

## STAFFING

**1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To revise Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) procedures regarding changes to staffing and recruitment policies with the enactment of VA Health Care Personnel Enhancement Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-445, dated December 3, 2004). Changes affecting physician and dentist pay and time-in-grade requirements will become effective January 8, 2006.

**2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This handbook contains mandatory VA procedures on staffing and recruitment. The pages in this issuance replace related material in part III, chapters 1-5 of VA Handbook 5005, Staffing. These changes will be incorporated into the electronic version of VA Handbook 5005, Staffing, that is maintained on the [Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations Web site](#). This revision reflects the following changes:

- a. Removes reference to promotion and advancements for physicians and dentists.
- b. Eliminates reference for time-in-grade requirements for physicians and dentists.
- c. Salary determinations for physicians and dentists will be recommended by a Compensation Panel.
- d. Clarifies language on promotions to higher grade levels and advancements to higher levels within a grade.
- e. Clarifies time-in-grade requirements which were inadvertently omitted in Change 13, dated August 12, 2005.

**3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (059), Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management and Labor Relations.

**4. RELATED DIRECTIVE:** VA Directive 5005, Staffing.

**5. RESCISSIONS:** None.

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STAFFING

PART III. INTERNAL PLACEMENT[, CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENT] AND PROMOTION

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**PART III. INTERNAL PLACEMENT[, CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENT OR] PROMOTION**

**CHAPTER 1. GENERAL**

**1. SCOPE.** This part contains the policies and procedures governing the placement of VA employees in another VA position, including the movement of the employee to another VA facility under a different appointing officer. Such position changes include demotion, reassignment or promotion of an employee while continuously employed in VA and authorized conversion to another appointment under certain circumstances.

**2. ORGANIZATION**

a. Chapters 2 and 3 include requirements and procedures for internal placement and promotion actions for employees in the competitive service under title 5.

(1) While the provisions in these chapters apply to the competitive service, there is no prohibition against using these or similar procedures to provide opportunities to certain excepted service employees, such as those appointed under the Veterans Recruitment [Appointment] (VRA) or severely handicapped individuals appointed under Schedule A.

(2) In the interest of clarity, policy requirements are identified by the word "requirement". Requirements are mandatory provisions established in accordance with or consistent with Federal human resources policies issued by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) or pertinent laws, rules and regulations.

(3) Guidance, which is identified as such, is included to provide matters to be considered, information, clarification, examples, etc., to assist in the development of subordinate policies which will conform to VA and OPM policy requirements.

b. Chapter [ ] 4 [ ] contain[s] internal placement[, change in assignment] and advancement policies, procedures and requirements for employees appointed under 38 U.S.C., chapter 74.

c. Chapter [5 contains] requirements [for conversion or change of assignments for employees appointed under 38 U.S.C. 73 or 74].

[d. Chapter 6 includes requirements and procedures related to military leave and restoration/reemployment. The provisions of this chapter apply to both title 5 and title 38 employees.]



(2) **Requirement** - It is the employee's responsibility to secure appropriate supervisory evaluations of performance and annual performance appraisals and forward them, along with a completed employment application, in accordance with the due date specified in the announcement. The receiving facility will be informed by the applicant when its request for additional information requires extra time and the anticipated date of receipt. The local HRM staff will, when requested, provide information to applicants concerning the proper completion of the employment application and/or other forms or requests for information.

(3) **Requirement** - Referral of personnel folders to the facility having the vacancy will not be made routinely. Under unusual circumstances, however, when proper evaluation and ranking cannot be made based on the available information, requests for personnel folders by other facilities will be honored. Facilities receiving folders will ensure that all required actions are completed and the folders are released to the appropriate facility within 5 workdays after receipt.

## 12. USE OF VA FORM 3918, INTRA-AGENCY TRANSFER REQUEST

a. **General Requirement** - VA Form 3918, Intra-Agency Transfer Request, will be completed for each VA employee who is selected for transfer. After the transfer has been affected, the VA Form 3918 will be filed on the left side of the employee's personnel folder for at least 1 year.

### b. Action by the Receiving HRM Office

(1) **Guidance** - When an employee is selected for transfer, the receiving HRM office will normally initiate the VA Form 3918 by completing Part I of the form and sending it to the releasing HRM office.

(2) **Requirement** - If the proposed transfer is to a position in a different wage schedule or locality pay area, the pay rates of the grade will be indicated in item 9 on the form. This will enable the releasing facility to inform the employee of the rate of pay for the new position.

(3) **Requirement** - The criteria for determining whether relocation expenses may be authorized at Government expense are contained in MP-1, part II, chapter 2 and paragraph 13 of this chapter. Item 15 of VA Form 3918 will indicate whether or not relocation expenses will be authorized. If relocation expenses are not authorized by the appropriate approving official, the employee statement and signature cited in paragraph [14d], this chapter, are required and will be entered in item 34 on the reverse side of the VA Form 3918.

(4) **Guidance** - When time is short, it may be more practical for the releasing facility to initiate the VA Form 3918. **Requirement** - In these cases, the receiving facility must let the releasing facility know if travel and transportation costs are to be paid by VA so the employee can complete the appropriate sections of the form.

### c. Action by the Releasing HRM Office

(1) **Requirement** - Upon receipt of the VA Form 3918, the releasing HRM office will have the employee complete the appropriate portions of Part II. Employees for who travel and transportation

**CHAPTER 4. TITLE 38 AND HYBRID TITLE 38 PROMOTIONS AND INTERNAL PLACEMENTS****SECTION A. PROMOTION [OR CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENT] AND INTERNAL PLACEMENT OF TITLE 38 EMPLOYEES****1. GENERAL**

a. This section contains instructions and procedures governing the promotion and advancement of [ ] podiatrists, optometrists, chiropractors, registered nurses (RNs), nurse anesthetists, physician assistants (PAs) and expanded-function dental auxiliaries (EFDAs) appointed under authority of 38 U.S.C. 7401(1) or 7405(a)(1)(A); and medical and dental residents appointed under authority of 38 U.S.C. 7406.

**NOTE [1]:** *Residents serving under a disbursement agreement are excluded from coverage under the provisions of this section.*

**[NOTE 2:** *VHA physicians and dentists are excluded from coverage for promotion procedures as described in this section. See VA Handbook 5007, Pay Administration, Part IX, for guidance for pay regulations and procedures.]*

b. The promotion system shall provide advancement opportunities for employees, predicated upon the recognition of the quality of service rendered, additional experience and professional attainment as determined by a thorough review of the employee's individual record.

c. To meet the criteria for promotion, the individual must meet the criteria for the next higher grade level in the applicable VA qualification standard. A review of the individual's total record must show evidence that the contribution to VA medical service is of sufficient value to warrant promotion. Potential for continuously greater contribution is also a prerequisite. Reviews and recommendations of professional standards boards will be sufficient to ensure that promotion is fully merited and not recommended based on meeting administrative requirements alone. The individual's total record and professional stature will be carefully evaluated and supported by documentary evidence as necessary.

d. Promotion actions will be taken without regard to age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, lawful partisan political affiliation, marital status, physical or mental disability (when the employee is qualified to do the work), or membership or non-membership in a labor organization, or any other non-merit factor.

e. Promotion actions will conform to the restrictions governing the employment of relatives. (See VA Handbook 5025, Legal.)

f. Promotion [and advancement] opportunities shall include:

**(1) Promotion**

[(a)] Promotion to a higher grade in recognition of substantially greater service to the patient and VA.

[(b) Promotion to Grade IV or Grade V of the Nurse Schedule, for assignment to positions of nurse anesthetist, Nurse Executive, or other key nursing positions. Key nursing positions refer to registered nurses (other than Nurse Executives) at Nurse IV and above whose grade is based on both their personal qualifications and responsibilities of their assignment. The grades of Nurse Executives are based on the assignment of the individuals. Advancement of other registered nurses and nurse anesthetists to these grades will be based on the VA Qualification Standards for Nurses and Nurse Anesthetists and promotion criteria which cover the complexity and responsibility involved in the specific assignment.]

(2) **Advancement**

(a) [Advancement of Nurses in Grade I to Level 2 or Level 3].

(b) [Special Advancements for Achievement and Performance. (See VA Handbook 5017, Employee Recognition and Awards.)]

(c) [Change in assignments for physicians and dentists. (See VA Handbook 5007, Part IX, paragraph 15)].

[ ]

**2. PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO ACT ON RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARDS FOR PROMOTIONS[,] ADVANCEMENTS [OR CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENTS]**

a. The Secretary shall approve all assignments of physicians and dentists to [tier 4 assignments] on the recommendation of the Under Secretary for Health or designee.

b. Officials authorized to approve promotions[,] advancements [or change in assignments] other than those described in paragraph 2a are set forth in appendix K, this part.

**3. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BOARDS**

(See part II, chapter 3, section C, this handbook.)

**4. PROMOTION - GENERAL**

a. **Consideration.** Full-time, part-time, and intermittent employees, having attained eligibility for initial appointment on the basis of appropriate qualification standards, shall be considered periodically for promotion in their current occupation. Eligibility for such promotion considerations shall be based upon fully meeting prescribed administrative requirements.

b. **[Promotion to a Higher] Grade.** Promotions shall be based on the qualifications (experience, education, and competencies) of the employee and on the nature and complexity of the higher level position. In addition, when an employee enters a special program where the grade of the employee is restricted by the program, appropriate grade adjustments may be made upon completion of

the required period for the special program. The employee may be promoted to the grade and step for which qualified for appointment, provided the administrative requirements for promotion consideration [ ] have been met.

c. **Effective Date.** The effective date of a promotion or advancement to a higher level within a grade is the 1st day of the pay period following approval by the approving official, but not earlier than the date on which all administrative requirements are met.

d. **Notification of Eligibility.** Human Resources Management Officers are responsible for assuring that appropriate officials are notified approximately 60 days in advance of the date employees meet the administrative requirements for promotion, except that for podiatrists, optometrists, and chiropractors in Associate or Full grade, physician assistants in Associate grade; and expanded-function dental auxiliaries in Junior grade, notification of consideration for promotion will be made approximately 60 days in advance of the anniversary date of grade. The employee shall also be notified. If the employee is not promoted, these notifications shall continue to be made annually approximately 60 days prior to the anniversary date of grade until a change in grade occurs. A longer period between promotion consideration, not to exceed 3 years, may be established by the approving official when a nurse or expanded-function dental auxiliary does not meet the education or experience requirements.

e. **Administrative Requirements for Consideration**

(1) A current proficiency rating of Satisfactory or higher[,or Executive Career Field Performance appraisal of Fully Successful or higher].

(2) The experience and education requirements in the appropriate VA Qualification Standards.

[(3) Time-in-grade requirements (See Appendix L, this part.)]

f. **Service Which May Be Credited Toward Meeting [Time-In-Grade] Requirement for Promotion**

(1) Continuous full-time, part-time and intermittent paid employment rendered under 38 U.S.C. 7401(1) and 7405(a)(1), or under 38 U.S.C. 7406 as a medical or dental resident.

(2) All leave with pay.

(3) Full-time, part-time and intermittent paid employment under authority of 38 U.S.C. ch. 73 or 74 which is:

(a) Rendered prior to a separation other than for cause, provided such period of separation was not in excess of 3 years.

(b) Rendered prior to a period of approved LWOP irrespective of the length of such period.

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(4) Continuous temporary full-time and part-time paid employment under 38 U.S.C. 7405(a)(1) as a graduate nurse technician, graduate physician assistant or graduate nurse anesthetist rendered prior to appointment under 38 U.S.C. 7401(1) or 7405(a)(1), without a break in service for more than 3 calendar days.

(5) LWOP approved for educational purposes which has been granted on the premise that it will ultimately be to the advantage of VA.

(6) LWOP granted for other than educational purposes not to exceed 30 calendar days for full-time [ ] podiatrists, optometrists, and chiropractors, and 22 days for those who are part-time, for each year of experience required, up to a maximum of 120 calendar days or 88 workdays, respectively. LWOP granted for other than educational purposes not to exceed 176 hours (22 workdays) for full and part-time registered nurses and nurse anesthetists for each year of experience required, up to a maximum of 528 hours (66 workdays). LWOP granted for other than educational purposes not to exceed 176 hours (22 workdays) for physician assistants and expanded-functional dental auxiliaries for each year of experience required, up to a maximum of 352 hours (44 workdays). LWOP in excess of such amounts requires employees to serve an additional number of days or hours equal to such excess.

(7) Active military duty when otherwise creditable service was interrupted thereby and the employee exercises statutory restoration rights.

(8) Service not to exceed 120 calendar days between discharge or termination from the Armed Forces and reemployment under mandatory provisions of any statute or regulation.

(9) All time during which an employee receives benefits under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act, provided sufficient service has been performed so that the candidate can be properly evaluated.

**5. PROMOTION OF [ ] PODIATRISTS, OPTOMETRISTS, CHIROPRACTORS, PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS, AND EXPANDED-FUNCTION DENTAL AUXILIARIES**

a. **[Requirements for Podiatrists, Optometrists, Chiropractors, Physician Assistants, and Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries.** Before they can be considered for promotion, employees in the above occupations must have a current proficiency rating of Satisfactory or higher. These employees must meet the same grade requirements, including the specified demonstrated accomplishments, as for appointment. Any deviation or exception to these requirements will be limited to those specified in the appropriate qualification standard. (See part II, appendix G.)]

b. **[Processing Procedures** (See appendix M, this part.)]

(1) Notification of Eligibility

(a) Approximately 60 days prior to the date the employee meets the experience requirement for consideration for promotion, the health care facility will receive from the Austin Automation Center (AAC) VA Form 5-97, Notice of Pending Personnel Action, in duplicate, identifying the employee and stating that the employee meets the time requirements for promotion as of the date specified. In addition, VA Form 5-97 will indicate if there is a satisfactory or higher proficiency on record and the amount of

leave without pay (LWOP) since the beginning of the waiting period to the date VA Form 5-97 is issued. (VA Form 5-97 will be received approximately 60 days prior to the anniversary date of grade for podiatrists, optometrists, and chiropractors in Associate or Full grade, physician assistants in Associate grade, and for expanded-function dental auxiliaries in Junior grade.) The employee shall also be notified.

(b) If the employee is not promoted, the AAC will continue to send VA Form 5-97 annually until a change in grade occurs. The VA Form 5-97 will be forwarded to the appropriate supervisory official. An employee who is not promoted will be reconsidered on the next anniversary date of grade. A longer period between considerations, not to exceed 3 years, may be established by the approving official when an expanded-function dental auxiliary does not meet the qualification standard education or experience requirements for the next grade. In these cases, the Human Resources Management Office will tab the service control file and will destroy the VA Form 5-97 for the year(s) when the employee is not to receive consideration.

## **6. PROMOTION [TO A HIGHER GRADE] AND ADVANCEMENT TO A HIGHER LEVEL WITHIN THE GRADE OF REGISTERED NURSES AND NURSE ANESTHETISTS**

a. **Administrative Requirements.** Before they can be considered for promotion [to a higher grade level] or advancement to a higher level within the grade, registered nurses and nurse anesthetists must have a current proficiency rating of Satisfactory or higher and meet the experience requirements specified in the qualification standards. Registered nurses and nurse anesthetists considered for promotion [to a higher grade] or for advancement to a higher level within the grade based on possession of additional qualifications and/or placement in an enhanced assignment must meet the requirements in the applicable qualification standard. Any deviation or exception to these requirements will be limited to those specified in the qualification standard.

b. **Criteria for Consideration of Registered Nurses.** Registered nurses who meet the above administrative requirements become eligible for consideration for promotion [ ] to a higher [ ] grade and must meet the following criteria:

(1) Have improved the effectiveness of patient care through the use of more complex skills and application of scholarly knowledge to practice.

(2) Have assumed greater responsibility for the improvement of patient care.

(3) Have made steady progress toward professional goals for the improvement of patient care.

(4) Have demonstrated the ability to perform at the level of professional nursing practice required in the qualification standard for appointment to the grade to which the registered nurse is being considered for promotion [to a higher grade level] or advancement to a higher level within the grade.

c. **Criteria for Positions Other Than Nurse Executive Which May Warrant [Promotion] of a Registered Nurse to Nurse IV or Nurse V**

(1) Assignments such as Associate or Assistant Chief, Nursing Service; Associate Chief Nursing Service for Research; Associate Chief Nursing Service for Education; Supervisor, Nursing Home Care

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Unit; assignments in the Employee Education System; or Central Office nursing positions are examples of positions that may be appropriate for these grades. Assignments are typically located in organizational settings where there is a high degree of activity, where there is a broad program mission involving a great variety of specialty/ subspecialty care in a more complex setting, and other special programs. These assignments are usually found at medical centers where complex patient care is provided, and at VISN offices or Central Office. Assignments of the scope and complexity contemplated for these grade levels may occur, on a limited basis, at other medical facilities.

(2) In considering the scope and complexity of the assignment, reviewers should look at those factors which specifically relate to the administrative, clinical, educational or research functions of the position:

(a) **Administrative Assignments.** The individual's responsibility for managing and supervising the total nursing program; planning, organizing, directing, controlling and evaluating programs and follow-up actions required by internal and external review organizations and/or accrediting bodies; giving daily attention to complex personnel management problems; participating in executive and decision making deliberations; and performing a full range of administrative duties.

(b) **Educational Assignments.** The individual's responsibility for developing broad educational and training programs involving a variety of nurse specialties in widely diversified nursing activities; providing nursing personnel with the vital link between nursing education and nursing practice; coordinating and maintaining close relationships with affiliated schools of nursing, professional organizations, certifying bodies, and program directors of students of other disciplines who rotate through the medical facility; and serving on Education and Training Committees, nursing advisory groups, and special task force teams concerned with managing education and career development activities.

(c) **Research Assignments.** The individual's responsibility for (1) conducting merit-reviewed, approved research projects relative to nursing care and related specialty areas, performing independent research or serving as a primary contributing member of a research team, formulating the research proposal and protocol submission to Central Office for merit review, and publishing in appropriate nursing and related professional journals or speaking to peer groups; or (2) serving as a highly competent and productive researcher on problems of major scope, directing independent research of considerable interest and value to nursing or related fields, where the research contributions can be reviewed as being highly productive and of such quality and originality as to have marked the nurse scientist as a significant contributor to advances in the practice of nursing.

(d) **Nursing Home Care Supervisor Assignments.** The individual's responsibility for supervising a large Nursing Home Care Unit (NHCU) characterized by a high degree of interdisciplinary involvement, significant involvement in rehabilitation and outplacement efforts, and nursing home care program planning, organizing, directing, controlling, and evaluating activities. The assignment includes significant human resources responsibilities along with a full range of administrative duties.

(e) **Other Comparable Assignments.** The individual's responsibility for assignments comparable to any one or combination of those described in subparagraphs (2)(a) through (2)(d).

d. **Criteria for Consideration of Nurse Anesthetists.** Nurse anesthetists who meet the administrative requirements in subparagraph 6a become eligible for promotion [to a higher grade level] and must meet the following criteria:

- (1) Supervisory evaluations clearly illustrate the significant contribution the candidate's accomplishments have made directly or indirectly to services to the patient.
- (2) The candidate has demonstrated consistent and progressive professional and/or administrative growth.
- (3) The candidate has demonstrated increasing professional responsibility for patient welfare.
- (4) The candidate has displayed the ability to communicate and work effectively with others.
- (5) The candidate has demonstrated the potential for further development and professional attainment.
- (6) The candidate has demonstrated increasingly significant contributions to the service.

e. **Processing Promotions [to a Higher Grade Level] and Advancements to a Higher Level Within the Grade for Nurse Anesthetists.** Promotions [to a higher grade level] and advancements to a higher level within the grade for nurse anesthetists will be processed [according to instructions in appendix M, this part]. [ ] When possible, the physician chief of anesthesiology, physician consultant in anesthesiology or Chief, Surgical Service, shall be a member of the Physician Professional Standards Board in examining nurse anesthetists for promotion to [a] higher grade.

f. **Processing Promotions [to a Higher Grade Level] and Advancements to a Higher Level Within the Grade for Registered Nurses.** See appendix M, this part.

(1) **General.** Approximately 60 days prior to the date the registered nurse meets the experience requirement for consideration for promotion [to a higher grade level] or advancement to a higher level within the grade, the facility will receive from the AAC, VA Form 5-97, Notice of Pending Personnel Action, in duplicate, identifying the employee and stating that the employee meets the experience requirement for promotion [to a higher grade level] or advancement to a higher level within the grade as of the date specified. In addition, VA Form 5-97 will indicate if there is a Satisfactory or higher proficiency rating on record and the amount of LWOP since the beginning of the waiting period to the date VA Form 5-97 is issued.

(2) **Promotions for Facility Nurse Executives, VISN Nurses and Nurses in Central Office**

(a) The recommending official forwards the proposed functional description, employee's curriculum vitae and the latest two proficiency reports (or their equivalent) to the appropriate Nurse Professional Standards Board (NPSB) for review. VHA Central Office NPSB is appropriate for VHA Central Office and VISN staff. All other promotions and advancements are to be reviewed by the NPSB designated for the VISN. (See appendix H5, part II of this handbook.)

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(b) The NPSB reviews the employee's qualifications and the scope of the position to determine whether the proposed grade is warranted and makes a recommendation regarding the employee's promotion to the approving official (facility Director or designee for nurse executives, the Under Secretary for Health or designee for VISN and Central Office staff).

(c) The approving official approves or disapproves the promotion.

(d) **Notification of VISN and VA Central Office.** When a selection is made for one of these positions, approving officials will notify the appropriate Network Director and the Office of Nursing Services (108) in VA Central Office.

**(3) Promotions to Nurse IV and Nurse V for Registered Nurses Other Than Those Cited in Subparagraph 6f(2).**

(a) Procedures for advancement are the same as in subparagraph 6f(2), except subparagraph 6f(2)(d) does not apply to those covered by this paragraph.

(b) Approximately 120 days before the anniversary date of the registered nurse's assignment to Nurse III or IV, the AAC will send to the facility a VA Form 5-97, Notice of Pending Personnel Action, in duplicate. The servicing Human Resources Management Office will retain the duplicate as a suspense copy and forward the original to the Nurse Executive. The Nurse Executive will review the registered nurse's assignment and compare it with the criteria in the VA Nurse Qualification Standard for the grade for which the registered nurse is being considered and the criteria in paragraph 6c [ ]. If the Nurse Executive recommends advancement, the front of the VA Form 10-2543, Board Action, will be completed, and a special Proficiency Report shall be prepared if the most recent Proficiency Report does not accurately reflect the employee's current performance. The recommendation, the Board Action, the registered nurse's personnel folder, and a description of the assignment's responsibilities will be forwarded to the facility Director. If the Director concurs, the Director will send the documents, along with the recommendations, to the appropriate NPSB. If the Nurse Executive does not recommend advancement, the facility Director does not concur, or the facility Director disapproves the advancement after review by the NPSB, the recommending, concurring, or approving official is to take the actions prescribed in subparagraph 6f3(d).

(c) Recommendations will address the individual's personal qualifications as specified in the VA Nurse Qualification Standard and the scope and complexity of the assignment. To recommend an action covered by this paragraph, the NPSB must find that the individual meets the qualifications for the position and that the scope and complexity of the assignment are comparable to the corresponding Nurse Executive assignment. The corresponding Nurse Executive assignment means that:

1. A Nurse IV assignment must be comparable to a Nurse Executive assignment at a moderately complex facility; and,

2. A Nurse V assignment must be comparable to a Nurse Executive at a very complex facility.

(d) If advancement is not recommended, the facility Director does not concur, or the action is disapproved, a Board Action is to be completed and approved by the recommending, concurring, or

approving official. The Board Action is to be filed in the personnel folder, and the nurse will be informed of the decision.

(e) Once appropriate officials have determined that the scope and complexity level of the assignment do not warrant promotion to a higher grade, a review of the registered nurse's qualifications and performance is required only when there has been a significant change in the nature of assignment or a reassignment.

(f) Registered nurses who are not recommended or approved for assignment to these grades are not entitled to higher level review, including promotion reconsideration.

(g) Grade assignments to Nurse IV or above are limited to the registered nurse's current position. Registered nurses who are reassigned will not retain Nurse IV or above unless a determination is made by the appropriate NPSB that the duties of the new position meet the scope and complexity criteria for the contemplated grade. Also, the position vacated will not be filled at the Nurse IV level or above without prior review of the qualifications of the individual registered nurse to be assigned to the position. Such recommendations will be forwarded to the appropriate NPSB.

**(4) Promotion Consideration to Nurse III and Below for the Positions of Associate Chief, Nursing Service for Education; Supervisor, Nursing Home Care Unit; Assistant Chief, Nursing Service; Associate Chief, Nursing Service; and Associate Chief, Nursing Service for Research**

(a) Upon receipt of VA Form 5-97, the Human Resources Management office will retain the duplicate copy of the form as a suspense copy and forward the original to the Nurse Executive. This individual will complete the front of VA Form 10-2543, Board Action. If the most recent proficiency report on file was prepared more than 6 months before the date of promotion consideration, narrative performance evaluations will be prepared by the Nurse Executive and by the Chief of Staff. These evaluations may be in the form of a supplement to the latest proficiency report. The registered nurse's file, including the personnel folder, will then be forwarded, through the facility Director, to the appropriate NPSB for consideration, after the Human Resources Management Officer has made an administrative review of the file.

(b) Following consideration by the appropriate Board, the file will be returned to the facility Director for approval or disapproval.

**(5) Promotions and Advancements to a Higher Level Within the Grade to Nurse III and Below Other Than for Positions Identified in Subparagraph 6f(4).** (Also see appendix M, this part, for processing instructions.)

(a) In considering a registered nurse for promotion or advancement to a higher level within the grade, the local NPSB determines whether or not the individual meets the VA Nurse Qualification Standard requirements. If the board determines that requirements are met, the registered nurse is eligible for promotion or advancement consideration. Following consideration by the board, the file will be referred to the facility Director for appropriate action.

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(b) If the employee is not promoted, the AAC will continue to send the VA Form 5-97 annually until a change in grade occurs. The VA Form 5-97 will be forwarded to the appropriate supervisory official. An employee at Nurse II and below who is not promoted or advanced to a higher level within the grade will be considered for promotion or advancement to a higher level within the grade on the next anniversary date of grade. [After September 30], 2005, a longer period [between] consideration[s], not to exceed 3 years, may be established by the NPSB when a registered nurse at Nurse II and below does not meet the qualification standard[’s education or experience requirements]. In these cases, the Human Resources Management [O]ffice will tab the service control file and will destroy the VA Form 5-97 for the year(s) when the employee is not to receive consideration.

**NOTE:** *Upon completion of the degree requirement, a registered nurse or nurse anesthetist may be considered for promotion if the administrative requirements are met. This is the only time a registered nurse or nurse anesthetist may be considered for promotion other than on the anniversary date of grade.*

(6) **Waiver of Experience and/or Degree Requirements.** The appointing official may authorize a waiver of experience and/or the degree requirements for individuals whose professional accomplishments, performance, and qualifications warrant such consideration based on demonstrated ability to meet the requirements for promotion to the next higher grade or advancement to a higher level within the grade. (See the VA Nurse Qualification Standard, appendix G6, Part II, this Handbook.) In considering a registered nurse for promotion to Nurse III or below, the appropriate NPSB will determine whether or not the individual should be recommended for promotion or advancement to a higher level within the grade with a waiver of the experience and/or degree requirements.

(7) **Recommendations of Nurse Professional Standards Boards.** If consideration of a registered nurse promotion or advancement to a higher level within the grade by the Under Secretary for Health or designee is requested, the Human Resources Management Officer will take necessary steps to ensure that the Nurse Executive and the Chief of Staff are aware of the case and of the recommendation(s) of the appropriate Nurse Professional Standards Boards.

**7. [TIER DETERMINATION OR] PROMOTION RECONSIDERATION AND REVIEW**

a. **Coverage.** This paragraph applies to [ ] podiatrists, optometrists, chiropractors, registered nurses, nurse anesthetists, physician assistants, and expanded-function dental auxiliaries appointed under 38 U.S.C. 7401(1) or 7405(a)(1)(A). [**NOTE:** VHA physicians and dentists appointed under 38 U.S.C. 7401(1) or 7405(a)(1)(A) can request reconsideration of tier determination. (See VA Handbook 5007, Part IX, paragraph 11).]

b. **Notice of Decision.** Supervisors must advise employees of any decision not to promote them, of the reason(s) for the decision, and of their right to request reconsideration. The right to reconsideration does not extend to promotions to Nurse IV and Nurse V, which are based on complexity of assignment, nor does it extend to temporary promotions.

c. **Informal Discussion.** The employee must discuss his or her dissatisfaction with their immediate supervisor prior to submitting a request for reconsideration under subparagraph 7d.

**d. Submission of Reconsideration Request or Request for Central Office Review****(1) Reconsideration Request.**

(a) If the employee does not believe the supervisor's explanation is satisfactory, the employee may submit a written request for reconsideration through the supervisor to the appropriate Professional Standards Board for review within 14 calendar days of the non-promotion decision. (See subparagraph 7e.). The approving official or designee may extend the 14-day period at the written request of the employee if the employee is unable to submit the information timely for reasons beyond the employee's control. The employee's written request for reconsideration must indicate when the informal discussion was held with the immediate supervisor and cite the specific reason(s) why the employee believes the decision was not proper. Supervisors must review and comment on the employee's request in writing, and provide copies of those comments to the employee.

(2) If on reconsideration the approving official disapproves the promotion under paragraph 7f(3), the employee may request Central Office review by submitting a written request through the supervisor to the approving official within 14 calendar days of receiving notice of the reconsideration decision. The approving official or designee may extend the 14-day period at the written request of an employee if the employee is unable to submit the information timely for reasons beyond the employee's control.

**e. Professional Standards Board Review.** The appropriate Professional Standards Board at the facility will review the information submitted by the employee and make a recommendation to the approving official. If the employee's request does not include the information specified in paragraph 7d(1)(a), the technical representative to the Professional Standards Board is to return the request to the employee for completion. The additional information is to be returned to the Professional Standards Board within 14 calendar days; however, the appropriate management official may extend the 14-day period if the employee is unable to submit the information for reasons beyond the employee's control. Upon completing its review, the Board must forward its recommendation to the approving official for action under paragraph f.

**f. Action by Approving Authority.** Upon review of the reconsideration file, the approving official shall take one of the following actions:

(1) Request any additional information needed to make a decision. This includes, but is not limited to, meeting with representatives of the Board, the employee, or the employee's supervisor prior to making a decision under paragraph f(2) or f(3).

(2) Approve the adjustment of the employee's grade or level in accordance with paragraph 8a.

(3) Disapprove the promotion and notify the employee of the decision in writing. If the employee requests VA Central Office review under paragraph 7d(2), the approving official shall forward the reconsideration file, the employee's personnel folder, and any comments to the appropriate VA Central Office Professional Standards Board for review.

g. **Request for Central Office Review**

(1) **Review by the Central Office Professional Standards Board.** When a request for Central Office review is submitted to the appropriate VA Central Office Professional Standards Board under paragraph f(3), the Under Secretary for Health or a designee becomes the promotion approving authority. The appropriate Board will review the information submitted by the facility and make a recommendation to the approving official. If necessary, the Central Office Board may request additional information. Upon completing its review, the Central Office Board will forward its recommendation to the approving official for action under paragraph h.

[(2) Employees may withdraw requests for reconsideration or for Central office review at any time.]

h. **Action by the Under Secretary for Health or Designee.** Upon receipt of the recommendation from the appropriate VA Central Office Professional Standards Board, the approving official or designee may:

(1) Authorize the adjustment in the employee's grade or level in accordance with paragraph 8a.

(2) Request any additional information needed.

(3) Disapprove the promotion and advise the employee of the determination in writing. Such determinations are final.

i. **[Exclusion from Coverage as Employee Grievance.** Requests for promotion reconsideration are excluded from the Agency Grievance Procedure. See VA Handbook 5021, Part IV, Chapter 3, paragraph 16. Promotion reconsideration is also excluded from negotiated grievance procedures under the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 7422(b)].

[ ]

**8. EFFECTING ADVANCEMENT[, ] PROMOTION ACTIONS [AND CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENT]**

a. **Effective Date**

(1) The [advancement,] promotion [or change in assignment] will be placed into effect by the Human Resources Management Officer on the first day of the pay period following the date of administrative approval of the promotion [or change in assignment] by the approving official designated in appendix K, this part, but in no case earlier than the date on which all administrative requirements are met.

(2) If an employee becomes eligible for [advancement or] promotion while on LWOP for educational or other purposes, no action will be taken until the employee returns to duty. If the employee upon return to duty meets all other requirements for promotion, an appropriate recommendation will be made. However, if [advanced or] promoted, the [advancement or] promotion will not be effected retroactively.

**NOTE:** See chapter 6, this part, for effecting of promotion actions upon return from military service.

b. **Disposition of Forms.** On completion of [an advancement,] promotion action [or change in assignment], or disapproval of [an advancement,] promotion [or change in assignment] the original VA Form 10-2543, Board Action, and any accompanying documents will be filed in a separate envelope in the employee's personnel folder. [The Compensation Panel Action form, VA form 10-0432a, will be used for physicians and dentists to document compensation determinations. These forms will be filed with the Board Action form on the right side of the employee's personnel folder.]

**9. [CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENT OR] ADJUSTMENT OF PROMOTIONS [TO A HIGHER GRADE] OR ADVANCEMENTS TO A HIGHER LEVEL WITHIN THE GRADE.** Approving officials may adjust an employee's [change in assignment,] promotion [to a higher grade] or advancement to a higher level within the grade if it is determined that such action is consistent with applicable qualification requirements. Such decisions shall consider the recommendation of the appropriate Standards Board [or Compensation Panel]. Actions taken under this paragraph will be effected at the beginning of the next pay period following approval.

**10. ADVANCEMENT OF RESIDENTS.** Residents appointed under authority of 38 U.S.C. 7406 will be advanced in salary upon successful completion of each year of training provided the House Staff Review Committee recommends the increase and continuation of training. If the committee recommends the advancement, the effective date of promotion will be the first day following completion of each year of training. The required training may have been obtained in part from sources outside VA. (See M-8, pt. II, ch. 1.)

**11. TEMPORARY CHIEF OF STAFF ASSIGNMENTS [(CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENTS)]**

a. **General.** When the position of Chief of Staff is vacant, the facility Director may request the temporary [change in assignment] of a physician as Chief of Staff. [Change in assignments] will be for a period not to exceed 1 year, and may be terminated prior to the expiration date.

b. **Submission of Requests.** Facility officials will continue to forward chief of staff nominations to the Management Support Office (10A2B). The chief of staff program staff in the Management Support Office will provide a technical review of the nomination[;] arrange for appropriate approvals and reviews [by] VHA Central Office officials as necessary[;] and forward the completed nomination to the Network Director for approval. Requests for temporary [change in assignments] to chief of staff in [a Chief of Staff Assignment tier are] renewable [for] periods not to exceed 1 year require approval of the appropriate Network Director. Normally, [change in assignments] will be approved only after an employee has served in an acting capacity for at least 90 days. In exceptional circumstances, the appropriate Network Director may approve a temporary [change in assignment] when an employee has served less than 90 days in an acting capacity.

c. **Temporary [Change in Assignment].** An employee who is temporarily [changed in assignment] to a Chief of Staff position will be advanced to [a Chief of Staff Assignment tier] for the duration of the assignment. On expiration or termination of the assignment, the [tier] and salary of the employee will be adjusted in accordance with the provisions of VA Handbook 5007, Pay Administration[, Part IX]. In applying the provisions of this handbook, the salary will be adjusted to the salary held previously [ ]. On assignment, the following statement will be placed in the "Remarks" item of the SF 50-B, Notification of Personnel Action: "Employee informed of conditions of temporary [tier] assignment." [ ]

## 12. DETAILS, TEMPORARY REASSIGNMENTS, AND TEMPORARY PROMOTIONS FOR REGISTERED NURSES AND NURSE ANESTHETISTS

- a. **Details.** When the position of Nurse Executive, or a nurse anesthetist position at Nurse IV or Nurse V is vacant, the facility Director may detail an employee to that position. Generally, details will not exceed 90 days, and may be terminated prior to the expiration date. The facility Director may approve extensions of the detail in 90-day increments when circumstances warrant.
- b. **Temporary Reassignments.** When a position at Nurse IV or V is vacant, the facility Director may approve the temporary reassignment of an individual into the position. Generally, temporary reassignments will be for a period not to exceed 1 year, and may be terminated prior to the expiration date. The facility Director may approve the extension of a temporary reassignment not to exceed 1 additional year when circumstances warrant. Normally, such temporary reassignments will be approved only after a registered nurse or nurse anesthetist has acted in the position for at least 90 days. When circumstances warrant, the approving official may approve a temporary reassignment when an employee has served less than 90 days in an acting capacity (e.g., when the position is expected to remain vacant for an extended period). On approval of the temporary reassignment, the following statement will be placed in the "Remarks" section of the SF 50-B: "Employee informed of conditions of temporary assignment."
- c. **Temporary Promotions.** If a registered nurse is temporarily reassigned to a higher grade assignment under subparagraph 8b, the facility Director may temporarily promote the individual. Such action will be taken only after the facility Director considers the recommendation of the appropriate NPSB. The facility Director may similarly temporarily promote a nurse anesthetist to Nurse IV or V after considering the recommendation of the facility PSB for nurse anesthetists. On expiration or termination of the temporary promotion, the grade and salary of the employee will be adjusted in accordance with the provisions of VA Handbook 5007, Pay Administration. The employee will be advised in writing of the conditions of the temporary promotion or assignment. In applying the provisions of this handbook, the salary will be adjusted to the salary held previously, unless a higher step is warranted by reason of a periodic step increase, special advancement, or under the highest previous rate rule.

## 13. OTHER GRADE CHANGES [OR CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENT]

### a. Change to Lower Grade [or Changes in Assignment]

(1) **General.** As provided by 38 U.S.C. 7403, where an employee's grade [or tier] level and salary are based on both the nature of the assignment and the employee's] personal qualifications, and the assignment is subsequently changed, the grade and salary may be adjusted as appropriate. [ ]

(2) **Key Nursing Personnel (Registered Nurses Other Than Nurse Executives) and Nurse Anesthetists in Nurse IV and Above Whose Grade is Based on Both Their Personal Qualifications and Responsibilities of Their Assignment.**

(a) **Placement in a Lower Grade for the Good of VA.** Employees placed in a lower grade for reasons other than cause or at the employee's request will have their pay set at the lowest step of the lower grade which equals or exceeds their existing rate of basic pay. If there is no such step, employees are entitled to pay retention.

**CHAPTER 5. CONVERSIONS [OR CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENTS] (TITLE 38)**

**1. DEFINITION.** [Change in assignment for physicians and dentists will be processed by a Compensation Panel. (See VA Handbook 5007, Part IX.)] All personnel actions changing an employee from one type of appointment to another under authority of 38 U.S.C., chapter 73 or 74 and not involving a break in service will be processed as conversions except changes from or to fee-basis appointments under authority of 38 U.S.C. 7405(a)(2) and lump-sum fee-basis appointments of consultants and attendings under authority of 38 U.S.C. 7405(a)(2), and without compensation appointments under 38 U.S.C. 7405(a)(1). These actions will be processed as new appointments.

**NOTE:** *Conversion [or change in assignment] to another appointment giving the employee fewer rights and benefits will not be made until the employee has been advised in writing of the conditions of employment under the new appointment, and the employee has submitted a written resignation or other written evidence clearly indicating voluntary separation from the previous employment.*

**2. UTILIZATION ON A FEE BASIS**

a. Individuals who render service to VA on a fee basis, such as employees paid according to a schedule of fees or consultants or attendings used by letter of appointment (see part II, section G, this handbook) may not be converted to appointments under the provisions of sections 7306, 7401(1), 7401(3), and 7405(a)(1). Fee-basis employees will be terminated prior to appointment under these authorities.

b. Full-time, part-time or intermittent employees appointed under sections 7306, 7401(1), 7401(3), or 7405(a)(1), may not be converted to utilization on a fee basis. An employee must resign or the appointment must be terminated prior to rendering service on a fee basis except for instances in which dual appointment has been approved. (See part II, chapter 3, section A).

**3. ACTION BY PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BOARD [OR COMPENSATION PANEL]**

a. A PSB will be responsible for making recommendations to the approving authority concerning any conversion action to a probationary appointment under 38 U.S.C. 7401(1) or 7401(3), and on any conversion involving a change in grade and/or step rate within the grade. [Any change in assignment for physicians and dentists will be determined by a Compensation Panel.] No action by a PSB will be required on conversion from an appointment under 38 U.S.C. 7401(1) or 7401(3) provided the employee has previously acquired permanent status under 38 U.S.C. 7401(1) or 7401(3), as appropriate, and has had continuous service under 38 U.S.C., chapter 73 or 74 since acquiring such status.

b. The [B]oard will determine that the employee's past and expected future performance and physical, mental and emotional ability warrants the change in employment status. VA Form 10-2543, Board Action, will be used to document the [B]oard's recommendation to the approving authority [official].

[c. The Compensation Panel will document any change in assignment on VA Form 10-0432a, Compensation Panel Action, along with a recommendation to the approving official.]

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**4. APPROVAL AUTHORITY.** All conversion actions [or change in assignments] may be approved by the facility Director except those involving a change in grade or step rate [or tier level] for which the approving authority is vested in Central Office or where Central Office approval is specifically required.

**5. PROCESSING REQUIREMENTS**

a. Personnel actions necessary to effect conversions to appointments [or change in assignments] under 38 U.S.C., chapter 73 or 74 generally will be effective the first day of the pay period following approval of the conversion [or change in assignment] except where otherwise specified. When necessary, in order to prevent a break in service caused by the expiration of an appointment prior to the first day of the next pay period, the action may be made effective the first day following the expiration of such appointment.

b. The nature of action will indicate conversion [or change in assignment] to an appropriate excepted appointment under the authority of 38 U.S.C., chapter 73 or 74. For individuals converted to an appointment under 38 U.S.C. 7401(1), the “Remarks” section of the SF 50-B will, when appropriate, state “Appointment subject to probationary period of 2 years.” When appropriate, it will also show the amount of any prior service which is creditable toward completion of the required probationary period.

c. A new application is not required for conversions [or change in assignments] when one is already on file and VA Form 10-2850, 10-2850a, or 10-2850c is not specifically required.

**6. CONVERSION [OR CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENTS] TO APPOINTMENT UNDER SECTION 7401(1) FROM APPOINTMENT UNDER SECTION 7306.** Employees serving under section 7306 appointments will notify the Under Secretary for Health (10) if they desire full-time appointments under 7401(1). (See part II, chapter 3, section A, this handbook.) A Central Office Professional Standards Board will recommend to the Under Secretary for Health the grade and rate of pay and type of assignment which should be made on conversion. [The Central Office Compensation Panel for physicians and dentists will recommend a tier determination to the Under Secretary for Health on changes in assignment.] On approval of the [B]oard’s [or panel’s] recommendation by the Under Secretary for Health, personnel action will be taken to effect the conversion [or change in assignment].

**7. CONVERSION TO RESIDENCY APPOINTMENTS UNDER SECTION 7406.** An employee who requests conversion to a residency appointment will apply using VA Form 10-2850b, Application for Residency. The application will be processed in accordance with provisions of M-8, part II, chapter 1.

**APPENDIX K. PROMOTIONS, [ADVANCEMENT TO A HIGHER LEVEL WITHIN THE GRADE, OR CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENTS] APPROVED BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH OR A DESIGNEE, NETWORK DIRECTORS AND FACILITY DIRECTORS**

*NOTE: The term advancement in this appendix refers to advancement to a higher level within the grade for nurses, not special advancements for achievement or performance.*

**1. Under Secretary for Health or designee**

*NOTE: All actions affecting Directors of medical and regional office centers requiring approval of the Under Secretary for Health, or designee, will also require the concurrence of the Under Secretary for Benefits.*

- a. [Promotion] of Chiefs of Pharmacy Service to GS-15
- b. Promotion of VHA Central Office employees.
- c. Promotion reconsideration requests from registered nurses and VHA Central Office employees.

**2. Network Directors**

- a. [Promotion] of VISN employees.
- b. [Reconsideration requests for promotion or change in assignment from employees at field facilities within the respective VISNs. This applies to all occupations except registered nurse].
- c. [Temporary change in assignments to Chief of Staff or comparable positions in tier 4 assignments for renewable periods not to exceed 1 year].

**3. Facility Directors**

- a. [Promotion] of Chief of Pharmacy Service at GS-14 and below.
- b. Promotion of Pharmacists. Facility directors may also delegate to the Chief of Pharmacy Service the promotion of pharmacists in noncentralized assignments below GS-13 and Assistant Chiefs of Pharmacy Service at GS-13 [ ].
- c. Promotion of all other hybrids, which may be delegated to Chiefs of Staff, the Associate Director, or Nurse Executive, as appropriate.
- d. Promotion of Optometrists.
- e. Promotion of Chiropractors.

- f. Promotion of Podiatrists.
- g. [Change in assignment] of Dentists (staff dentists, service chiefs and positions comparable to service chief).
- h. Promotion of Expanded-Function Dental Auxiliaries.
- i. Promotion of Physician Assistants.
- j. [Change in assignments] of Physicians.
- k. Promotion or advancement to a higher level within the grade of Nurse Anesthetists.
- l. Promotion or advancement to a higher level within the grade of Registered Nurses at Nurse III and below, which may be delegated to the Nurse Executive.
- m. Promotion of Registered Nurses at Nurse IV and Nurse V, which may not be delegated to the Nurse Executive.

**APPENDIX M. PROCESSING TITLE 38 PROMOTIONS AND ADVANCEMENTS**

<p><b>HOW TO PROCESS A PROMOTION FOR [ ] PODIATRISTS, CHIROPRACTORS, NURSE ANESTHETISTS, PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS, EXPANDED-FUNCTION DENTAL AUXILIARIES, [PHARMACISTS, OCCUPATIONAL AND PHYSICAL THERAPISTS, CERTIFIED RESPIRATORY THERAPISTS, REGISTERED RESPIRATORY THERAPISTS, AND LICENSED PRACTICAL OR VOCATIONAL NURSES]</b></p>		
<b>A</b>		<b>B</b>
<p>S T E P S</p>	<p>If full-time, part-time or intermittent employee meets the time-in-grade requirements specified in Appendix III-L, and is a</p>	<p>then take these steps</p>
<p>1</p>	<p>[ ] podiatrist, chiropractor, [ ] nurse anesthetist, [pharmacist, occupational or physical therapist, registered respiratory therapist, certified respiratory therapist or licensed practical/vocational nurse]</p>	<p>Upon receipt of VA Form 5-97, Notice of Pending Personnel Action, the HRM Office will forward the original copy to the employee’s service chief through the Chief of Staff, as appropriate. The duplicate copy will be retained in the HRM office as a suspense copy.</p>
<p>2</p>		<p>The service will make appropriate recommendation to the Professional Standards Board or Standards Board (through the health care facility Director and Chief of Staff, [ ] when appropriate, such as for physicians and dentists), including a concise evaluation based on the criteria in [paragraphs 5 and 6 of] chapter 4, this part (as appropriate). The Chief of Staff [ ] will make recommendations similarly for service chiefs. Significant changes in recent proficiency/performance ratings or unusually high or low elements will be evaluated in terms of promotion consideration. Each of these officials will indicate concurrence or non-concurrence, including specific reasons for such recommendation.</p>
<p>3</p>		<p>The Professional Standards Board or Standards Board will examine the personnel folder, supervisory evaluations, and all other information furnished. Additional information may be obtained at the direction of the board. Boards will report their findings and recommendations on VA Form 10-2543, Board Action. All members will sign the form. The board action and all related papers will then be forwarded to the appropriate promotion approving authority listed in Appendix III-K. Action by the approving authority is required even [though] promotion is not recommended.</p>
<p>4</p>		<p>When the health care facility Director is the approving authority, this official will note the final decision on the Board’s recommendation, sign VA Form 10-2543 and take appropriate action.</p>

<b>HOW TO PROCESS A PROMOTION FOR [ ] PODIATRISTS, CHIROPRACTORS, [ ] NURSE ANESTHETISTS, PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS, EXPANDED-FUNCTION DENTAL AUXILIARIES, [PHARMACISTS, OCCUPATIONAL AND PHYSICAL THERAPISTS, CERTIFIED RESPIRATORY THERAPISTS, REGISTERED RESPIRATORY THERAPISTS, AND LICENSED PRACTICAL/VOCATIONAL NURSES] (Continued)</b>	
<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
5	When the Under Secretary for Health, or a designee, is the approving authority, the official will review the findings and recommendations of the board, and may require a professional examination even though one was not recommended by the board. The promotion may be approved or disapproved without a professional examination even though one was recommended by the board. If no professional examination is to be required, the approving authority will notify the health care facility concerned of the approval or disapproval of the promotion. If a professional examination is authorized, the approving authority will not take action on the promotion until notified of the results of the examination.
6	The health care facility Director or a designee will notify the employee of the results of promotion consideration. If the employee is not promoted, the appropriate official will discuss with the employee the reasons for non-promotion and what the employee should do to meet the promotion requirements. If an employee who has acquired permanent status or an employee serving on a probationary appointment believes that the action taken to deny a promotion not requiring a waiver by the Under Secretary for Health or a designee was improper, the provisions of chapter 4[, paragraph 7, this part,] will apply.
7	physician assistant or expanded-function dental auxiliary See step 1 (above).
8	The service chief should make an appropriate recommendation to the Professional Standards Board through the Chief of Staff and the health care facility Director, including a concise evaluation which will clearly indicate specific professional or administrative strengths and weaknesses and will cite substantiating examples of accomplishments or lack thereof. Significant changes in recent proficiency ratings or unusually high or low elements will be evaluated in terms of promotion consideration. Each official will indicate concurrence or non-concurrence, including specific reasons for such recommendation.
9	See steps 3 through 6 (above).