

**SYSTEM OF VA HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVES AND HANDBOOKS  
GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND ADMINISTRATION**

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To update Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy in VA Directive 5001 in accordance with Public Law 108-422.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This directive is revised to include the Blind Rehabilitation Specialist and Blind Rehabilitation Outpatient Specialist occupations that Public Law 108-422 placed under Title 38, United States Code.
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Human Resources Management Compensation and Classification Service (055), Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management and Labor Relations.
- 4. RELATED HANDBOOK:** VA Handbook 5001, System of VA Human Resources Management Directives and Handbooks, General Introduction and Administration.
- 5. RECISSIONS:** None.

**CERTIFIED BY:**

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY  
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

/s/Robert N. McFarland  
Assistant Secretary for  
Information and Technology

/s/R. Allen Pittman  
Assistant Secretary for  
Human Resources and Administration

ELECTRONIC DISTRIBUTION ONLY



## SYSTEM OF VA HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVES AND HANDBOOKS GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND ADMINISTRATION

**1. PURPOSE.** The purpose of this directive is to establish a basic Departmental medium to contain VA human resources management policies, program objectives, and instructions for the establishment of a positive, progressive, and integrated human resources management program.

### **2. POLICY**

a. Consistent with the decentralization of authority and responsibility of field facility directors for operating methods, mandatory procedures will be limited to (1) those which are essential to effective application of VA policies, requirements of law, regulations, or instructions of other agencies, and (2) those in which uniformity is required in the interest of increased effectiveness or economy, or to ensure uniform treatment of employees.

b. Implementations which are deemed necessary by the Administrations to make the policies and procedures fully effective or to meet problems or conditions peculiar to a single administration will be issued, as appropriate, in the text of or as appendices to these directives and handbooks.

c. Public Law 79-293, now incorporated in 38 U.S.C., chapters 73 and 74, authorized the establishment of a Department of Medicine and Surgery, now referred to as the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), within VA. A primary purpose of this act was to ensure an adequate and complete medical service for the care and treatment of veterans. The act also provided for employment and utilization of physicians, dentists, and nurses within the department without regard to civil service laws, rules, and regulations--such employment and utilization to be in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Public Law 94-123, provided for the inclusion of physician assistants and expanded-function dental auxiliaries. Public Law 94-581, provided for the inclusion of podiatrists[, chiropractors by (Public Law 108-170),] and optometrists. [ ] Public Law 96-330, provided for the inclusion of non-physician facility directors. Public Laws 98-160[, 98-528, and [ ] 99-576 provided for the inclusion of authorities for the appointment, qualifications, advancement, and pay of certified or clinical counseling psychologists who hold diplomas or diplomates from an accrediting authority approved by the Secretary, certified or registered respiratory therapists, licensed physical therapists, and licensed practical or vocational nurses. Public Laws 100-322 and 100-687, provided for the inclusion of authorities for the appointment, qualifications, advancement, and pay of pharmacists and occupational therapists. Public Law 108-170, provided for the inclusion of authorities for the appointment, qualifications, advancement, and pay for audiologists, speech pathologists, and audiologists-speech pathologists; biomedical engineers; dental hygienists; dental assistants and aids; dietitians; medical instrument technicians; medical records administrators and specialists; medical records technicians; medical technologists; nuclear medicine technologists; occupational therapy assistants and aids; kinesiotherapists; orthotists, prosthetists, and orthotist-prosthetists; pharmacy technicians and aids; physical therapy assistants and aids; prosthetic representatives; psychologists; diagnostic radiologic technicians and technologists; therapeutic radiologic technicians and technologists; and social workers. [Public Law 108-422, provided for the inclusion of authorities for the appointment, qualifications, advancement, and pay of blind rehabilitation specialists and blind rehabilitation outpatient specialists.]

(1) The Assistant Secretary for the Office of Human Resources and Administration is authorized to prescribe human resources regulations pursuant to 38 U.S.C. chapters 73 and 74[;] to establish

and approve changes to human resources policies for title 38 and hybrid employment systems. This authority may be redelegated in accordance with the memorandum of the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, dated March 1, 2004.

(2) These directives and handbooks prescribe rules for such personnel employed or utilized under the title, whenever and to the extent that their conditions of employment are not subject to other acts. These directives and handbooks must also be interpreted consistent with applicable collective bargaining agreements. In addition, these issuances establish basic policies, programs, and standards for these employees in all functional areas of human resources administration, together with indications of authorities for administrative decisions, including the establishment and functions of various administrative or advisory boards of the Secretary to be issued by 38 U.S.C., chapters 73 and 74.

(3) Policies so promulgated under the authority of 38 U.S.C. are regulatory with no deviations, not expressly authorized herein, to be indulged.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, Other Key Officials, and Field Facility Directors are responsible for the implementation of VA Human Resources Management policy within the organization over which they have jurisdiction.

b. The Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations (OHRM&LR) will develop and interpret policy and procedures for administering the Department's Human Resources Management policy, advise management, operating officials and employees, and maintain this system of directives and handbooks. OHRM&LR will also ensure that the official version of these Human Resources Management directives and handbooks are maintained electronically and available through the [OHRM&LR Web site](#).

c. HRM Officers will provide technical advice and assistance to managers, line officials and employees on all Human Resources Management policies and procedures.

### 4. REFERENCES

a. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Memorandum for the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Human Resources and Administration dated March 1, 2004, regarding Delegation of Authority for Title 38 and Hybrid Human Resources Policy Proposals and Revisions.

b. Title 5, United States Code.

c. Title 38, United States Code.

d. VA Directive 6330, Directives Management, and VA Handbook 6330, Directives Management Procedures.

e. 5 Code of Federal Regulations.

f. 38 Code of Federal Regulations.