

HOURS OF DUTY AND LEAVE

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To issue Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) procedures regarding hours of duty and leave.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This directive sets forth mandatory procedures previously contained in numerous other issuances. This change incorporates the inclusion of the chiropractic occupation for coverage in Part I, Part II, and Part III per the requirements of Public Law 107-135, dated January 23, 2002.
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Work Life and Benefits Service (058), Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources.
- 4. RELATED DIRECTIVE:** VA Handbook 5011, Hours of Duty and Leave.
- 5. RESCISSIONS:** Refer to the Transmittal Sheet for VA Handbook 5001, General Introduction and Administration.

CERTIFIED BY:

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

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

/s/William H. Campbell
Assistant Secretary for Management
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1. PURPOSE. This directive contains existing policy on the establishment of duty schedules and on leave administration for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) personnel. It is applicable to General Schedule employees (including title 38 hybrid employees appointed to positions listed in 38 U.S.C. 7401(3)); Federal Wage System employees; non-U.S. citizen employees employed outside the United States; physicians, dentists, podiatrists, [chiropractors,] optometrists, nurses, nurse anesthetists, physicians assistants, and expanded-function dental auxiliaries appointed under 38 U.S.C., chapter 73 and 74; and non-physician/non-dentist program directors and other key executives appointed under 38 U.S.C. 7306(a)(7) or (9). This directive should be used in conjunction with VA Handbook 5011, which contains mandatory guidance and procedures on hours of duty and leave administration in VA.

2. POLICY

a. The VA leave program for employees shall be administered fairly and uniformly within the meaning of the provisions of this directive and VA Handbook 5011.

b. In scheduling hours and tours of duty for VA employees, primary consideration will be given to efficiency in management and conduct of an agency functions, and equitable treatment of individual employees.

c. When tours of duty must necessarily vary from the normal tour, employees will be given the opportunity of discussing their assignment and of having their views or personal problems arising in connection with such assignment considered. Tours of duty will not be changed arbitrarily and insofar as possible, employees will be given notice of any change in their work schedule at least one administrative workweek in advance. Sympathetic consideration will be extended to employees who have religious scruples against working on their Sabbath. If practicable, mutually satisfactory exchange of duty assignments may be worked out for such employees or substitute work-time may be provided to offset the time required for religious observance. Insofar as possible, work schedules should be arranged to permit employee's observance of their Sabbath on whatever day it occurs.

d. All employees are expected to be on duty during the full period of their tours of duty unless absent on approved leave; to observe the opening and closing hours established for the tour of duty; and to adhere to established luncheon periods.

e. In the establishment of work schedules, employees will have their assignments scheduled in advance over periods of not less than one administrative workweek and such schedules will be established in a manner that realistically reflects the actual work requirement.

f. The occurrence of holidays shall not affect the designation of the basic workweek.

g. Duty schedules for title 38 healthcare employees shall be established as appropriate and necessary for performance of services in the care and treatment of patients and other essential activities within the administration of the Under Secretary for Health or designated officials