

## Memorandum of Understanding

The following constitutes an Agreement between the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration (VHA), Veterans Crisis Line (VCL) and the American Federation of Government Employees (AFL-CIO), National Veterans Affairs Council #53, concerning VHA VCL Digital Services (DS) Plan.

1. All Social Science Specialist (SSS) will be trained on how to use the DS Platforms which consists of text and chat features of current technology utilized by VCL. The use of DS Platforms is mandatory and the training on their use will be conducted on duty time.
2. The training period shall be two (2) weeks (eighty (80) hours) long, with one week devoted to text and one week devoted to chat features of DS Platforms. The training will include sixteen (16) hours of self-led, TMS training (101 and 102) and sixty-four (64) hours of precepting during which SSS will practice using the DS platforms, shadow an experienced peer and provide care with a peer precepting them. If the employee requests and the supervisor approve, additional training will be provided to an employee as needed.
3. After completing training, SSS who are currently onboard when this MOU is signed will be provided sixty (60) days to acclimate to performing DS duties. Performance evaluation under the DS performance standards will begin once an employee completes their training and their sixty (60) day acclimation period expires.
4. The VCL will work to schedule this training around pre-approved leave requests. No approved leave may be cancelled solely because training is scheduled absent valid operational needs.
5. Employees will rotate in handling text, chat or telephones calls, and will only be required to perform work in one platform at a time. Every effort will be made to ensure employees will only be scheduled to perform phone, chat or text work during each scheduled tour of duty; however, VCL retains the right to transition staff from one platform to another to meet valid operational needs.
6. Every effort will be made to ensure an employee will not be assigned to handle more than two (2) texts or two (2) chats at the same time. Every effort must be taken to ensure an employee will not be assigned to handle more than two (2) text or two (2) chats at the same time.
7. Upon their receipt the appropriates management official shall provide a copy of this MOU to the five (5) VCL AFGE Local Presidents.



Recoverable Signature

**X** Lyndsey Miller

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Lyndsey Miller, Labor Relations Specialist  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
Signed by: LYNDSEY MILLER

**X**

*Oscar L. Williams Jr 11/31/2024*

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Oscar L. Williams Jr, 2nd Exec Vice President  
AFGE National Veterans Affairs Council #53



Recoverable Signature

**X** Anne E. Burnham

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Anne E. Burnham, HR Consultant, ELR  
Workforce Management & Consulting, VHA  
Signed by: ANNE BURNHAM