

Manual M-2, Professional Services. Part XII, Social Work Service

**Chapter 1, Social Work Service Functions
(Paragraphs 1.01 through 1.03)**

Rescinds Chapter 1 dated November 7, 1975 and its changes.

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Professional Services

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Part XII, Revised, "Social Work Service," VA Department of Medicine and Surgery Manual M-2, "Professional Services," is published for the compliance of all concerned.



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CONTENTS

PARAGRAPH	PAGE
CHAPTER 1. SOCIAL WORK SERVICE FUNCTIONS	
1.01 General	1-1
1.02 Eligibility	1-1
1.03 Functions	1-2
CHAPTER 2. PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES AND OPERATIONS	
2.01 In Relation to Health Care	2-1
2.02 Social Service in Relation to Other VA Services	2-4
CHAPTER 3. SOCIAL WORK SERVICE STANDARDS	
3.01 General	3-1
3.02 Program	3-1
3.03 Practice Standards—Quality Assurance	3-2
3.04 Resources	3-3
3.05 Recording	3-3
3.06 Community Relations	3-3
3.07 Continuing Education and Staff Development	3-3
3.08 Student Training	3-4
3.09 Research	3-4
3.10 Regionalization	3-5
3.11 Veterans Benefits	3-5
CHAPTER 4. ADMINISTRATION	
4.01 General	4-1
4.02 Social Work Service Administrative Records	4-1
4.03 Resource File	4-1
4.04 Social Work Clinical Recording	4-1
4.05 Reports to Regional Offices	4-2
4.06 Release of Information	4-3

CONTENTS—Continued

PARAGRAPH	PAGE
CHAPTER 4. ADMINISTRATION—Continued	
4.07 Social Work Service Field Travel	4-3
4.08 Consultants	4-3
4.09 Fee Basis Social Work	4-3
4.10 General Post Fund	4-4
CHAPTER 5. REPORTS OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICE ACTIVITIES	
5.01 AMIS Reports, RCS 10-291	5-1
5.02 Report of Social Work Student Activities, VA Form 10-7099, RCS 10-105	5-1
5.03 Annual Narrative Report of Social Work Service, RCS 10-292	5-2

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RESCISSIONS

The following material is rescinded:

1. COMPLETE RESCISSIONS

a. Manuals

M-2, part XII, dated November 7, 1975
M-2, part XII, chapter 3, dated May 20, 1980
M-2, part XII, changes 1 and 2
M-2, part XII, chapter 5, dated May 20, 1980

b. Interim Issues

II 10-78-14
II 10-79-15
II 10-84-31 and supplement no. 1
II 10-85-25 and supplement no. 1
II 10-88-9

c. Program Guides

G-1, M-2, part XII, dated August 16, 1957

d. Circulars

10-84-141 and supplements 1 and 2

CHAPTER 1. SOCIAL WORK SERVICE FUNCTIONS

1.01 GENERAL

a. Social Work Service, as an integral part of the VA health care system, supports and advances the mission of the Department of Medicine and Surgery through the practice of professional social work which includes the provision of evaluative, preventive, therapeutic, restorative, and personal care services. Social Work Service programs encompass:

- (1) Participation in policy formulation, planning, program development and evaluation.
- (2) Administration of specific programs, organizational units, and program segments, which may be assigned as appropriate.
- (3) Multidisciplinary collaboration, coordination, and consultation.
- (4) Provision of selective social treatment through individual, group, family and milieu therapies.
- (5) Planning, development, coordination and integration of social services with public and private agencies, community organizations and groups at the local, State, regional, and national levels to further the VA health care mission.

b. Each independent health care facility will have a Chief, Social Work Service, responsible for the organization, administration, and professional effectiveness of services provided by staff and units of the Social Work Service program.

c. The Chief, Social Work Service, usually will be professionally and administratively responsible to the Chief of Staff. When the Chief, Social Work Service, is administratively responsible to the Assistant Director, lines of communication will remain open to the Chief of Staff on patient care matters.

d. Within each independent health care facility, all social work personnel will be professionally and administratively responsible to the Chief, Social Work Service, except as provided in paragraph 3.01h.

1.02 ELIGIBILITY

The following persons are eligible for social work services:

- a. All veterans who are in need of such services.
- b. All relatives, dependents, and significant other persons as needed to facilitate the veteran's treatment and care.
- c. Spouses and children of deceased veterans who are eligible for health care and other veterans' benefits as a result of legislation.
- d. Claimants referred by the Department of Veterans Benefits for social services on behalf of veterans, spouses, and dependents.
- e. Nonveterans who are provided health care in the VA system through sharing agreements or other arrangements.
- f. Applicants determined to be ineligible for or not in need of hospitalization or health care services.

1.03 FUNCTIONS

a. Social Work Service seeks to enhance or restore social functioning through the application of a wide range of resources. These resources include the social treatment of individuals, groups, and families, the provision of tangible services, knowledge and use of community agencies, and intervention in community systems to render them more responsive to human needs.

b. Within the VA health care system, social work services will be particularly directed to the needs of persons confronted with crises, life-threatening illnesses, traumatic losses, and chronic diseases or disabilities, including those social and environmental problems which represent barriers to effective use of incare services, or which prevent or impede, the patient's successful return to community living.

c. Social Work Service participates in community planning of social and health programs which may influence the effectiveness of VA medical care. Paid membership in social and welfare councils will be entered in the name of the local VA facility.

d. Social Work Service will utilize services offered by volunteer groups, individuals, and organizations, through the VAVS (VA Voluntary Service) and other sources, in order to augment professional care, to enhance community understanding of the needs of veterans, and to aid in developing resources to fill gaps in established community services.

e. In order to promote employee work effectiveness and to enhance employee morale, Social Work Service will provide professional counseling, consultation and referral services as requested to VA employees with personal, family or behavioral problems, offer professional consultation to supervisors of employees with personal or behavior problems; participate in health education for employees orientation.

f. The Chief, Social Work Service, or designee, will serve on administrative and professional committees such as Clinical Executive Board, utilization review, medical records, etc., as appointed by management.