

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

1. **REASON FOR ISSUE.** To establish the VA Central Office (VACO) Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) program.
2. **SUMMARY OF CONTENTS.** This directive sets forth the policies and responsibilities for managing and implementing the VACO OSH program.
3. **RESPONSIBLE OFFICE.** The Office of Administration (03).
4. **RELATED DIRECTIVE.** VA Directive 7700, Occupational Safety and Health.
5. **RESCISSIONS.** None.

CERTIFIED BY:

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

/s/
Roger W. Baker
Assistant Secretary for
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OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

1. PURPOSE

a. Establish VA Central Office (VACO) Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) program policy for the VACO campus. (See Appendix for list of VACO campus buildings.)

b. Implement OSH requirements contained in Federal laws, regulations, executive orders, VA directives and labor-management OSH agreements.

2. POLICY

a. Maintain safe and healthful work environment for VACO campus employees by eliminating safety and health hazards and developing safe work practices;

b. Prohibit reprisals against VACO campus employees who exercise their rights under VA's OSH program;

c. Implement all requirements specified herein in compliance with the terms of applicable collective bargaining agreements; and

d. Support the Department's VA Directive 7700, Occupational Safety and Health.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

OSH responsibilities are addressed by the VACO Campus Safety Officer (CSO), in consultation with the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE); Department's Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO); VACO Designated Safety and Health Official (DSHO); and division chiefs and supervisors. All perform their responsibility in implementing the VACO campus OSH program, and will coordinate efforts to ensure that all OSH requirements are satisfied and that a safe and healthful workplace is provided.

a. **Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration (AS/HR&A).** The AS/HR&A will appoint the DSHO for the VACO campus. This individual shall have direct access to funds to support program initiatives and adequate authority over line management.

b. **Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration (ADAS/A).** The ADAS/A will:

(1) Serve as the VACO DSHO with oversight authority for the VACO campus OSH program, which is also monitored according to the terms of the master collective bargaining agreement between the Department and AFGE.

- (2) Mandate initiatives for the promotion and development of program objectives.
- (3) Recommend VACO campus OSH goals to the DASHO.
- (4) Obtain concurrence and any changes for this document from the DASHO.
- (5) Provide the DASHO with an annual report on the VACO campus OSH program, to include a list of VACO campus buildings with the date of their last annual safety inspection, accomplishments, and other items specified in VA Directive 7700.
- (6) Immediately notify the DASHO and the Office of OSH of any employee fatality, or hospitalization of three or more employees, including contractors' employees; and provide a written report within 7 calendar days.
- (7) Resolve claims of reprisal and workplace hazard and exposure concerns brought to VA's Office of Human Resources and Administration for resolution.
- (8) Review and sign acknowledgement of VACO Campus Safety Committee (CSC) meeting minutes.
- (9) Appoint OSH professional managers, excluding AFGE Local 17 representative, to serve on each Board of Inquiry to investigate work-related fatalities or incidents resulting in the hospitalization of three or more employees, and provide a written report within 7 calendar days.
- (10) Recognize significant contributions to the VACO OSH program through special awards.

c. **VACO Campus Safety Officer.** The VACO CSO will:

- (1) Manage the VACO campus safety program; assist the DASHO in preparation and submittal of the VACO campus annual report to the DASHO.
- (2) Serve as a point of contact for safety related activities which impact or involve VA occupants within the VACO campus buildings.
- (3) Provide counsel and advice to VACO campus management concerning safety matters.
- (4) Evaluate and resolve, as appropriate, employee suggestions and complaints related to safety and health.
- (5) Monitor and track VACO campus compliance with safety goals and inspection requirements.

(6) Conduct both scheduled and unannounced inspections of the VACO campus workplace in conjunction with the AFGE Local 17 union representative, and safety committee members. Accompany OSH contractors and OSHA agency representatives during inspection and assessment of the VACO campus buildings.

(7) Participate in the quarterly VA DASHO conference call and the bi-monthly VA SSC meeting.

(8) Maintain OSHA forms for recording work-related injuries and illnesses in accordance with DOL regulations; ensures that OSHA's Form 300A "Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses" is completed and posted annually as required by OSHA regulations, Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations, part 1960.67 – Federal agency certification of the injury and illness annual summary (OSHA 300-A or equivalent).

(9) Coordinate with the VACO Health Unit to ensure appropriate follow-up on work related injury and illness.

(10) Serve as liaison to interact with the AFGE Local 17 union representative on safety issues.

(11) Ensure that OSH-related problems and deficiencies are identified and resolved in a timely manner throughout the VACO campus; reviews safety committee minutes and recommendations and presents to DSHO for approval and implementation.

(12) Coordinate the development, maintain and administer the Occupant Emergency Programs for the VACO campus buildings.

(13) Support the VACO Space and Renovations Service during the design and inspection of work space by interpreting and applying the National Fire Protection Association Life Safety (NFPA) Codes, Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)/Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS).

d. VACO Campus Division Chiefs and Supervisors (DC&S). VACO DC&S will:

(1) Enforce VA OSH rules, regulations, and standards within their area of responsibility.

(2) Identify unsafe and unhealthy conditions and practices in the workplace and take prompt corrective action.

(3) Encourage employee suggestions on how to improve Occupant Safety and Health.

(4) Notify the VACO CSO of work-related injuries and illnesses.

(5) Ensure that employees under their supervision receive prompt and appropriate medical attention in the event of an injury or illness; such medical services are offered, not mandatory.

(6) Investigate injuries and illnesses that occur to employees under their supervision, documenting this information on OSHA's Form 301, "Injury and Illness Incident Report" or an equivalent form (to be considered an equivalent form, any substitute must contain all information asked for on this form); submit a copy of the completed forms to the VACO CSO; institute or recommend corrective action intended to preclude recurrence of similar injuries or illnesses. Federal workers' compensation forms should not be used in lieu of OSHA Form 301 for documenting injuries and illnesses that occur to employees under their supervision.

(7) Complete compensation and accident investigation forms.

(8) Instruct employees under their supervision in safe work practices, including the use of personal protective equipment, and correct employees that do not follow safe work practices.

(9) Initiate progressive disciplinary action, as appropriate, against employees who repeatedly violate safe work practices and procedures.

(10) Ensure that employees under their supervision are trained to perform their work safely, that they are aware of the hazards, if any, involved in their normal work functions, and that such training is properly documented.

(11) Obtain Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) for hazardous chemicals used by employees under their supervision or stored in an area for which you are responsible.

e. VACO Campus Safety Committee.

(1) The VACO CSC described in this Directive is an advisory committee organized and maintained to address health and safety related activities in the VACO campus buildings/workplace.

(2) The DSHO will have the responsibility to appoint one member of the VACO CSC from each VACO campus building. This committee will also include the VACO CSO and one employee representative from the AFGE Local 17.

(3) The DSHO recommends solutions, develops abatement plans which are implemented throughout the VACO campus buildings.

(4) The VACO CSC will meet quarterly to report, discuss, and resolve fire and safety related issues affecting the VACO campus.

(5) The VACO CSO and AFGE Local 17 union representative will arrange for meeting space, equipment, maintenance of minutes, and development of agendas.

(6) The VACO CSC will maintain an open channel of communication between employees and management concerning safety and health matters in the VACO campus workplace.

4. REFERENCES:

- a. AFGE Contract, Article 28 - Safety, Health and Environment.
- b. Executive Order (E.O.) 12196, Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees.
- c. E.O. 13043, Increasing Safety Belt Use in the United States.
- d. Public Law 91-596, Occupational Safety and Health Act, 1970.
- e. Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Public Law 93-112.
- f. Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 1960, Basic Program Elements for Federal Employee OSH Programs and Related Matters.
- g. VA Directive 0320, Comprehensive Emergency Management Program.
- h. VA Handbook 0320, Comprehensive Emergency Management Program.
- i. VA Directive 7700, Occupational Safety and Health.

LIST OF THE VACO CAMPUS BUILDINGS

<u>BUILDING</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
VA Central Office	810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Lafayette Building	811 Vermont Avenue, NW
TechWorld Building	801 I Street, NW
Northwestern Building	1800 G Street, NW
ASAE Building	1575 I Street, NW
Greenhoot and Cohen Building	1722 I Street, NW
1717 H Street Building	1717 H Street, NW
1990 K Street Building	1990 K Street, NW
625 Indiana Avenue Building	625 Indiana Avenue, NW