

ACQUISITION OF ARTWORK AND DECORATIVE ITEMS

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes policy for procurement of Artwork and Decorative Items.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS:** This new Directive establishes:
 - a. Policy and approval process concerning the procurement of Artwork and Decorative Items across the VHA organization.
 - b. Approval of thresholds for procurement, expectation for managing artwork inventory, and the VHA approval process.
 - c. Policy that ensures all VHA Artwork and Decorative Items reflect the mission of the VHA organization and promote the healing environment for Veterans.
- 3. RELATED ISSUES:** VHA Handbook 4721, VHA Handbook 1850.05
- 4. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Office of Environmental Programs Service (10NA7) is responsible for the content of this Directive. Questions may be referred to 202-632-7882.
- 5. RESCISSIONS:** None.
- 6. RECERTIFICATION:** This VHA Directive is scheduled for recertification on or before the last working day of August 2021.

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Under Secretary for Health

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ACQUISITION OF ARTWORK AND DECORATIVE ITEMS

1. PURPOSE

This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes the policy and approval process concerning the procurement of artwork and decorative items for all VA medical facilities and other VHA locations, including, but not limited to major and minor construction as well as leased and new spaces. This Directive represents VHA policy for approval threshold of procurement, expectations of managing artwork inventory and the VHA approval process. **AUTHORITY:** Title 38 United States Code (U.S.C). 7301(b).

2. BACKGROUND

a. During a procurement review, no formal VHA policy was found on the procurement of artwork and decorative items. As a result, VHA formed an Integrated Product Team (IPT) to conduct an in-depth review of these types of acquisitions, and develop guidance and policy consistent with all applicable laws.

b. Artwork has been proven through Evidence Based Design to be effective in improving recovery for VA patients.

3. POLICY

a. It is VHA policy that procurement of artwork and decorative items be approved by the VA medical facility Director, the Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN) Director, and the Office of Environmental Programs Service (EPS) as outlined in the Responsibilities section of this Directive (see paragraph 4) prior to acquisition, and that such items be consistent with the facility or project artwork plan, reflect as appropriate VA's mission of service to Veterans, promote the healing environment of the facility, and be in keeping with VA's responsibility to be a good steward of public funds. Use of Veteran produced artwork should be considered when feasible. Procurements, including artwork loaned to VHA, must be submitted through the appropriate authority, utilizing the Acquisition and Deaccession/Disposal Threshold Matrix found in Appendix A and procedures in the [EPS Interior Design Program Guide](#). **NOTE:** *This is an internal VA Web site that is not available to the public.*

b. It is VHA policy that the procurement of donated art must follow procedures outlined in the EPS Interior Design Program Guide and VHA Handbook 4721, VHA General Post Fund Procedures, but is otherwise within the discretion of the procuring facility's Director.

c. It is VHA policy that the purchase of commissioned artwork and decorative items is restricted to items approved by EPS.

NOTE: *Architectural artwork elements planned, designed or installed using construction funding will be reviewed for approval using the same threshold limits (Medical Facility Director, VISN Director, EPS) based on the estimated line item cost for that element within the total project cost. After VHA accepts the building or space, the VA medical facility is responsible for artwork management. See paragraphs 4.c. and 4.d.*

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **Office of Environmental Programs Service.** EPS is responsible for:

(1) Reviewing all requests for commissioned artwork.

(2) Reviewing any single request for artwork which costs \$50,000 or more, or an accumulation of purchases exceeding \$100,000 in one fiscal year.

(3) Reviewing any request for a single decorative item that costs \$5,000 or more.

(4) Reviewing all purchases of \$25,000 or more for the service of restoration/refurbishment of existing artwork.

(5) Approving/disapproving artwork packages to ensure compliance with this Directive and the allowance for artwork specified in paragraph 5.a.

(6) Notifying VA medical facilities of the approval/disapproval of the artwork package with justification to support the decision.

(7) Reviewing and reconciling each facility's Artwork and Decorative Items Inventory.

(8) Referring questions of acquisition or gift law to Office of General Counsel.

b. **Veterans Integrated Services Network Director.** The VISN Director is responsible for:

(1) Ensuring VA medical facility Directors adhere to the procedures specified in this Directive.

(2) Reviewing all requests for artwork which costs between \$25,000 and \$49,999.

(3) Reviewing any request for a single decorative item that costs between \$2,500 and \$4,999.

(4) Reviewing all purchases of between \$10,000 and \$24,999 for the service of restoration/refurbishment of existing artwork.

c. **VA Medical Facility Director.** The VA medical facility Director or designee is responsible for:

(1) Ensuring facility staff adheres to this Directive.

(2) Reviewing all requests for artwork which costs between \$2,500 and \$24,999.

(3) Reviewing any request for a single decorative item that costs \$2,500 or more before review by the VISN.

(4) Reviewing all purchases which cost between \$2,500 and \$9,999 for the service of restoration/refurbishment of existing artwork.

(5) Submitting artwork packages to the appropriate approval authority.

(6) Ensuring the Art Plan does not exceed the allowance for artwork specified in paragraph 5.a.

(7) Ensuring facility staff maintains an Artwork and Decorative Items inventory and submits the Inventory annually to EPS.

(8) Determining when to seek approval to dispose of a specific piece of artwork or decorative item.

(9) Referring questions of acquisition or gift law to District Chief Counsel.

d. **Interior Design Officer (IDO)**. The VA medical facility IDO or designee is responsible for:

(1) Ensuring that the acquisition of artwork and decorative items is consistent with this Directive, reflects the mission of VA, and promotes the healing environment for Veterans.

(2) Developing an Art Plan for the facility that, to the greatest extent possible, will enhance the function of wayfinding, reduce noise, and support creative functions which directly contribute to the delivery of care to Veterans.

(3) Developing an Art Plan budget that does not exceed the allowance for artwork specified in paragraph 5.a.

(4) Developing the artwork package including all required documents for submission to the appropriate approving authority and, whenever possible, partnering with other public or private organizations to leverage the procurement of artwork and decorative items.

(5) Developing and maintaining the Artwork and Decorative Items inventory and submitting the Inventory annually to EPS.

5. ACQUISITION OF ARTWORK AND DECORATIVE ITEMS. In acquiring artwork and decorative items, the following requirements must be met:

a. **Cost and Display.**

(1) VHA's allowance for artwork will be 0.4 percent of the Estimated Construction Cost (ECC) in any project plan;

(2) Artwork must meet the Minimum Technical Requirements as outlined in the VHA Healthcare Furniture Standards for Artwork;

(3) Displays and artwork must meet all local, state and federal building, fire, life safety and Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines (ABAAG) codes; and

(4) The display and selection of the artwork shall consider the social, cultural, and historical value, geographical subject matter and physical location of the site, either existing or planned.

b. **Records Management and Documentation.** Each VA medical facility Director or designee will be responsible for developing and maintaining an Artwork and Decorative Items Inventory. Any single piece of artwork or decorative item that is equal to or greater than \$2,500 (single item cost approval threshold) shall be maintained in the Inventory.

c. **Deaccession/Disposal.**

(1) Each VA medical facility Director or designee is responsible for determining when to seek approval to dispose of a specific piece of artwork or decorative item if the facility decides it should be de-accessed/disposed (see appendix A).

(2) The approval authority for deaccession/disposal of artwork must follow the acquisition thresholds (see appendix A).

(3) The request for de-accession/disposal must be submitted along with the inventory of proposed deaccession/disposal items identifying each item along with the reason for its de-accession/disposal.

6. REFERENCES

a. VHA Handbook 4721, VHA General Post Fund Procedures
http://www.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=1570

b. VHA Handbook 1850.05, Interior Design Operation and Signage
<http://vaww.vhaco.va.gov/EPS/1850.05HK7-1-2011.pdf>

NOTE: *This is an internal VA Web site that is not available to the public.*

c. Environmental Program Services (EPS) Interior Design Program Guide,
<https://vaww.vha.vaco.portal.va.gov/sites/DUSHOM/EPS/Projects/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

NOTE: *This is an internal VA Web site that is not available to the public.*

d. Office of Construction & Facilities Management (CFM), Technical Information Library (TIL) <http://www.cfm.va.gov/TIL/>

e. VHA National Activations Office (10NA-NAO), Activation Process Guide Feb 2015.
https://vaww.visn11.portal.va.gov/sites/NAO/sitepages/act_docs.aspx

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ACQUISITION AND DEACCESSION/DISPOSAL THRESHOLD MATRIX

Approval Level	Medical Facility Director	VISN Director	VHACO (NAO & EPS)
Original / Gallery Art	\$2,500 - \$24,999	\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$50,000 or more
GSA Schedule / Open Market Competition	\$2,500 - \$24,999	\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$50,000 or more
Single Item	X	\$2,500 - \$4,999	\$5,000 or more
Restoration/ Refurbishment	\$2,500 - \$9,999	\$10,000 - \$24,999	\$25,000 or more
Commissioned Art	X	X	ALL

All prices must include installation and artwork consultation services