

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
CHARTER OF THE
VETERANS' RURAL HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- A. OFFICIAL DESIGNATION: Veterans' Rural Health Advisory Committee.
- B. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES: The Veterans' Rural Health Advisory Committee will advise the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on health care issues affecting enrolled veterans residing in rural areas.
- C. PERIOD OF TIME NECESSARY FOR THE COMMITTEE TO CARRY OUT ITS PURPOSES: There is a continuing need for the Committee. No termination date for the Committee has been set.
- D. OFFICIAL TO WHOM THE COMMITTEE REPORTS: The Veterans' Rural Health Advisory Committee will report to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs through the Under Secretary for Health.
- E. AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING THE NECESSARY SUPPORT TO THE COMMITTEE: The Veterans Health Administration (VHA), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), is responsible for providing support to the Veterans' Rural Health Advisory Committee.
- F. DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE: The Veterans' Rural Health Advisory Committee will examine ways to improve and enhance VA services for enrolled veterans residing in rural areas by evaluating current program activities and identifying barriers to providing services. The Committee will meet as necessary to discuss VA Office of Rural Health programs and policies that impact the provision of VA health care to veterans in rural areas. The Committee may adopt recommendations designed to enhance or improve VA rural health care services for veterans, and the Committee may submit such reports as it deems necessary to describe its activities, deliberations and findings.

Committee members will be appointed by the Secretary and will include affected veterans, rural health experts in academia, state and federal government professionals who focus on rural health, veterans affairs officials at the state level, and veterans service organization leaders. Ex-officio members will include appropriate designees of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Agriculture.

The Committee will be composed of approximately 12-15 members. Several members may be Regular Government Employees, but the majority of the Committee's membership will be Special Government Employees. Committee members will serve as objective advisors, not as representatives of any organizations for which they may otherwise be serving.

Each member of the Committee will serve an initial two year term. The Secretary may re-appoint members for additional terms of service.

G. ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS IN DOLLARS AND STAFF YEARS:

Estimated annual operating costs for the Committee are \$140,000 and .6 staff years. All members will receive travel expenses and a per diem allowance in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulation for any travel made in connection with their duties as members of the Committee.

H. ESTIMATED NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS: The Committee is expected to meet at least two times annually. The Designated Federal Officer (DFO), a full time VA employee, will approve the schedule of Committee meetings. The DFO or a designee will be present at all meetings, and each meeting will be conducted in accordance with an agenda approved by the DFO. The DFO is authorized to adjourn any meeting when he or she determines it is in the public interest to do so.

I. COMMITTEE TERMINATION DATE: Unless renewed by appropriate action prior to the expiration of this charter, the Committee will terminate two years after the date shown below.

J. DATE CHARTER IS FILED:

Approved:



James B. Peake, M.D.
Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Date

6/08/08