-site investigations of criminal activity within VA facilities as needed.
- Provides appropriate technical oversight and support of criminal investigations that are conducted by field VA police units.

Intelligence and analysis.

- As a key member of the VA Integrated Operations Center team, provides near real-time incident and event analysis using criminal intelligence and strategic analysis of security risks and crimes facing VA facilities and people.

- Continuously develops and monitors all intelligence and analysis sources from all agencies, Federal Protective Service, United States Secret Service, Federal Bureau of Investigations and all DoD security, and law enforcement agencies.
- Provides daily reviews and analyses of criminal and security-related activity that impact or could impact VA operations.
- Prepares in-depth analysis of crime and security trends to support long-term program development.

#### Executive Protection.

- Monitors all pertinent intelligence and analysis of threats to the senior leaders.
- Provides daily transportation for the executives through fleet management and driver support.
- Provides personal security details for the executives during official in-town and out-of-town travel.
- Shares security-related information within VA and with outside law enforcement officials.
- Provides executive protection to the SECVA and DEPSECVA.

#### Infrastructure Protection.

- Coordinates and provides uniformed contract security coverage with the DHS Federal Protective Service and appropriate outside law enforcement.
- Analyzes and reports crime patterns that may impact VACO employees and visitors.
- Conducts security and risk assessments of VACO space, ensuring that a safe and secure work environment is maintained.
- Provides security design services to VACO tenants, ensuring that appropriate security countermeasures are properly located, and coordinating the purchase of such equipment with the organization.
- Coordinates or conducts criminal investigations of suspected criminal activity occurring within the VACO campus.
- Oversees VACO camps security and provides law enforcement and security expertise in accordance with Interagency Security Committee standards when applicable.
- Provides policy guidance and oversight for VA police field units and serves as the representative to labor unions concerning VA police issues relevant to VA Directive 0730, 0730/1 and VA Handbook 0730 and 0720.

### **Law Enforcement Training Center (LETC)**

#### Training Standards Division.

- Oversees development and continuous updates of all training programs utilizing Instructional Systems Design methodologies.

Prepares and monitors all professional accreditation of training programs.

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- Develops and tracks all LETC directives and policies.
- Monitors all yearly Special Agent/Instructor training and credentialing processes.
- Develops and monitors all testing materials for the LETC.
- Manages and issues all law enforcement badges and credentials.
- Oversees LETC central supply and EIL functions.

#### Technical Division.

- Provides training for the Ground Defense and Recovery Instructor Course to certify VA Police Services Field Instructors in OC, expandable baton, handcuffing, flow drill, and GDR techniques.
- Provides training for the Firearm Instructors Course to certify VA Police Services field trainers in firearms fundamental shooting and coaching, range safety, and range master responsibilities.
- Provides training for the ATR Instructor course to certify VA Police Service field firearm instructors in tactical operations, tactical live-fire, close-quarter battles drills, force on force and marking cartridge training, and active threat response.
- Provides all initial and sustainment training for LETC special agent staff, and supports training efforts and needs for OS&LE special agents located in Washington DC, HQ.
- Provides all initial firearms, OC, baton, defensive tactics, and GDR training and operator certification for the VA basic police officer course.
- Provides all firearms training for the Air Force basic police officer course.
- Supports the VA Police Services nationwide with instructor recertification courses and mobile training teams for specific training.

#### Advance Division.

- Provides advanced courses of instructions in criminal investigations techniques and infrastructure security to enhance VHA's ability to provide a safe and secure environment for Veterans and employees.
- Supports VHA's session planning initiatives through the presentation of VA police-centered supervisory and executive leadership courses.
- Develops courses applicable to non-VA police personnel, which are exportable to medical centers and designed to reduce conflict, mitigate disruptive behavior and enhance patient/employee satisfaction.
- Spearheads and manages customer input initiative through the Senior Field Executive Advisory Council to ensure training provided meets the needs of VAMCs.
- Conducts continuous improvement initiatives to improve quality of training materials and reduce expenditures.

#### Academics Division.

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- Provides basic law enforcement training designed to continually enhance the professionalism of police officers throughout the country, to include VA Police Officer, Department of Air Force Police Officer, Naval Police, and other limited jurisdictional agencies.
- Prepares new and experienced law enforcement professionals to fulfill their responsibilities in a safe manner and at the highest level of proficiency.
- Provides duly appointed VA Police Officers with a specialized orientation to agency law enforcement policies and procedures; training that will ensure the proper exercise of Federal statutory law enforcement authority; and, specialized training that will prepare them for situations that involve patients or persons of diminished capacity.
- Provides police officers with the knowledge, skills, and ability to blend their duties as law enforcement officers with the special needs of the public they serve.
- Fulfill the agency's need for training that will ensure students possess basic police knowledge of and attitude toward Federal laws and agency regulations and procedures, particularly in the law enforcement subjects of arrest, search and seizure, and their related constitutional safeguards.
- Thoroughly explain the guideline standards established by the Office of the Attorney General that require Federal agencies having criminal law enforcement jurisdiction to train all its personnel empowered with law enforcement authority in policies and procedures for preventing the unauthorized use of this authority.
- Fulfill the requirement that VA Police Officers be trained to deal successfully with situations involving patients at VA health care facilities.

### **Authorities**

#### Statutes:

38 U.S.C. 901-Secretary's Authority to Protect Life and Property within the Department's jurisdiction.

38 U.S.C. 902-Authority of Department Police Officers

#### Regulations:

38 CFR 1.200-Employees Duty to Report Criminal Activity

38 CFR 1.218-Security and Law Enforcement of Department Property

#### Policy:

VA Directive and Handbook 0720, 0730, 0730/1, 0730/2 and 0730/3 (currently in draft)

## **12.4 OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR FOR PERSONNEL SECURITY AND IDENTITY MANAGEMENT (OPSIM)**

### **Mission Statement**

The Office of Personnel Security and Identity Management (OPSIM) contributes to a safe and secure environment for the Department of Veterans Affairs through ensuring trust in our VA

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workforce – appointees, employees, contractors, and affiliates. OPSIM enforces VA compliance with Federal personnel security and suitability statutes, regulations, and policies. It manages VA’s compliance with Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12) and delivers a VA Personal Identity Verification (PIV) smartcard credential for access to Federal facilities and information systems.

### **Functions and Tasks**

The Director of OPSIM serves as the executive lead for the VA major initiative (MI) of Preparedness, ensuring the preparedness of VA to meet emergent national needs, as directed in the VA Strategic Plan for FY 2011-2015. It provides the operating plan, sustainment and transition Plan, and provides program management for preparedness MI including the two major sub-programs of HSPD-12 and the Integrated Operations Center (IOC). As directed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Director of OPSIM is responsible for the continued implementation of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12), Policy for a Common Identification Standard for Federal Employees and Contractors, dated February 3, 2011, to ensure the use of the PIV credential is required as the common means of authentication for access to VA’s facilities, networks and information systems. As directed by the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Director of OPSIM serves as the lead for identity management for VA, managing the Departmentwide process of ensuring that people who access VA facilities and systems are identity-proofed, trust, and credentialed at the appropriate level to carry out the work they are assigned.

#### **Personnel Security and Suitability Service.**

- Writes, coordinates, and distributes policies and processes that define VA requirements for compliance with applicable statutes, Executive Orders, and Federal regulations for all VA employees, contractors, and affiliates.
- Conducts training, oversight, and compliance of VA offices that perform personnel security and suitability functions or tasks in accordance with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) program review standards.
- Coordinates requirements and acts as liaison with OPM Federal Investigative Service and other supporting organizations for personnel security.
- Ensures that each appointee, employee, contractor, and affiliate receives the appropriate background investigation commensurate with the designated risk and sensitivity level.
- Conducts the security clearance appeals board as required.
- Coordinates with other agencies and exchanges personnel security and suitability information with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), and other agencies.

#### **Security and Investigations Center (SIC).**

- Directs and operates the Security and Investigations Center, one of the six self-supporting lines of business (VA Enterprise Centers) delivering a leading fee-for-service operation within the Federal Government. The SIC's primary mission is to deliver personnel security and suitability processing and adjudications services, while complying with all laws and regulations, in a timely manner and at a fair and reasonable price.
- Processes, initiates, and adjudicates all high and moderate risk background investigations for VA employee suitability.
- Processes, initiates, and adjudicates all eligibility for access to national security information (security clearances) for VA employees.
- Processes, initiates, and adjudicates all levels of background investigations for VA contractor "fitness" or suitability.

#### Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12) Program Management Office.

- Ensures VA's compliance with Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12) and manages the development and implementation of the Department's HSPD-12 Program.
- Provides policies (directives) and processes (handbooks) that define VA requirements for compliance with HSPD-12 and applicable Federal standards.
- Ensures PIV card issuance for all eligible VA employees, contractors, and affiliates.
- Ensures training, oversight and compliance for all VA PIV card issuance facilities, including assessment and accreditation in accordance with National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) requirements.
- Ensures training and certification for all Personal Identity Verification (PIV) role holders in accordance with Federal Information Processing Standards.
- Ensures life cycle management of the PIV Card Management System as a key authoritative digital identity database in accordance with the Federal Identity Credential and Access Management Roadmap.
- Provides daily oversight and program management for the VA-wide HSPD-12 program, to include execution of the approved operating plan and associated work breakout structures, integrated master schedule, and risk register.
- Conducts coordination and reports compliance to OMB providing monthly reports on VA's HSPD-12 program.
- Ensures VA achieves OMB milestones and objectives for Governmentwide HSPD-12 compliance, including PIV card issuance, Physical Access Control Systems (PACS), and Logical Access Control Systems (LACS).

#### **Authorities**

P.L. 108-458

5 U.S.C.

CFR 731

5 U.S.C.

CFR 732

32 CFR Part 147

E.O. 10450

E.O. 13467

E.O. 13488

E.O. 12968

E.O. 13381

P.L. 108-458

HSPD-12

Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12) dated July 2004

VA Directive 0710 dated June 4, 2010

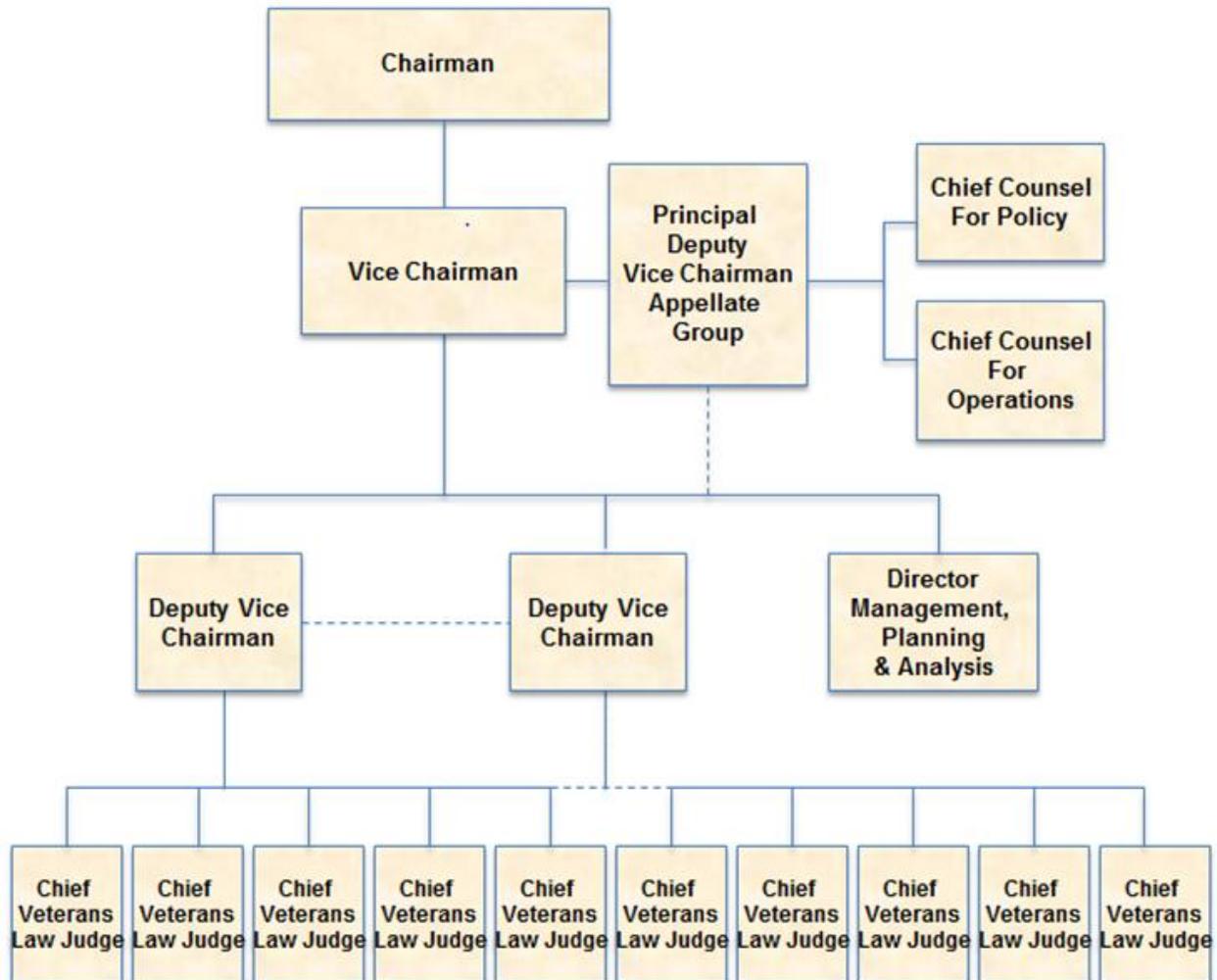
VA Handbook 0710 currently in draft

VA Directive 0735 dated February 17, 2011

VA Handbook 0735 currently in draft

VA Strategic Plan Refresh FY 2011-2015

### 13 BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS (BVA)



#### Mission Statement

The mission of the Board of Veterans' Appeals is to conduct hearings and dispose of appeals properly before the Board in a timely manner.

#### Overview

The Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) was established in 1933 and operates by authority of, and functions pursuant to, Chapter 71 of Title 38, U.S.C. The Board consists of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Principal Deputy Vice Chairman, and sufficient Veterans Law Judges (VLJs), staff counsel, and other administrative and clerical staff to conduct hearings and decide appeals in a proper and timely manner. The Board's organizational structure includes an Office of the Chairman; the Appellate Group; an Office of Management, Planning, and Analysis; and an Office of VLJs. The Appellate Group is led by the Principal Deputy Vice Chairman and includes: the Chief Counsel for Operations; the Chief Counsel for Policy and Procedure; the Chiefs (Senior

Counsel) of Litigation Support, Quality Review, and the Training Office; a Medical Advisor; a Counsel for Labor Relations; several Special Counsel who cover a variety of legal specialty areas; and numerous legal support personnel. The Office of Management, Planning, and Analysis is the administrative directorate of the Board, consisting of the Director, the Deputy Director, the Administrative Support Division, the Decision Team Support Division, and the Financial Management Division. The Office of VLJs comprises two Deputy Vice Chairmen, 10 Chief VLJs, 10 Senior Counsel, and numerous VLJs and staff counsel.

The Board has jurisdiction over appeals arising from the Department's regional offices, medical centers, National Cemetery Administration (NCA), and Office of General Counsel (OGC). Although the Board has jurisdiction over a wide variety of issues and matters, the vast majority of appeals considered involve claims for disability compensation or survivor benefits. Examples of other types of claims addressed by the Board include fee-basis medical care, waiver of recovery of overpayments, reimbursements for emergency medical treatment expenses, education assistance benefits, vocational rehabilitation training, burial benefits, and insurance benefits.

### **13.1 OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN/APPELLATE GROUP**

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Manages the overall operations of the Board.

- Conducts the administrative processing of appeals remanded to the Board from the Federal courts.
- Responds to case status inquiries from Veterans, representatives, and members of Congress.
- Develops Board-wide guidance documents, including Chairman's memoranda and other directives.
- Drafts regulatory amendments and reviews and comments on regulations promulgated by other VA organizations that affect compensation benefits, representation before the Department, and claims and appeals processing.
- Serves as a liaison between the Board and other VA components, as well as with external stakeholders, regarding any matters related to the Board.

Establishes and implements Board policies and procedures.

- Manages and runs the Board's Quality Review Program.
  - Processes requests for information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act.
  - Coordinates training efforts for VLJs and staff counsel, as well as training with other VA offices, as appropriate.
  - Maintains legal and medical research materials in various media to assist VLJs and staff counsel in appeals adjudication.
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- Provides consultation and training on complex medical questions and provides technical review of medical opinion requests.

Provides legal guidance to the Board's senior management for employee/labor relations and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) matters.

- Recommends charges and penalties in disciplinary matters within the Board.
- Serves as a liaison with Central Office Human Resources Service (COHRS), labor management relations (LMR) ,and the OGC.
- Recommends resolutions in employee/labor relations and EEO matters and negotiates for the same with employees and their representatives.

### **13.2 OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT, PLANNING AND ANALYSIS**

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Provides support to the Office of VLJs.

- Provides logistical and administrative support for the scheduling and conduct of Board hearings.
- Controls the administrative processing of requests for outside medical opinions.
- Manages the storage and flow of cases throughout the Board in close coordination with Board leadership.
- Dispatches Board decisions and provides administrative support to VLJs and staff counsel.

Provides administrative support to the Board and coordinates with other branches of VA to provide timely responses to inquiries from the public.

- Responds to case status and other inquiries from Veterans, their representatives and other VA offices.
- Processes incoming claims files and establishes appropriate administrative controls.
- Processes incoming mail received at the Board.
- Secures the translation of foreign language documents contained in claims files.

Provides overall financial management for the Board.

- Develops and executes an annual budget.
- Procures and administers contracts.

### **13.3 OFFICE OF VLJs**

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Produces timely and accurate appellate decisions for Veterans and other appellants in appeals from regional offices and other parts of the Department responsible for the initial adjudication of benefit claims.

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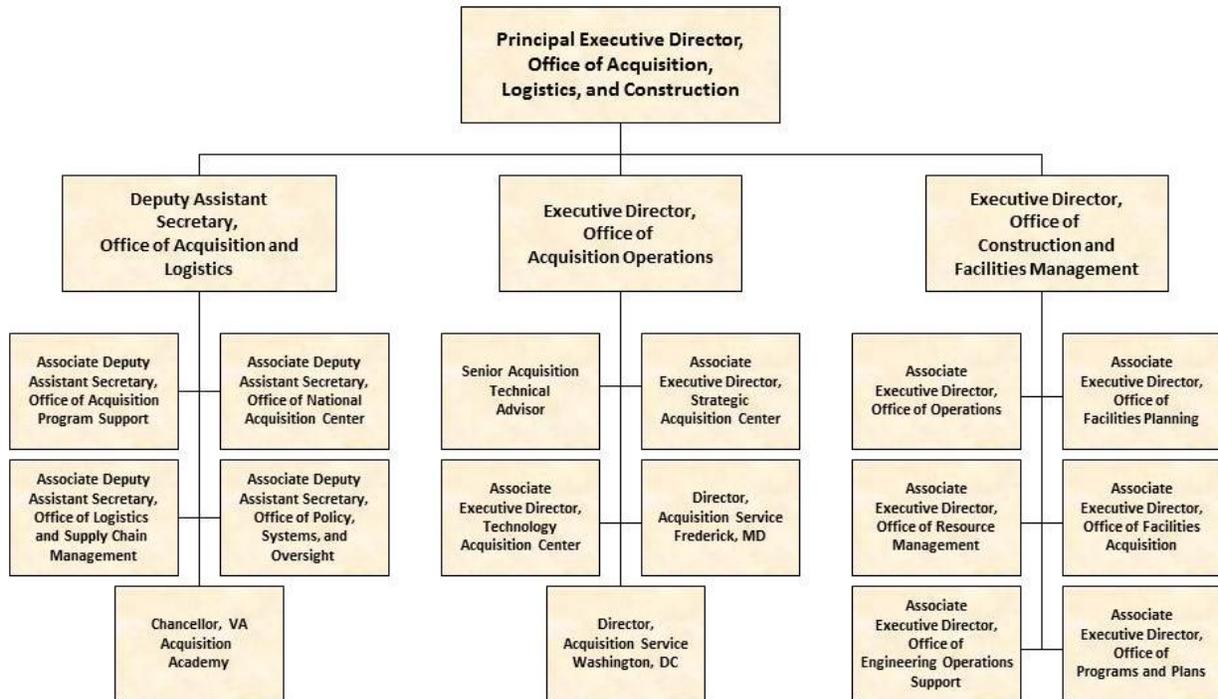
- Staff counsel review the record on appeal, research the applicable law and prepare comprehensive draft decisions/remand orders for review by a VLJ.
- VLJs review draft decisions/remand orders prepared by staff counsel and issue final decisions, appropriate preliminary orders, and rulings on motions that arise during the course of the proceedings.
- VLJs preside over hearings in appeals before the Board, which are either held in person at the Board's offices in Washington, DC, at a regional office or other field facility designated by the Department or by way of video-teleconference; and rule on motions made during the course of such hearings.

**Authorities**

38 U.S.C. Chapter 71

38 CFR Parts 19 and 20

## 14 OFFICE OF ACQUISITION, LOGISTICS AND CONSTRUCTION (OALC)



### Mission Statement

Provide a full range of innovative, cost-effective business solutions, and responsible services tailored to meet the ongoing and emerging needs of our customers in their support of America's Veterans and their families.

### 14.1 OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

#### Functions and Tasks

Establishes and oversees enterprise acquisition policy, processes, and education.

- Is the primary advisor to the Deputy Secretary on acquisition related items.
- Develops and maintains the acquisition career management program. Trains and certifies the entire acquisition team through the operation of the VA Acquisition Academy.
- Manages and establishes standards for VA's enterprisewide acquisition technology tools.
- Formulates, reviews, and implements enterprisewide acquisition policy, ensuring compliance with Federal acquisition policy promulgated by Office of Federal Procurement Policy, legislation, and other regulatory entities.
- Develops VA supply chain management policy and monitors enterprisewide operations.
- Provides strategic direction and management oversight of VA's delegated authority from the General Services Administration (GSA) to establish and maintain Federal Supply Schedules for health care system, commodities, and equipment.

- Establishes performance measures for the agencies acquisition programs.

Develops and oversees acquisition operations for the Department.

- Serves as the primary advisor to the Deputy Secretary on acquisition operation related items.
- Oversees the formulation of plans and acquisition strategies.
- Ensures the provision of acquisition services to the Department.

Develops and oversees VA's major construction program and leasing activities.

- Serves as the primary advisor to the Deputy Secretary on construction and lease-related items.
- Manages the progress of specific construction and lease projects.
- Promulgates VA's construction, leasing, and historic and environmental preservation policies and standards.
- Reviews, presents and defends the requested budget for VA's major construction and leasing program.
- Oversees the formulation of plans and acquisition strategies for the procurement of land, and construction and leasing services.
- Provides management and oversight of facility engineering operations for strategic capital investment and project prioritization.
- Establishes and implements enterprisewide processes and tools to support and standardize the construction and leasing process.

### **Authorities**

Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

P.L. 93-400, as amended by P.L. 96-83

Title 38 Part VI Chapter 81 Subchapter 1 §§ 8101-8119

## **14.2 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ACQUISITION AND LOGISTICS**

### **Mission Statement**

Provide acquisition and logistics solutions to meet the needs of our customers in support of America's Veterans and their families.

### **Functions and Tasks**

Responsible for the Department's acquisition and logistics policy development and enforcement functions.

- Serves as the Senior Procurement Executive (SPE) for the Department.

- Serves as the primary advisor to the Chief Acquisition Officer (CAO) and the SECVA on all matters related to acquisition and logistics, and assists the CAO in the planning and execution of enterprise business strategies and acquisition management.
- Establishes and manages all acquisition workforce policies and programs in the Department.
- Oversees acquisition management functions.
- Testifies before Congress on acquisition and logistics activities.
- Directs the full range of programmatic and oversight duties associated with acquisition and logistics policies and procedures, including procurement policies and procedures for the Department.
- Operates a variety of risk management, quality assurance, and compliance programs, and the contracting officer warrant program to ensure proper stewardship of Department resources.
- Oversees the development, deployment, and operational assessment of directives to effectively and efficiently implement Federal law, Presidential Executive Orders, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR).
- Develops and maintains VA's Acquisition Regulations (VAAR) and other Departmental acquisition and logistics guidance.

Represents the Department in matters pertaining to intergovernmental acquisition and logistics, policies and procedures, and coordinates intergovernmental support operations. Manages the Department's acquisition systems.

- Oversees the operation of enterprise acquisition management information systems and ensures timely and accurate acquisition reporting to the OMB and Congress.
- Provides operational performance assessments related to system use.
- Oversees implementation of system enhancements.

Oversees acquisition support programs and processes.

- Establishes and manages all acquisition workforce policies and programs in the Department.
- Establishes and manages all acquisition workforce development policies and programs, and manages the Federal acquisition workforce certification programs.
- Develops and deploys Department-level acquisition career management doctrine, policy and implementing regulations to assure compatibility with overall VA objectives and Federal mandates.
- Directs the strategic planning, operational improvement and integrated performance management functions.
- Formulates, manages, and executes the VA Supply Fund. Supports in excess of \$17 billion in annual spending across the Department.

- Directs the development of metrics and performance standards for all acquisition activities identifying potential systemic problems and/or continuous improvement opportunities.
- Identifies and applies new approaches and/or solutions to improve acquisition planning, execution, and workforce development.

Oversees supply chain management activities.

- Formulates VA-wide logistics and supply chain management doctrine, policy, and strategies for supplier relationship transformation, supply chain process improvement, strategic sourcing and product standardization.
- Ensures VA's logistics and supply chain management program complies with Federal law and regulation, presidential directives, and OMB mandates.
- Oversees a comprehensive review process to ensure VA's logistics programs are organized to achieve cost-effective solutions consistent with laws and regulations, sound business practices, and customer service expectations.

Established educational and training requirements and programs for the Department's acquisition workforce.

- Provides training and professional development curriculums based on acquisition workforce competency and certifications requirements established by OMB.
- Oversees the design, development, and management of the Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C), Program and Project Management (FAC-P/PM), and Contracting Officer's Representatives (FAC-COR) training curriculum practices, procedures and protocols.
- Oversees curriculum development and training delivery of the Schools for Logistics Management and Construction and Facilities Management.
- Develops automated systems to collect and store acquisition workforce data to support VA's acquisition workforce certification program.

Supports VA's health care procurement requirements as well as the needs of other Government agencies.

- Develops and administers VA's Federal Supply Schedules and national standardization contracts for health care system, commodities, equipment, services, and just-in-time distribution programs.
- Manages the awards of high volume contracts for recurring items used throughout the Federal health care system.

### **Authorities**

Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

#### **14.2.1 Office of Acquisition Program Support**

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**Functions and Tasks**

Manages acquisition human capital programs.

- Manages a comprehensive acquisition career management program in accordance with OMB and Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Federal Acquisition Certification directives in the areas of Contracting (FAC-C), Contracting Officer Representatives, (FAC-COR), and Program and Project Management (FAC-P/PM).
- Develops and manages an acquisition corps training and certification program for the Department to develop a professional acquisition workforce.
- Develops and manages the Department's "Critical Acquisition Position" list to support the development of highly qualified and certified acquisition professionals for assignment to critical programs and contract support positions.
- Develops policy and standards for the Applied Learning Center, analyzes results of competency assessments, and supports development of education and training programs to address acquisition workforce competency deficiencies. Works in close collaboration with the Chancellor of the VA Acquisition Academy to ensure that the Academy offerings are fully synchronized with acquisition workforce needs.
- Develops and maintains acquisition enterprise-level automated business systems requirements that support acquisition workforce management functions, including competency testing, records management, and reporting. Ensures acquisition stakeholder communities are knowledgeable in the use of these systems, develops operational performance assessments related to system use, and implements continuous process improvements.
- Develops, monitors, and supports succession planning for the acquisition workforce across the Department. Prepares an annual congressional report detailing the status of the Department's acquisition workforce.

Manages VA's Supply Fund (revolving fund).

- Formulates the budget and executes the VA Supply Fund that generates in excess of \$17 billion in annual sales, provides over 1,000 full-time equivalent positions throughout the Office of Acquisition and Logistics (OAL), Office of Acquisition Operations, the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, the Veterans Health Administration's Procurement and Logistics Office, and various legal, assessment, and administrative support positions throughout the Department.
  - The Supply Fund recovers its operating expenses through surcharges on various products or services provided to Veterans and other Government agencies. VA organizations and facilities can use the 1 VA+ Program to extend obligation authority of appropriated funds for short periods of time to support bona fide program needs.
  - The Supply Fund supports the Capital Leasing Program to rent equipment, and reduces initial acquisition costs by spreading payments over a period of up to five years. VA and OGA customers routinely take advantage of minimal finance rates offered by the program.
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- In partnership with the Finance Service Center in Austin, TX, the Supply Fund recovers duplicate payments to vendors and unused credits from vendors.
- The Office performs a full range of accounting functions, including recording obligations and processing payments, maintaining financial records of the Supply Fund, performing financial analyses, and managing the annual fund audit process conducted by a private sector accounting firm.

Manages acquisition strategic planning and operational assessments.

- Develops and maintains reporting mechanisms for critical operational and transformational metrics, and analyzes performance outcomes to identify potential systemic problems and continuous improvement opportunities.
- Manages strategic planning for the OAL, tracks progress on strategic and operational initiatives, and initiates corrective actions.
- Provides integrated performance reporting for OAL to the VA Integrated Operating Model.
- Develops and deploys departmental procurement performance measures to determine operational effectiveness, efficiency, and achievement of objectives. Develops and manages executive dashboards to support timely decision-making on critical OAL work functions.
- Sponsors acquisition strategic studies to identify and implement industry best practices and business processes.
- Manages an internal acquisition customer satisfaction program to identify and resolve systemic problems to include necessary changes in customers' Service Level Agreements.
- Provides around-the-clock acquisition and logistics policy support to the Department via the VA Integrated Operations Center.

Integrates VA acquisition systems to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness.

- Develops policies and procedures to integrate the Department's overarching acquisition framework and related business management systems.
- Establishes program management doctrine and develops program management policies and procedures to standardize proper activities throughout the Department.
- Assists with resolving acquisition life cycle management challenges.
- Serves as VA's acquisition career manager for the acquisition certification program for Program and Project Managers.
- Supports the Department's Chief Acquisition Officer and senior leadership in fulfilling the acquisition program management oversight function of the Department.

### **Authorities**

Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (as amended)

31 U.S.C. Economy Act (as amended)

GSA FSS Delegation for Selected Federal Supply Classification Groups of 1961 (as amended).

### **14.2.2 Office of Policy, Systems, and Oversight**

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Provides leadership and management to the Departmentwide acquisition program, one of the largest within the Federal Government with annual spending exceeding \$17 billion.

- Manages and directs the development, deployment, and operational assessment of directives to effectively and efficiently implement Federal law, Presidential Executive Orders, the FAR and other Department guidance across the acquisition enterprise.
- Formulates, reviews, and implements Department-level acquisition policy and guidance as it relates to the Department's acquisition activities.
- Represents the Department in matters pertaining to intergovernmental acquisition, and logistics policies and procedures, coordinates intergovernmental support operations.

Formulates VA-wide procurement doctrine and policy.

- Formulates, reviews, and implements VA Acquisition Regulations, which supplements the FAR.

Develops and implements procurement and risk management, quality assurance, and compliance activities.

- Monitors operational performance to ensure goals and priorities are met and program activities are controlled.
- Collects data to support internal measurement and assessment programs, and prepares reports for the OMB and Congress.
- Manages the OMB Circular A-123 program regarding the assessment of VA procurement activities.
- Manages VA's Suspension and Debarment program.
- Manages VA's Protest and Mistake-in-Bid programs.
- Manages VA's Subcontract Compliance Review program.

Directs the development, deployment, and maintenance of enterprise automated systems including the Electronic Contract Management System.

- Develops and maintains acquisition enterprise-level automated business systems.
- Integrates business systems with other corporate systems such as financial management systems and conducts operational performance assessments.

Manages the Contracting Officer Warranting Program.

- Oversees the Contracting Officer Warrant Board and coordinates the issuance of warrants through the Departments Senior Procurement Executive.
- Reviews and processes Contracting Officer warrants for the Department.

**Authorities**

Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

Federal and Departmental Acquisition Regulations

**14.2.3 Office of Logistics and Supply Chain Management****Mission Statement**

Improve VA's ability to deliver products and services to America's Veterans at the right place, the right time, and with the right quality.

**Functions and Tasks**

Establishes and oversees enterprise supply chain management policies

- Formulates, reviews, and implements Department-level supply chain management policies, including strategic sourcing policies.
- Ensures that supply chain functions are integrated with other key enterprise management functions.
- Develops supply chain management training and professional development strategies.
- Monitors relations with VA's supplier community.
- Provides sponsorship (as business owner) of enterprise logistics information technology requirements.
- Oversees supply chain management standards.
- Coordinates Federal Property management inventory reporting.

Provides specific logistics support services.

- Develops printing and publication policy and guidance.
- Provides a wide range of publications services to VA customers, including duplication and distribution services, design services, and preparation of detailed specifications for printed material.
- Manages and develops policy for Departmental freight management, household goods moves and employee relocations, small-package express delivery.
- Provides biomedical equipment repair services to VA and other Federal agencies.
- Provides shipping and product distribution services for VA, such as all VA stocked forms and publications, burial flags, etc.

**Authorities**

Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

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Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (as amended)  
Federal Management Regulation §§ 102-36, -38, and -39  
Federal Property Management Regulation §§ 101-27 and -42  
VA Directives and Handbooks 7002/1 and 7348  
U.S.C. Title 44  
49 U.S.C. § 10721 and 13172  
41 CFR 102-117 and 102-117  
FAR 52.247-1  
FAR Subpart 47.104, Government rate tenders under §§ 10721 and 13712 of the ICA  
United States Government Freight Handbook  
VA Handbook 7240, Transportation and Traffic Management (May 24, 1996)  
VA Acquisition Regulation Part 847, Transportation Information Letter (IL) 001AL-10-01,  
Guidance for the Distribution and Replenishment of Burial Flags (Nov. 6, 2009)

#### **14.2.4 Office of National Acquisition Center**

##### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the National Acquisition Center is to deliver innovative acquisition and logistics solutions for the health care-related needs of our Veterans and Government clients through fiscal responsibility.

##### **Functions and Tasks**

Develops and oversees national health care-related acquisition programs for VA and other Government agencies.

- Establishes and administers VA's Federal Supply Schedule Program.
- Establishes national standardization contracts, programs, blanket purchasing agreements (BPAs), and blanket ordering agreements for pharmaceuticals, medical/surgical supplies, medical equipment, and other health care-related commodities.
- Establishes prime vendor distribution (just-in-time) programs for pharmaceuticals, medical/surgical supplies, and subsistence.
- Establishes national contracts in support of VHA, VBA, NCA, and other Federal agencies.
- Partners with DoD, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Bureau of Prisons, and other Federal customers on joint procurements of medical/surgical supplies, high-tech medical systems, and pharmaceuticals.
- Co-chairs VA/DoD Acquisition and Medical Materiel Management Work Group.
- Represents VA to GSA's Governance Board and Multiple Award Schedule Policy Workgroup and HHS's Committee for Bioterrorism.
- Markets existing acquisition programs to other Federal and Non-Federal agencies.
- Builds partnerships and establishes agreements to provide acquisition services to non-VA partners.

- Works with other Federal agencies to dissolve or consolidate competing programs and leverages combined requirements for the benefit of all.

Provides contingency contracting support and assistance to VA, other Federal and state customers responding to natural and man-made disasters.

- Provides acquisition support and assistance to VA's Security and Preparedness, Office of Emergency Management, CDC's Strategic National Stockpile Program.

Provides logistics support to VHA, our Veterans and other Government customers.

- Provides prosthetic, orthotic, and other medical devices (hearing aids, assistive listening devices, orthotic items, Telehealth), quality hearing aid repair services, and contingency contract programs.

### **Authorities**

Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR)

GSA Acquisition Manual

Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations (DFAR)

Federal Property Management Regulations (FPMR)

Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1995 (FASA)

Federal Acquisition Reform Act of 1996 (FARA)

Economy Act, DoD Sharing Agreement 2121, 2111

Federal Property and Administrative Services Act 1949 (as amended)

31 U.S.C.

P.L. 93-400, as amended by P.L. 96-83

GSA FSS Delegation for Selected Federal Supply Classification Groups 1960-Present (as amended)

VA Directives and Handbooks 7124, 7125 and 7126

### **14.2.5 Chancellor, VA Acquisition Academy**

#### **Mission Statement**

Create learning opportunities for acquisition professionals to efficiently award and manage contracts to attain the goods and services needed to achieve the vital mission of VA.

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Recapitalizes VA's acquisition workforce through the Acquisition Internship School.

- Trains the next generation of acquisition professionals.
- Uses an experiential learning model to include skill building, where interns apply theoretical concepts in a safe, simulated environment and learn by doing. The experiential

model accelerates the learning curve and enables interns to be more productive more quickly and add immediate bench strength to the VA acquisition workforce.

- Satisfies Governmentwide professional certification requirements mandated by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) to ensure interns gain education leading to Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C), Levels I and II.
- Employs a holistic approach to develop the technical contracting skills, as well as competencies in communication, critical thinking, program management, business savvy, customer service, oral and written communication, risk management, creative thinking and interpersonal skills to create trusted business partners capable of executing the FAR's emphasis on using sound business judgment to deliver best value solutions to serve the Veteran.
- Conducts robust stakeholder engagement to ensure intern program is meeting VA business needs and developing learning interventions.
- Executes the Warriors to Workforce intern program to train and educate wounded Veterans as either a contract specialist or program manager, while providing a critical source of talent for the Federal Acquisition workforce. The program enables interns to achieve college-level credits and complete either a two-year Acquisition Intern or Program Management Fellows Program. The curriculum also includes peak performance training focused on management of the mental, emotional, and physiological responses to perform at peak performance under stress.
- Delivers training to other Government agencies utilizing established mechanisms for student seat fees.

The Contracting Professional School conducts thorough technical and business competency-focused training to enable the existing VA acquisition workforce to obtain and maintain the Office of Federal Procurement Policy's (OFPP) FAC-C Levels I, II, and III.

- Incorporates VA-specific case studies and examples to increase relevance. Examples are practical and create a meaningful theory-to-practice connection.
- Offers specialized acquisition training in areas such as strategic sourcing, forging stakeholder relationships, developing independent government cost estimates (IGCEs), construction, leasing, and VA's Electronic Contract Management System (eCMS).
- Provides electives to assist VA acquisition employees in earning Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) to maintain required professional certifications.
- Ensures highest quality training by utilizing a standardized student evaluation tool and in-class instructor evaluations conducted by training specialists and subject matter experts.
- Solicits stakeholder engagement to ensure alignment with business needs to satisfy the VA mission.
- Delivers training to other Government agencies utilizing established mechanisms for student seat fees.

Trains and certifies VA program and project managers to a Federalwide competency-based standard at mid, entry, and senior levels through the Program Management School.

- Provides training to ensure VA program and project managers achieve and maintain required Federal Acquisition Certification in Program/Project Management (FAC-P/PM) and close competency gaps.
- Ensures immediate impact through capstone examination to certify skills. Assists in the development of action plans to ensure immediate impact working toward establishing a program/project management culture in VA.
- Provides facilitated workshops to major initiative teams to address programmatic-specific needs throughout the program life cycle.
- Conducts stakeholder engagement and value measurement methodologies to ensure alignment with business needs and obtain feedback on program impacts.
- Works with the OIT, VHA, and Construction and Facilities Management to ensure trained and certified program and project managers.
- Trains and certifies VA Contracting Officer Representatives to satisfy Governmentwide professional certification requirements mandated by Office of Federal Procurement Policy in Federal Acquisition Certification-Contracting Officer Representative (FAC-COR).
- Partners with VA Learning University (VALU) as the funding agency to train and certify VA program and project managers and Contracting Officer Representatives.
- Delivers training to other Government agencies utilizing established mechanism for student seat fees.

The Supply Chain Management School conducts quality training to ensure the existing supply chain workforce possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and the understanding to excel in their jobs, and to educate the workforce of the importance of their roles and responsibilities to ensure the supply chain process is cost efficient and effective.

- Provides state-of-the-art courses, blending academic rigor and real-world experiences, that are sponsored and taught by industry experts with a focus on best practices for supply chain operations, and improving supply chain performance and management at all levels.
- Provides training to ensure VA and supply chain managers close competency gaps.
- Conducts stakeholder engagement and value management methodologies to ensure the alignment with business needs and obtain feedback on SCM impacts.
- Ensure the highest quality training with standardized student evaluation tool and in-class instructor evaluations by training specialists and subject matter experts.
- Delivers training to other Government agencies utilizing established mechanisms for student seat fees.

Evaluates and assesses the learning content across the Academy enterprise through the Learning Standards Office.

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- Conducts analysis and evaluation of training activities and instructor evaluation. Within the next five years, VA Facilities Management School will become the training and professional development partner of choice for VA Facilities Management workforce by ensuring high-quality training and professional development that will establish facilities management as an integrated enterprise operation throughout the Department to ensure quality facilities for all Veterans. The mission of VA Facilities Management School is to provide the highest quality training and professional development activities through superior customer services and innovative training opportunities.
- Captures data in an evaluation tool to reflect return on investment.
- Utilizes a knowledge-management infrastructure for capture, sharing, and reuse.
- Manages, acquires, and maintains accreditation from the Council on Occupational Education and the International Association for Continuing Education and Training, and establish college credit eligibility for courses.

### **Authorities**

Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Policy Letter 05-01 (FAC-C)

OMB Memorandum, The Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer Technical Representatives, dated Nov. 26, 2007 (FAC-COR)

OMB Memorandum, The Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers, dated April 25, 2007 (FAC-P/PM)

## **14.3 OFFICE OF ACQUISITION OPERATIONS (OAO)**

### **Mission Statement**

Enabling our customers to provide best value solutions to Veterans and their families.

### **Functions and Tasks**

The Executive Director of the Office of Acquisition Operations is the VA official “head of the contracting activity” (HCA) and directs acquisition, contracting and contract administration for VA’s Office of Acquisition Operations and VACO staff organizations, including OM, OHRA, and OIT.

- Serves as the primary advisor and high-level resource to the Principal Executive Director, OALC on acquisition-related items, and represents the Principal Executive Director in a wide variety of situations with VA, other Federal agencies, and the private sector.
- Exercises direct-line authority for acquisition actions at VA’s Strategic Acquisition Center (SAC), in support of enterprisewide, non-IT, strategically sourced medical supplies, equipment, and services, in a manner that increases standardization, reduces cost, and increases transparency, and acquisition actions in support of VACO organizations, including VBA, NCA, and VHA.

- Exercises direct-line authority for acquisition actions at VA's Technology Acquisition Center, in support of VA-wide strategic information technology supplies, equipment, and services.
- Exercises direct-line authority for acquisition actions at Acquisition Business Service in support of VACO organizations, including VBA, NCA, and VHA.
- Provides procurement services for simplified acquisition purchases to VACO organizations.
- Ensures awarded procurement actions meet and exceed performance measures in accordance with the Department's acquisition program goals and objectives.
- Oversees procurement actions for unauthorized commitments and unsolicited proposals at the TAC, SAC, Acquisition Service-DC and Acquisition Service-Frederick, MD.
- Responsible for the procurement management and oversight of VA's interagency agreements and national advisory and assistance contracts.

Formulates and recommends enterprisewide acquisition operations guidance, plans, and strategies that support the Department's mission, goals, and objectives.

- Establishes agreements between VA and other Federal and private organizations in an effort to promote economy and effectiveness in the supply process.
- Analyzes procurement data and develops acquisition strategies to leverage VA's buying power.
- Provides quality control programs to ensure OAO procurement programs are carried out in accordance with Federal and Department acquisition policies and practices established by regulation and competent authority.
- Sponsors acquisition process improvement studies and recommends improvement to VA's practices.
- Evaluates new acquisition programs and implements the "best of breed."
- As the Department's competition advocate, promotes full and open competition.
- Provides execution support of the Department's strategic sourcing programs and initiatives.

Formulates and directs comprehensive outreach programs with OAO customers to ensure quality and timely acquisitions.

- Advises and provides guidance to senior leadership regarding acquisition strategies and issues, and provides acquisition support to VHA, VBA, NCA, OIT, and VACO Staff Offices.
- Maintains and improves VA relationships through participation in the administrative, education, community and social events of Federal, state, local, and other affiliated organizations involved with VA programs, VSO, and appropriate civic organizations.
- Guides and directs the development of a comprehensive education and training program for TAC, SAC, and VACO customers.

- Provides advice and assistance to VA's program offices to acquire market analyses, market forecasts, product sources, Government cost estimates, and requirements documents in order to achieve effective and efficient contracts and acquisition of goods and services.
- Fosters and maintains positive relationships with vendors and furthers partnerships with VA's supplier community.
- Represents VA on intergovernmental groups and councils, and coordinates VA acquisition programs with that of other Government agencies.

### **Authorities**

Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR)

Veterans Affairs Acquisition Regulation (FAAR)

Services Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

P.L. 93-400, as amended by P.L. 96-83

Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1995 (FASA)

Federal Acquisition Reform Act of 1996 (FARA)

Economy Act, DoD Sharing Agreement 2121, 2111

## **14.4 OFFICE OF CONSTRUCTION AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**

### **Mission Statement**

Provides design, major construction and lease project management, design, and construction standards, and historic preservation expertise and services to the Department of Veterans Affairs in support of our Nation's Veterans.

### **Functions and Tasks**

Serves as the primary advisor to the Principal Executive Director, OALC, and the SECVA on all areas pertaining to VA's major construction and real property programs.

- Executes VA's major construction, leasing, real property management and other capital asset services in support of VA's mission.
- Supports VA's Administrations and Staff Offices in matters pertaining to policy and quality assurance of VA's capital facilities and real property programs.
- Takes a major role in VA's Strategic Capital Investment Process to ensure VA's assets are allocated and implemented in the best interests of the Department and Veterans.

Manages all VA major construction and leasing programs.

- Formulates long-range goals, develop policies, objectives, priorities, strategies, and procedures to accomplish the responsibilities of the Office of Construction and Facilities Management.

Leads transformation efforts.

- Oversees the development and implementation of an enterprise-level facilities management strategy and performance measures in accordance with established departmental policy.
- Benchmarks with industry leaders to identify state-of-the-art facilities management processes.
- Implements standard facilities management processes across the Department.
- Realigns processes to provide more direct support to customers both regionally and locally.

### **Authorities**

Title 38 Part VI Chapter 81 Subchapter 1 §§ 8101-8119

Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

### **14.4.1 Office of Facilities Planning**

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Serves as the principal advisor to the Executive Director, CFM on planning, architectural cost estimating, assists, and manages the development and maintenance of VA architectural and engineering (A/E) quality standards for existing facilities. Provides consulting services for the VA's State Nursing Home Grant and Homeless Grant Programs and oversees VA's historical preservation and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance issues.

- Develops design guides, construction standards, master specifications and guidance, and coordinates VA facilities space requirements; oversees the strategic planning and research on health care specialties and related space requirements, process engineering and layouts in accordance with Departmental policy.
- Provides master planning, technical advice, and training assistance to other VACO and field organizations.
- Provides consulting assistance on an as-needed basis to VA administrations and Staff Offices on minor construction projects and nonrecurring maintenance. (NRM).

Develops construction standards, master specifications and guidance to oversee VA working spaces.

- Develops and oversees architectural and engineering standards and master specifications; building information modeling; sustainability including energy and water conservation; functional design guides; technical discipline manuals; design alerts; signage and interior design; architectural barrier compliance; post-occupancy evaluations; and multi-hazard physical security assessments of VA facilities and preparedness standards for physical security, seismic, hurricane and other natural disasters in accordance with established Departmental policy.
- Develops guidelines and provides oversight and technical support training to CFM's regional offices and other VA organizations.

Provides cost estimating services.

- Develops requirements and provides guidance for the oversight of programs for construction cost projections and budgeting.
- Estimates overall construction and life cycle costs.
- Provides value engineering consultation services.

Provides facilities planning support.

- Supports CFM's regional offices and other VA organizations by executing facilities planning programs. Oversees the development of plans for all CFM projects and provides guidance for local planning.

### **Authorities**

Title 38 Part VI Chapter 81 Subchapter 1 §§ 8101-8119

Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

## **14.4.2 Office of Resource Management**

### **Functions and Tasks**

Oversees the financial management of VA's major construction program and CFM's administrative budget and office administration functions, including human resources management, travel, training, space management, database management, and equipment.

- Serves as the principal advisor to the Executive Director of CFM on VA major construction, resources and CFM organizational resources.
- Coordinates annual construction and leasing program estimates for VA's budget.
- Manages the major construction working reserve.
- Serves as primary point of contact on CFM organizational needs for information systems; responds to OMB, GAO, IG, and FOIA requests for information; provides internal organizational assessments, audits, performance measures, and reporting to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of CFM's business lines.

Performs financial and correspondence management.

- Provides fiscal fiduciary oversight for the management of major construction programs and CFM's operating funds, appropriations for design and construction funds for major capital projects and purchase card management.
- Develops and coordinates major construction budget submissions.
- Monitors CFM's operating plan.
- Maintains and updates CFM's continuity of operations plan.
- Coordinates, tracks, and reviews all executive-level correspondence and ensures timeliness and quality of CFM's controlled correspondence.

Coordinates construction data systems.

- Develops policy and coordinates CFM's information management business needs.
- Provides oversight for the coordination of the development of systems for operating needs.
- Coordinates hardware/software support for CFM's central office and field employees, coordination telecommunication needs, oversees equipment tracking and logistics, and records management.
- Plans and coordinates software development and upgrades.

### **Authorities**

Title 38, Part VI, Chapter 81, Subchapter 1 §§ 8101-8119

Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

### **14.4.3 Office of Facilities Acquisition**

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Develops guidelines to properly oversee major construction and lease contracting, A/E selection, and provide technical support to CFM's regional offices. The Associate Executive Director serves as the HCA for the Office of Construction and Facilities Management.

- Serves as the principal advisor to the Executive Director, CFM on major construction and lease contracting.
- Provides construction and real property acquisition oversight for VA's Administrations and Staff Offices for major projects (design and construction) from capital asset application approval through project completion.
- Provides oversight and guidance to staff at CFM's regional offices for major projects including renovations, replacement facilities, and additions.

Manages major construction contracting services.

- Develops evaluation policy and guidelines and provides technical support to CFM's regional offices on a full range of contracting activities, including A/E evaluation and selection, contract negotiation, and award activities covering all stages of the acquisition cycle.
- Oversees construction contract awards and administration of design and professional services contracts. Contracting activities involve a wide array of process administration for formal fixed contracts with A/E firms for services such as schematic design, design development, construction documents, and construction period services.
- Develops VA construction contracting goals for small and disadvantaged businesses.

Administers major construction's FAC-C Program.

- Manages all CFM requests for contracting certification to obtain warrants through the Office of Acquisitions and Logistics.

- Oversees warrant management, acquisition training, and develops acquisition training standards for CFM.
- Maintains a system of records for training requirements and warrant needs.
- Maintains certification records and coordinates the issuance of new or increased warrants for CFM employees.

Manages real property contract policy.

- Develops policy and guidelines for acquisition activities for CFM's real property programs.

Manages construction-related strategic contracting activities.

- Manages the acquisition aspects of complex projects ranging from \$500 million to \$1 billion.
- Develops the overall acquisition strategy, timetable, financial aspects, and milestones to meet the targeted award and completion dates.

### **Authorities**

Title 38, Part VI, Chapter 81, Subchapter 1 §§ 8101-8119  
Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

## **14.4.4 Office of Programs and Plans**

### **Functions and Tasks**

Develops a national program strategy for construction acquisition, real property acquisition and disposal, and program quality assurance.

- Serves as the principal advisor to the Executive Director of CFM for issues associated with construction acquisition, real property acquisition and disposal, and program quality assurance.
- Develops policy, guidance, and performance measures for the oversight for construction and real property programs.
- Provides technical support to CFM's regional offices.

Serves as CFM's program manager for VHA, NCA and VBA major projects.

- Develops business solutions that maximize support to VHA major projects.
- Provides technical and professional support and develops recommendations for improved processes and procedures including acquisitions planning, project design, construction management, as well as oversight and management of contracts for professional A/E services, construction managers, design-build contractors, and all other construction contracts.
- Conducts code and best practice reviews of designs to ensure cost-effective and efficient construction.

- Oversees the administration of programs to assess organizational achievement and individual performance.

Provides an independent quality assurance program for CFM's business lines, ensuring compliance with applicable VA and Federal regulations and requirements.

- Conducts independent compliance reviews of major construction projects and leases to ensure adherence to FAR, VA, and CFM policy.
- Conducts cost benefit and price analyses to ensure the best value to the Department.
- Develops and implements measures to reduce risks of fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement.
- Other tasks include directives management, development of organizational performance measures, lessons learned, and benchmarking best practices in cost and pricing data, and reviews of changes in contract scope and additional costs.

Oversees the implementation of CFM's VA Facilities Management Transformation Initiative.

- Pilots a post-occupancy evaluation program for major, minor, and maintenance projects across all Administrations.
- Pilots a comprehensive marketwide master planning process to address needs of all Administrations.
- Provides technical support to CFM's regional offices for the management of VA's real property programs, including utilization and disposition of property (excluding property associated with VBA's loan guarantee program).
- Pilots a project management plan that addresses project staffing, responsibilities, master schedule and budget, and is scalable to major, minor, and maintenance projects.
- Develops management and review processes to ensure pilot projects produce a return on investment and that thorough processes will be instituted across the entire facility management spectrum.

### **Authorities**

Title 38, Part VI, Chapter 81, Subchapter 1 §§ 8101-8119  
Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

### **14.4.5 Office of Engineering Operations Support**

#### **Functions and Tasks**

Develops and provides guidance for all facilities engineering activities in CFM and provides support on A/E issues; provides subject matter expertise for VA's design and construction programs, as well as construction contract claims.

- Serves as the principal advisor to the Executive Director of CFM on all engineering and operations services for VA's design and construction programs.

- Provides direct on-call consulting support to field installations and CFM's regional offices.
- Provides consultation and support services related to A/E design services, automated transport design, conceptual and design development support, and engineering design services.
- Provides other key services including guidance on facility condition assessments, technical/building studies, critical path method scheduling and training, and subject matter expertise for claims management.
- Provides emergency response teams for natural disasters or other emergencies affecting VA assets to assess and document damage and critical safety issues, and develop recommendations for corrective actions.

Develops policy and guidelines for the effective and efficient use of VA's capital resources.

- Provides technical support to CFM's regional offices to enhance the total life cycle of buildings including design, construction, distribution, use and sale or disposal to improve sustainable consumption and production patterns for VA's capital assets.
- Identifies and recommends costs savings through facility service, life-cycle management.
- Oversees facility condition assessments, research facilities condition assessments, suitability assessments, and value engineering reviews.

Develops policy and guidelines in accordance with Departmental policy related to technical and engineering building support.

- Provides technical architectural, exterior envelope, structural, mechanical, electrical, and vertical transportation expertise as needed.
- Participates and provides technical expertise in major project design reviews, facility commissioning, and emergency preparedness assessments.

Develops policy and guidelines in accordance with established Departmental policy and provides technical support to CFM's regional offices and other VA organizations as needed.

- Provides technical support to CFM's regional offices and other VA organizations to ensure standardized practices in energy consumption management, power production and purchase, and utility distribution optimization.

Supports VA-wide regional and local facilities engineering activities across the Department.

- Ensures enterprise processes are executed consistently and effectively.
- Provides key services including life-cycle project management, energy, and utility support, facility condition assessments, technical/building studies, electrical studies, and critical path method scheduling.

### **Authorities**

Title 38, Part VI, Chapter 81, Subchapter 1 §§ 8101-8119

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## Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

### 14.4.6 Office of Operations

#### Functions and Tasks

Serves as the primary advisor to the Executive Director of CFM on all matters associated with service delivery to clients and supervises CFM's Regional Office Directors.

- Manages execution of major construction and lease projects.
- Serves as the Primary Action Officer for emergent high-level issues related to major construction and leasing.
- Oversees the design of systems and processes to support CFM's growing construction responsibilities and manages CFM's expansion efforts. Seeks collaboration among VA organizations and synthesizes information from various sources to identify best practices to facilitate overall CFM operations.
- Coordinates with CFM's Regional Office Directors and assists with determining appropriate staffing requirements in each region.
- Forms relationships with VA facilities leadership, construction, and the A/E industry to ensure effective execution across all work sites.

Oversees administration of lease acquisition for medical facilities and reviews GSA's occupancy agreements on behalf of VBA.

- Provides support for independent negotiations, as well as negotiations with GSA, on issues pertaining to leasehold interests, land and building acquisitions, disposal of buildings and/or land, demolitions and related activities, licenses and permits, out-leasing, VA quarters management, parking, and compliance with the Randolph-Sheppard Act and the McKinney-Vento Act.
- Provides for land management functions to all elements of the Department.

Oversees CFM's regional operations, which implements VHA major construction and lease projects. VACO staff provides support to VBA and NCA in their respective regions.

- Implements facilities construction projects, executes leasing agreements, provides technical assistance to individual project sites, provides contract management services and oversees the selection of A/E firms for VA's construction programs according to Federal and VA requirements and the evaluation of A/E performance in the design and construction of VA projects.

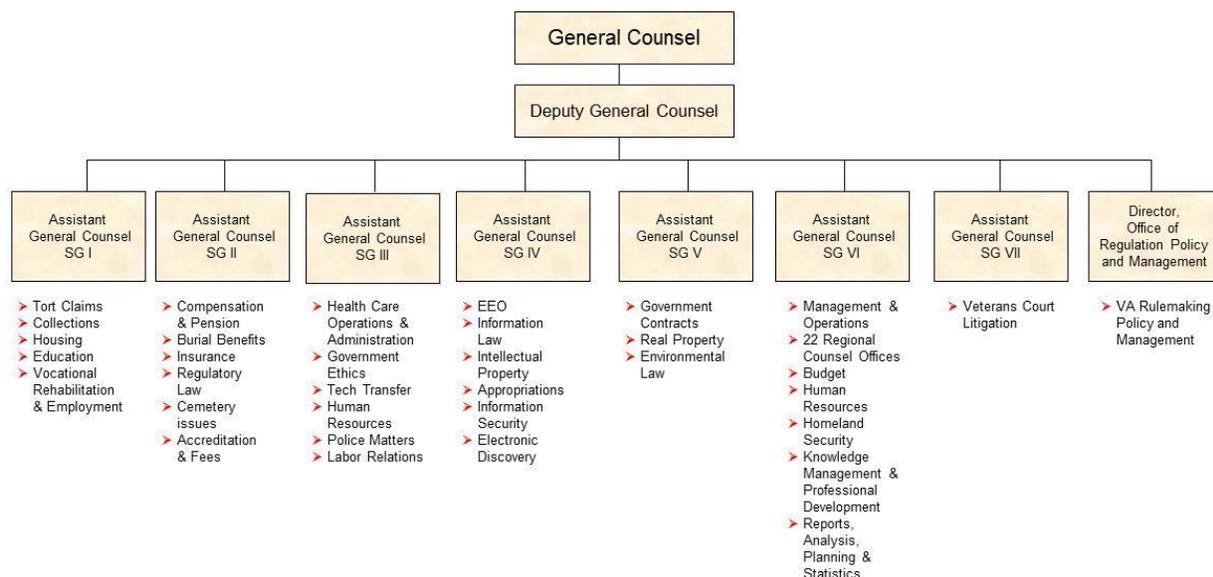
#### Authorities

Title 38, Part VI, Chapter 81, Subchapter 1S §§ 8101-8119

Randolph-Sheppard Act

McKinney-Vento Act  
Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA)

## 15 OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL (OGC)



### Mission Statement

The General Counsel provides legal advice and services to the SECVA and all organizational components of the Department. The General Counsel is, by statute, the Department's Chief Legal Officer.

### Functions and Tasks

The General Counsel and the Deputy General Counsel advise the SECVA, DEPSECVA, Chief of Staff, and other senior Department officials regarding all laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and judicial precedents pertaining to the Department.

- They accomplish this function by tasking the full range of legal, litigation, legislative, and regulatory activities among seven Staff Groups (SGs), each headed by an Assistant General Counsel (AGC), the Office of Regulation Policy and Management (02REG), headed by a Director, and 22 Regional Counsel offices, each headed by a Regional Counsel. Each SG component has specialized experience in specific subject matter areas, and is responsible for developing the specific legal advice the General Counsel and Deputy General Counsel use to advise VA senior officials.

The General Counsel and Deputy General Counsel provide legal guidance to the SECVA on draft bills and legislative testimony for presentation to Congress, and accompany the SECVA and other senior VA officials when testifying before Congress. Attorneys in the appropriate SG prepare draft bills, related legal opinions, and legal advice pertaining to proposed testimony, based on subject matter expertise.

**Authorities**

Title 38 U.S.C. § 311

38 CFR § 14.500 et seq.

**15.1 OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL – ASSISTANT GENERAL COUNSELS AND OFFICE OF REGULATION POLICY, AND MANAGEMENT****Overview**

The Office of General Counsel, at its VACO headquarters, is composed of seven Staff Groups of attorneys and support staff, each headed by an Assistant General Counsel, and an Office of Regulation Policy and Management headed by a Director.

**Functions and Tasks**

The General Counsel and OGC staff interpret and advise Department officials regarding all laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and judicial precedents pertaining to the Department. The General Counsel also functions as the final legal authority in issuing Departmental regulations that have the force of law.

- At OGC's VACO Headquarters, the responsibility for the full range of legal, litigation, legislative, and regulatory activities is tasked among seven Staff Groups (SGs), each headed by an Assistant General Counsel (AGC), and the Office of Regulation Policy and Management (02REG) headed by a Director. Attorneys in each SG have expertise in the specific subject matter areas noted in the chart above and provide specific legal advice to program officials, review proposed regulations and directives, and handle litigation involving VA programs.

OGC attorneys represent the SECVA either directly, or in collaboration with the Department of Justice. Attorneys in the SGs represent the SECVA directly in various administrative proceedings, and work with the Justice Department to either defend legal actions brought against VA or to affirmatively prosecute claims in favor of VA throughout the country.

OGC attorneys directly represent the SECVA in all cases litigated before the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans claims. Attorneys in SG VII represent the SECVA before the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans claims.

OGC attorneys provide the legal basis for the SECVA to recommend various legislative matters for presentation to Congress. SG attorneys prepare draft bills and legislative testimony, and review, comment, and concur with proposed draft oversight testimony being submitted to Congress.

OGC attorneys manage the Department's ethics program. The AGC for SG III is VA's Designated Ethics Official.

OGC attorneys manage the Department's data security and E-discovery guidelines. AGCs and their staff attorneys apply legal expertise in the areas of information law, disclosure, and privacy to provide guidance for these programs.

OGC attorneys manage the Department's programs for accrediting claimants' representatives and overseeing attorneys' fees charged by claimants' representatives. Attorneys in SG II accredit claimants' representatives and oversee attorneys' fees.

OGC attorneys also provide a full range of legal advice, guidance, and representation to VA officials in field facilities through its 22 Regional Counsel offices. The Regional Counsels, located in field offices nationwide, are under the supervision of the AGC for Management and Operations in SG VI. Each Regional Counsel is responsible for providing legal advice and assistance to Directors and other officials of all VA field facilities within the region. The Regional Counsels fulfill these functions by performing the following tasks:

- Advises and represents management of VA facilities on issues relating to personnel and labor law.
- Performs legal review of administrative tort claims and provide legal support to the local U.S. Attorneys' Offices in tort litigation.
- Recovers funds owed to the United States by various legal-collection remedies, to include litigation in Federal and state courts. In addition, Regional Counsels provide the full range of legal advice and assistance in local procurement matters.
- Initiates required court actions in guardianship commitment matters by appearing in state courts and furnishing legal assistance to Department officials.
- Provides necessary legal services in connection with the loan guaranty program.

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**APPENDIX A. GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

**ACMO** – Advisory Committee Management Office

**Acquisition** – Acquiring new or enhanced capabilities through the conceptualization, initiation, design, development, test/evaluation, production, deployment, logistics support, enhancements, and disposal of materiel solutions, products, and/or services (including construction and research and development) to satisfy business needs. Includes contracting for external resources to support the life cycle activities.

**ACMV** – Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans

**ACWV** – Advisory Committee on Women Veterans

**ADR** – Alternative Dispute Resolution

**A/E** – VA Architect and Engineering

**AGC** – Assistant General Counsel

**ALAC** – Administrative and Loan Accounting Center

**AMC** – Appeals Management Center – VBA’s centralized processing center for appeals remanded by the BVA.

**AMSUS** – Society of Federal Health Agencies

**ANCC** – American Nurses Credentialing Center

**APGs** – Agency priority goals

**APRNs** – Advanced Practice RNs

**ASD** – Architecture, Strategy and Design

**AS/IT** – Assistant Secretary of Information Technology

**Authority** – Sources that provide authorization for an organization’s missions, functions, and tasks.

**BAS** – Benefits Assistance Service

**BDD** – Benefits Delivery at Discharge

**BEC** – Benefits Executive Council

**BPR** – Business Process Reengineering

**Business owner** – Responsible for the identification and communication of the business needs and accompanying business requirements. Responsible for ensuring the nonmaterial aspects of the business need are satisfied. Performs periodic reviews of current and projected business requirements to determine near and long-term capability gaps. Responsible for identifying and analyzing alternatives using a capabilities-based business analysis framework and determining whether a material solution is required to fill a specific capability gap. Ultimately, responsible for acceptance of acquisition program deliverables throughout the life cycle to ensure the required business outcomes can be achieved.

**BVA** – Board of Veterans’ Appeals

**Capabilities** – Abilities that the VA possesses; it is not tied to the “who” or “how.” Capabilities are expressed in high level terms and reflect the outcome the ability is used to achieve.

**CBO** – Chief Business Office

**CCR** – Clinical Case Registries

**CDS** – Clinical Decision Support

**CDW** – Corporate Data Warehouse

**CFBNP** – Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships

**CFM** – Construction, Facilities and Management

**CFR** – Code of Federal Regulations

**CHAMPVA** – Civilian Health and Medical Program of VA

**CHTW** – Coming Home to Work Program

**CIO** – Chief Information Officer

**CMSWS** – Care Management and Social Work Services

**CMV** – Center for Minority Veterans

**CNLs** – Clinical Nurse Leaders

**CNS** – Clinical Nurse Specialist

**Contracting** – Purchasing, renting, leasing or otherwise obtaining supplies or services.

Contracting includes description (but not determination) of supplies and services required, selection and solicitation of sources, preparation and award of contracts and all phases of contract administration including payments, receipts, and auditing.

**COOP** – Continuity of Operations Plan

**COSVA** – Chief of Staff of Veterans Affairs

**COTR** – Contracting Officer Technical Representative

**CPACs** – Consolidated Patient Account Centers

**CRNA** – Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists

**CSBP** – Center for Small Business Programs

**CSEMO** – Corporate Senior Executive Management Office

**CVE** – Center for Veterans Enterprises

**CWINRS** – An automated case management system supporting the VRE program.

**CWV** – Center for Women Veterans

**CWVV** – Children of Women Vietnam Veterans

**DBQs** – Disability Benefits Questionnaires

**DCIO** – Deputy Chief Information Officer

**DEMO** – Disability Examination Management Office

**DEPSECVA** – Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs

**DIC** – Dependency Indemnity Compensation

**DLOs** – Designated Learning Officers

**DoD** – Department of Defense

**DOT** – Department of Transportation

**EA** – Enterprise Architecture

**EBP** – Evidence-Based Practice

**ECF** – Executive Career Field

**EDW** – Enterprise Data Warehouse

**EEO** – Equal Employment Opportunity

**EEOC** – Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

**EES** – Employee Education System

**EHR** – Electronic Health Record

**E.O.** – Executive Order

**ePMO** – enterprise Program Management Office

**EPSS** – Electronic Performance Support System

**ESC** – Executive Synchronization Committee

**EVEAH** – Enhancing Veteran Experience and Access to Health Care

**FACC** – Federal Acquisition Certifications in Contracting

**FAR** – Federal Acquisition Regulation

**FEA** – Federal Enterprise Architecture – A comprehensive business-driven blueprint of the entire Federal Government.

**FIPS** – Federal Information Processing Standard

**FIRP** – Federal Individualized Recovery Plans

**FISMA** – Federal Information Security Management Act

**FOIA** – Freedom of Information Act

**FOM** – Functional Organization Manual

**FRC** – Federal Recovery Coordinators

**FRCP** – Federal Recovery Coordination Program

**FSGLI** – Family Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance

**FSIP** – Federal Service Impasses Panel

**FSS** – Field Security Service

**Functions** – Functions are the appropriate or assigned duties and responsibilities of an office or organization. Functions are derived from the principal elements of an activity’s mission, elements that differentiate one activity from another (i.e., what the organization does).

**GAO** – Government Accountability Office

**GOE** – General Operating Expense

**GSA** – General Services Administration

**HAISS** – Healthcare Associated Infections and Influenza Surveillance System

**HBPC** – Home-based Primary Care

**HCIP** – Human Capital Investment Plan

**HCV** – hepatitis C

**HEC** – Health Executive Council

**HHS** – Department of Health and Human Services

**hi<sup>2</sup>** – Health Informatics Initiative

**HIPAA** - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

**HIV** – Human Immunodeficiency Virus

**HR** – Human Resource

**HRRO** – Healthcare Retention and Recruitment Office

**HR&SS** – Human Resources and Staffing Services

**HSPD** – Homeland Security Presidential Directive

**HTM** – Healthcare Talent Management

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**HUB** – Historically Underutilized Business  
**HUD** – Department of Housing and Urban Development  
**HVIO** – Homeless Veterans Initiative Office  
**ICS** – Internal Controls Service  
**ICD-10** – International Classification of Diseases version 10  
**IDES** – Integrated Disability Evaluation System  
**iEHR** – Integrated Electronic Health Record – Veterans Affairs and DoD common information and health records system consisting of shared applications, common architecture, and common data model.  
**IHS** – Indian Health Service  
**IPO** – Interagency Program Office (IPO)  
**IRIS** – Inquiry Routing and Information System  
**ISO** – International Organization for Standardization  
**IT** – Information Technology  
**ITC** – Information Technology Center  
**ITRM** - IT Resource Management  
**JIF** – Joint Incentive Fund  
**JEC** – Joint Executive Council  
**JSP** – Joint Strategic Plan  
**KMP** – Knowledge Management Portal  
**LAPP** – Lender Appraisal Processing Program  
**LGY** – Loan Guaranty Service  
**LMR** – Labor-Management Relations  
**MI** – Major Initiative – Major initiatives that represent the highest priorities of the VA.  
**Mission** – Mission statements should include the name of the organization, its responsibilities, and who the organization supports or provides services to. Indicate approving authority and date approved.  
**MSC** – Military Service Coordinators  
**MSNs** – Memorial Service Networks  
**MTFs** – Military Treatment Facilities  
**MVPCs** – Minority Veterans Program Coordinators  
**NADL** – Native American Direct Loan  
**NCA** – National Cemetery Administration – honors Veterans and their families with final resting places in national shrines and with lasting tributes that commemorate their service and sacrifice to our Nation.  
**NCEHC** – National Center for Ethics in Health Care  
**NCOD** – National Center for Organization Development  
**NCPS** – National Center for Patient Safety  
**NDCO** – National Data Center Operations  
**NFTS** – National Finance Training Strategy  
**NGO** – Non-Governmental Organization

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**NIST** – National Institute of Standards and Technology  
**NLC** – National Leadership Council  
**NSLI** – National Service Life Insurance  
**OAA** – Office of Academic Affiliations  
**OALC** – Office of Acquisition, Logistics and Construction  
**OBPI** – Office of Business Process Integration  
**OCLA** – Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs  
**ODA** – Office of Disability Assistance  
**ODMA** - Office of Disability and Medical Assessment  
**OEC** – Office of Enterprise Communications  
**OEDCA** – Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication  
**OEF** – Operation Enduring Freedom  
**OEO** – Office of Economic Opportunity  
**OFO** – Office of Field Operations  
**OFPP** – Office of Federal Procurement Policy  
**OGC** – Office of General Counsel  
**OHE** – Office of Health Equity  
**OHRA** – Office of Human Resource Administration  
**OHRM** – Office of Human Resources Management  
**OHT** – Office of Healthcare Transformation  
**OIHA** – Office of Interagency Health Affairs  
**OIA** – Office of Informatics and Analytics  
**OIF** – Operation Iraqi Freedom  
**OIG** – Office of Inspector General  
**OIT** – Office of Information Technology  
**OMB** – Office of Management and Budget  
**OM** – Office of Management  
**OMI** – Office of the Medical Inspector  
**ONCHIT** – Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT  
**OND** – Operation New Dawn  
**ONS** – Office of Nursing Services  
**OPCS** – Office of Patient Care Services  
**OPIA** – Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs  
**OPM** – Office of Personnel Management  
**OPP** – Office of Policy and Planning  
**ORCS** – Office of Readjustment Counseling Service  
**ORD** – Office of Research and Development  
**ORM** – Office of Resolution Management  
**ORO** – Office of Research Oversight  
**OSA** – Office of Survivors Assistance  
**OSDBU** – Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization

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**OSHA** – Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
**OSP** – Office of Operations, Security, and Preparedness  
**OSVA** – Office of the Secretary  
**PACT** – Patient-Aligned Care Team  
**PA&I** – Performance Analysis and Integrity  
**PAR** – Performance Accountability Report  
**PAS** – Personnel Accountability System  
**PCCCT** – Patient-Centered Care and Cultural Transformation  
**PCRs** – Public Contact Representatives  
**PCS** – Patient Care Services  
**PD** – Product Development  
**P&F** – Pension and Fiduciary  
**PIV** – Personal Identity Verification  
**P.L.** – Public Law  
**P&LO** – Procurement and Logistics Office  
**PLMS** – Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Services  
**PMAS** – Program Management Accountability System  
**PMCs** – Pension Management Centers  
**PMO** – Program Management Office  
**PPBE** – Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution  
**PTSD** – Post Traumatic Stress Disorder  
**QPO** – Quality, Performance & Oversight  
**RCOs** – Research Compliance Officers  
**RFL** – Revolving Fund Loan  
**RMC** – Records Management Center  
**RO** – Regional Offices  
**SAA** – State Approving Agencies  
**SAC** – Strategic Acquisition Center  
**SAH** – Specially Adapted Housing  
**SAPP** – Servicer Appraisal Processing Program  
**SDE** – Service, Delivery and Engineering  
**S-DVI** – Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance  
**SDVO SB** – Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business  
**SECVA** – Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
**SELDP** – Senior Executive Leadership Development Program  
**SES** – Senior Executive Service  
**SGLI** – Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance  
**STAR** – Systematic Technical Accuracy Review  
**Supporting Initiatives** – Initiatives that contribute to the VA’s Integrated Strategy.  
**TAC** – Technology Acquisition Center  
**TAP** – Transition Assistance Program

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**Tasks** – Tasks are requirements accomplished in connection with existing program policy directives or written tasking agreements (i.e., how the organizations provides a service).

**TBI** – Traumatic Brain Injury

**TMA** – TRICARE Management Activity

**TMS** – Talent Management System

**TNC** – Travel Nurse Corps

**TPSS** – Training Performance Support Systems

**TSGLI** – Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection

**USB** – Under Secretary For Benefits

**U.S.C.** – United States Code

**USGLI** – United States Government Life Insurance

**USH** – Under Secretary for Health

**USMA** – Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs

**VA** – Department of Veterans Affairs

**VACM** – Veterans Affairs Draft Capability Model – A program that reflects the operations and capabilities of VA.

**VACO** – VA Central Office – Veterans Affairs Central Office located in Washington, DC

**VAi2** – VA Innovation Initiative

**VALU** – VA Learning University

**VAMC** – Veterans Affairs Medical Centers

**VBA** – Veterans Benefits Administration – Administers benefits and services to Veterans, Service Members, and their dependents, and their survivors, including compensation, pension, education assistance, home loan guaranty, vocational rehabilitation and employment assistance, and life insurance coverage.

**VBMS** – Veterans Benefits Management System

**VEI** – Veterans Employment Initiative

**Veteran** – A person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

**VETSNET** – Veterans Service Network - A database that supports Veterans Benefits Administration systems used to administer Veterans benefits.

**VGLI** – Veterans' Group Life Insurance

**VHA** – Veterans Health Administration – Integrated health care system that provides comprehensive medical care to Veterans to improve their health and well-being.

**VISN** – Veterans Integrated Service Network – Veterans' health care in the U.S. is separated geographically into 21 regions known as VISNs, or Veterans Integrated Service Networks, into systems within each network headed by medical centers, and hierarchically within each system by division level of care or type.

**VistA** – A VA imaging system used for the Electronic Health Record

**VLER** – Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record

**VMLI** – Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance

**VORS** – Veterans Outreach Reporting System

**VRE** – Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment

**VRI** – Veterans’ Reopened Insurance

**VRM** – Veterans Relationship Management

**VSLI** – Veterans’ Special Life Insurance

**VSOs** – Veterans Service Organizations

**VSOC** – VetSuccess on Campus

**WG** – Work Group

**WHS** – Women’s Health Services

**WH OFBNP** – White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships

**WVHSHG** – Women Veterans Health Strategic Health Care Group

**YRRP** – DoD Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program

**APPENDIX B. FOM POINT OF CONTACT INFORMATION****Office of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs:****Advisory Committee Management Office (ACMO)**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Committee Management Officer	Drake, Vivian	202.246.7028	Vivian.Drake@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave., NW	512	

**Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (CFBNP)**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Title, VA CFBNP	LaVelle, E. Terri	202.246.7611	eterri.lavelle@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave., NW Washington, DC 20420	1139A	

**Center for Minority Veterans (CMV)**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Senior Program Analyst	Allen, Renaee	202.246.6196	Renaee.Allen@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave., NW	439	

**Center for Women Veterans (CWV)**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Senior Program Analyst	Long, Desiree	202.246.6105	desiree.long@va.gov	810 Vermont Avenue, NW Washington DC 20420 00W	441	

**Federal Recovery Coordination Office (FRCO)**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Assistant	O'Shea, Laura	202.246.5765	Laura.OShea@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave. Washington, DC 20420	475F	

### Immediate Office of the Secretary

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
The Executive Secretariat	Executive Reviewer	Hamami, Karen	202.246.4848	Karen.Hamami@va.gov	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of the Secretary Office of the Executive Secretariat	001B/Room 1027	

### Non-Governmental Organization Office (NGO)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Special Assistant to the Secretary	Carmon, Doug	202.246.4815	Doug.Carmon@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave., NW Washington, DC 20420	1063A	

### Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication (OEDCA)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Associate Director	Clegg, Karen	202.246.1650	Karen.Clegg@va.gov	1722 I St., NW	801	

### Office of Inspector General (OIG)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Special Assistant to the Inspector General	Moffet, Joanne	202.246.4530	Joanne.Moffett@va.gov	801 I Street, NW Washington, DC 20001	50b	

### Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Deputy Director, Executive Actions	Torres, Beth	202.263.8195	Elizabeth.Torres@va.gov	801 I Street, NW	1214	

### Office of Survivors Assistance

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director	Walker, Debra	202.226.4680	Debra.Walker3@va.gov	1717 H Street Washington, DC 20006	440	

## The Training Support Office (TSO)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
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## Veterans Service Organizations Liaison (VSO)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	VSO Liaison	Secor, Kevin	202.246.4839	Kevin.Secor@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave., NW Washington, DC 20420	1020	

**Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA):**

## Office of Field Operations

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Management Officer	Kupec, Jill	202.246.9340	jill.kupec@va.gov	Veterans Benefits Administration 1800 G. Street NW Washington, DC 20006	506	
	Deputy Under Secretary for Field Operations	Rubens, Diana	202.246.9340	diana.rubens@va.gov	Veterans Benefits Administration 1800 G. Street NW Washington, DC 20006	506	

## Office of Management

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director, Office of Management	Miranda, Bonnie	202.246.9412	bonnie.miranda@va.gov	Veterans Benefits Administration 1800 G. Street, NW Washington, DC 20006	518	

## Office of Performance Analysis and Integrity

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director, Performance Analysis and Integrity	Seastrom, Mark	202.246.9040	mark.seastrom@va.gov	Veterans Benefits Administration 1800 G. Street, NW Washington, DC 20006		

## Office of Resource Management

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director, Office of Resource Management	Manker, Jamie	202.246.9900	james.manker@va.gov	Veterans Benefits Administration 1800 G. Street NW Washington, DC 20006	624	

## Office of Strategic Planning

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director, Strategic Planning	Buchanan, Rick	202.263.8652	richard.buchanan2@va.gov	Veterans Benefits Administration 1800 G. Street, NW Washington, DC 20006	526	

## Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Disability Assistance

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Deputy Under Secretary for Disability Assistance	Jacobs, Janice	202.246.9320	janice.jacobs1@va.gov	Veterans Benefits Administration 1800 G. Street, NW Washington, DC 20006	516	

## Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity	Coy, Curtis	202.244.6080	curtis.coy@va.gov	Veterans Benefits Administration 1800 G. Street, NW Washington, DC 20006	510	
	Executive Management Officer	Kendrix, Angela	202.246.9736	angela.kendrix@va.gov	Veterans Benefits Administration 1800 G. Street, NW Washington, DC 20006	510	

## Office of the Under Secretary for Benefits

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits	Cardarelli, Michael	202.246.9300	michael.cardarelli@va.gov	VA Central Office 1800 G. Street, NW Washington, DC 20006	520	
VBA Office of the Chief of Staff	Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff	McCollam, Carolyn	202.246.9309	carolyn.mccollam@va.gov	VA Central Office 1800 G. Street, NW Washington, DC 20006	520	
VBA Office of the	Staff Assistant	Nguyen, Dan	202.246.9753	dan.nguyen2@va.gov	VA Central Office	520	

Chief of Staff					1800 G. Street, NW Washington, DC 2006		
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### Veterans Health Administration (VHA):

#### VHA Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (DUSHOM)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Clinical Executive	Schiffner, Susan	202.246.6476	susan.schiffner@va.gov	810 Vermont Avenue, NW 10A Washington, DC 20420	820	

#### VHA Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Policy and Services

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Clinical Executive	Schiffner, Susan	202.246.6476	susan.schiffner@va.gov	810 Vermont Avenue, NW 10A Washington, DC 20420	820	

#### VHA Office of the Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health (PDUSH)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Clinical Executive to the PDUSH	Schiffner, Susan	202.246.6476	susan.schiffner@va.gov	810 Vermont Avenue, NW 10A Washington, DC 20420	Room 820	

#### VHA Office of the Under Secretary of Health

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Clinical Executive	Schiffner, Susan	202.246.6476	susan.schiffner@va.gov	810 Vermont Avenue, NW 10A Washington, DC 20420	820	

### National Cemetery Administration (NCA):

#### Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Field Programs

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director, Policy and Planning Service	Lowther, Paige	202.246.4108	paige.lowther@va.gov	1575 Eye Street NW Washington, DC 20420	230E	

**Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Finance and Planning**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director, Policy and Planning Service	Lowther, Paige	202.246.4108	paige.lowther@va.gov	1575 Eye Street NW Washington, DC 20420	230E	

**Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Management**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director, Policy and Planning Service	Lowther, Paige	202.246.4108	paige.lowther@va.gov	1575 Eye Street NW Washington, DC 20420	230E	

**Office of the Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs	Walters, Ronald	202.246.6738	ronald.walters@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave. NW Washington, DC 20420	427Q	

**Office of the Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs (OCLA):****Office of the Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director of Operations	Hinkin, Lawrence	202.246.5914	lawrence.hinkin@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave NW Washington, DC 20420	502	
	Associate Assistant Deputy Secretary	O'Connor, Christopher	202.246.6456	christopher.o'connor2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave NW Washington, DC 20420	506	

**Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
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**Office of Human Resource Administration (OHRA):**

## Office of the Dean VA Learning University (VALU)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive in Charge	Biggs-Silvers, Catherine	202.263.7765	catherine.biggs-silver@va.gov	VA Learning University, 006V 1100 First Street, NE Washington, DC 20002		✓

## Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Hurndon, Roy	202.246.5000	Roy.Hurndon@va.gov	Office of Administration 810 Vermont Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20420	100	

## Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Diversity and Inclusion

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Coffey, Georgia	202.246.4131	georgia.coffey@va.gov	Office of Diversity and Inclusion 1575 Eye St., NW Washington, DC 20420	200	

## Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management (OHRM)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive in Charge	Ozben, Esra	202.246.7765	esra.ozben@va.gov	Office of Human Resources Management 810 Vermont Avenue, NW. Washington, DC 20420	208	✓

## Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Labor Management Relations

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Wiggins, Leslie	202.246.4122	leslie.wiggins2@va.gov	Office of Labor Management Relations 1575 Eye Street, NW Washington, DC 20420	250	

## Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Resolution Management

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Franco, Rosa	202.246.0280	rosa.franco@va.gov	Office of Resolution Management 1575 I Street, NW Washington, DC 20420	1000	

## Strategic Management Group (SMG)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director	Viani, Joseph	202.263.7965	joseph.viani@va.gov	Strategic Management Group 1100 1st Street NE Washington, DC 20002	200	

## Office of Information Technology (OIT):

## IT Resource Management

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director of Quality, Performance and Oversight	Orr, Martha	202.246.6910	martha.orr@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	700	
	Management Analyst	Anderson, Vernon	202.273.4124	vernon.anderson2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420		
	Contractor - Senior Business Analyst	Washington, Yolanda	202.246.5906	yolanda.washington2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	354A	

## Office of Architecture, Design, and Strategy (ASD)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director of Quality, Performance and Oversight	Orr, Martha	202.246.6910	martha.orr@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave Washington, DC 20420	700	
	Management Analyst	Anderson, Vernon	202.273.4124	vernon.anderson2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420		
	Contractor - Senior Business Analyst	Washington, Yolanda	202.246.5906	yolanda.washington2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	354A	

## Office of Information Security

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director of Quality, Performance and Oversight	Orr, Martha	202.246.6910	martha.orr@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	700	
	Management Analyst	Anderson, Vernon	202.273.4124	vernon.anderson2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420		
	Contractor - Senior Business Analyst	Washington, Yolanda	202.246.5906	yolanda.washington2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	354A	

## Office of Quality, Performance and Oversight

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director of Quality, Performance, and Oversight	Orr, Martha	202.246.6910	martha.orr@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	700	
	Management Analyst	Anderson, Vernon	202.273.4124	vernon.anderson2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420		
	Contractor - Senior Business Analyst	Washington, Yolanda	202.246.5906	yolanda.washington2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	354A	

## Office of Service Delivery and Engineering (SDE)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director of Quality, Performance and Oversight	Orr, Martha	202.246.6910	martha.orr@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	700	
	Management Analyst	Anderson, Vernon	202.273.4124	vernon.anderson2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420		
	Contractor - Senior Business Analyst	Washington, Yolanda	202.246.5906	yolanda.washington2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	354A	

## Office of the Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director of Quality, Performance and Oversight	Orr, Martha	202.246.6910	martha.orr@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	Room 700	
	Contractor - Senior Business Analyst	Washington, Yolanda	202.246.5906	yolanda.washington2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	354A	
	Management Analyst	Anderson, Vernon	202.273.4124	vernon.anderson2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420		

## Office of the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology - Interagency Program Office

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director of Quality, Performance and Oversight	Orr, Martha	202.246.6910	martha.orr@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	700	
	Management Analyst	Anderson, Vernon	202.273.4124	vernon.anderson2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave Washington, DC 20420		
	Contractor - Senior Business Analyst	Washington, Yolanda	202.246.5906	yolanda.washington2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave Washington, DC 20420	354A	

## Product Development

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director of Quality, Performance, and Oversight	Orr, Martha	202.246.6910	martha.orr@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	700	
	Management Analyst	Anderson, Vernon	202.273.4124	vernon.anderson2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave Washington, DC 20420		
	Contractor - Senior Business Analyst	Washington, Yolanda	202.246.5906	yolanda.washington2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave Washington, DC 20420	354A	

## Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record Enterprise Program Management Office

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director of Quality, Performance and Oversight	Orr, Martha	202.246.6910	martha.orr@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave Washington, DC 20420	700	
	Management Analyst	Anderson, Vernon	202.273.4124	vernon.anderson2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave Washington, DC 20420		
	Contractor - Senior Business Analyst	Washington, Yolanda	202.246.5906	yolanda.washington2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	354A	

**Office of Management (OM):**

## Office of Asset Enterprise Management (OAEM)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
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## Office of Business Oversight

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
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## Office of Performance Management

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
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## Assistant Secretary for Management

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director, Office of Business Oversight	Wood, Rodney	512.298.4200	rodney.wood@va.gov	1701 Directors Blvd Austin, TX 78744	Suite 900	
	Senior Policy Advisor	Johnson, Richard	202.246.6683	richardp.johnson@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	601	

## Office of Budget

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
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## Office of Finance

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
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## Office of Enterprise Risk Management

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
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**Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs (OPIA):**

## Homeless Veterans Initiatives Office (HVIO)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director	Angell, Susan	202.246.1508	susan.angell@va.gov	1722 I St. NW Suite 900 Washington DC 20006	915	
	Deputy Director	Taylor, Michael	202.246.1677	Michael.Taylor3@va.gov	1722 I Street, NW Washington, DC 20006	Room 922	

## National Veterans Outreach Office

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director	Curtin, Joseph	202.246.6807	joseph.curtin@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 20420	915F	

## Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Acting Executive Assistant to the Assistant Secretary	McCrea, Susan	202.246.7379	susan.mccrea@va.gov	810 Vermont Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20420	904	✓

## Office of Media Products and Internal Communication (OMP IC)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director	Benson, Jim	202.246.7429	jim.benson@va.gov	810 Vermont Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20420	VACO 918	

## Office of Media Relations (OMR)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Deputy Director	Ballesteros, Mark	202.246.7559	mark.ballesteros@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave. NW  Washington, D.C. 20420	914	

**Office of National Veterans Sports Programs and Special Events**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Deputy Director	Pejoro, Susan	202.263.6734	susan.pejoro@va.gov	810 Vermont NW Washington, DC 20420	430	

**Office of Online Communications**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Acting Director Online Communications	Tuscher, Joshua	202.246.7494	joshua.tuscher@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave Washington, DC	921	✓

**Office of Public Affairs**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Senior Advisor	Tallman, Gary	202.246.7430	gary.tallman@va.gov	810 Vermont Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20420	VACO 908	

**Office of Tribal Government Relations**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Program Specialist	Moott, Erika	202.246.7868	erika.moott@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave. NW Suite 915 L Washington, DC 20420		

**Office of Policy and Planning (OPP):****Enterprise Program Management Office**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director, Enterprise Program Management Office	Giddens, Gregory	202.246.6986	gregory.giddens@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave NW Washington DC 20420	310	

**Office of Corporate Analysis and Evaluation (CA&E)**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director - Acting	Wagner, Ken	202.246.5752	kenneth.wagner3@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave NW Washington DC 20420	315L	✓

**Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning	Snyder, Robert	202.246.5818	robert.snyder@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave NW Washington, DC 20420	304	

**Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Data Governance and Analysis**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Deputy Assistant Secretary for Data Governance and Analysis	Tran, Dat	202.246.5788	dat.tran@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave NW Washington DC 20420	308	

**Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy	Vacant, Vacant	202.246.5800				

**Office of Interagency Collaboration and Integration**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director for VA/DoD Collaboration	Medve, John	202.246.5626	john.medve@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave NW Washington DC 20420	327B	

**Office of Operations, Security, and Preparedness (OSP):****Office of the Director for Resource Management (ORM)**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director OSP Resource Management	Dunn, Sylvia	202.246.4984	sylvia.dunn@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave NW Washington DC 20520	1075F	✓

## Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Emergency Management

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director OSP Resource Management	Dunn, Sylvia	202.246.4984	sylvia.dunn@va.gov	810 Vermont Av, NW Washington DC 20520	1075F	✓

## Office of Security and Law Enforcement

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director OSP Resource Management	Dunn, Sylvia	202.246.4984	sylvia.dunn@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave NW Washington DC 20520	1075D	✓

## Office of the Director for Personnel Security and Identity Management (PSIM)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Director OSP Resource Management	Dunn, Sylvia	202.246.4984	sylvia.dunn@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave, NW Washington DC 20520	1075F	✓

**Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA):**

## Decision Teams

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
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## Office of Management, Planning and Analysis

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
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## Office of the Chairman/Appellate Group

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Assistant to the Chairman	Morton, Barbara	202.263.5907	Barbara.Morton2@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave., NW Washington, DC 20420	5E.250J	
	Special Assistant to the Vice Chairman	Klassen, Nicole	202.263.5230	Nicole.Klassen@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave., NW Washington, DC 20420	5E.250G	
	Executive in Charge	Keller, Steve	202.263.4603	Steve.Keller@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave., NW Washington, DC 20420	5E.250I	

## Office of VLJs

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
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**Office of Acquisition, Logistics and Construction (OALC):**

## Chancellor, VA Acquisition Academy

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Assistant	Falin, Melanie	202.246.0758	melanie.falin@va.gov	7485 New Horizon Way Frederick, MD 21703	2084	
	Chancellor	Starinsky, Melissa	202.246.0646	melissa.starinsky@va.gov	7485 New Horizon Way Frederick, MD 21703	2084	

## Office of Acquisition Operations (OAO)

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Assistant	Peterson, Dawn	202.246.6836	dawn.peterson@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave., NW Washington, DC 20420	727E	
	Executive Director	Cooper, Iris	202.246.6874	iris.cooper@va.gov	810 Vermont Ave., NW Washington, DC 20420	727E	

## Office of Acquisition Program Support

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary	Harvey, Ruby	202.246.0738	ruby.harvey@va.gov	810 Vermont Avenue, NW Washington DC 20420	715A	
	Acting Business Manager	Achille, Kathy	202.246.6888	kathy.achille@va.gov	810 Vermont Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20420	711	

## Office of Construction and Facilities Management

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Director	Fiores, Stella	202.263.4607	stella.fiores@va.gov	425 I Street NW Washington, DC 20001	6W104	

## Office of Engineering Support

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Acting Director, Consulting Support Services	Raychaudhuri, Asesh	202.263.5476	asesh.raychaudhuri@va.gov	425 I Street, NW Washington, DC 20001	6E224	✓

## Office of Facilities Acquisition Support

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Associate Executive Director	Szwarcman, George	202.263.4672	george.szwarcman@va.gov	425 I Street, NW Washington, DC 20001	6E503	

## Office of Facilities Planning

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Associate Executive Director	Siegel, Lloyd	202.263.4632	lloyd.siegel@va.gov	425 I Street, NW Washington, DC 20001	6W503	

## Office of Facilities Programs and Plans

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Associate Executive Director	Milsten, Dennis	202.263.5358	dennis.milsten@va.gov	425 I Street, NW Washington, DC 20001	6E429	

## Office of National Acquisition Center

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary	Robinson, Craig	708.878.5157	craig.robinson@va.gov	1st Ave. 1Blk. N. of 22nd St. Bldg 37, P.O. Box 76 Hines, IL. 60141	104	

## Office of Logistics and Supply Chain Management

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Assistant	Matos, Barbara	202.246.6930	barbara.matos@va.gov	810 Vermont Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20420	715D	

**Office of Operations**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Associate Executive Director	Milsten, Dennis	202.263.5358	dennis.milsten@va.gov	425 I Street, NW Washington, DC 20001	6E429	✓

**Office of Policy, Systems, and Oversight**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary	Heard, C. Ford	202.246.6877	ford.heard@va.gov	810 Vermont Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20420	715G	

**Office of Resource Management**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Associate Executive Director	Quicker, Rose	202.263.5466	rose.quicker@va.gov	425 I Street NW Washington D.C. 20001	6E651	

**Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Acquisition and Logistics**

Sub-Office	Position Title	Name	Phone	E-mail	Office Address	Room	Acting?
	Executive Assistant	Wilson, Robert	202.246.6923	robert.wilson@va.gov	810 Vermont Avenue, NW Washington DC 20420	715E	

**Office of the Principal Executive Director**

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**Office of the General Counsel (OGC):****Assistant General Counsels and Office of Regulation Policy, and Management**

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