

INTERIOR DESIGN PROGRAM

1. SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES: This directive:

- a. Revises the title of the directive to Interior Design Program (IDP).
- b. Adds responsibilities for the Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Support; Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Operations; Executive Director, Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Healthcare Environment and Facilities Program; and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facility IDP Supervisor (see paragraph 2).
- c. Updates responsibilities for the Director, Environmental Programs Service (EPS), Veterans Integrated Service Network Director, VA medical facility Director and VA medical facility Healthcare Interior Designer (see paragraph 2).
- d. Establishes the required use of standardized technical requirements for health care grade furnishings and accessories (see paragraph 2.e.).
- e. Establishes the Director, EPS as the Delegated Administrative Authority for VA Directive 7531, Acquisition of Artwork, Decorative Furnishings, and Decorative Items, dated March 1, 2017 (see paragraph 2.e.).
- f. Establishes the use of the automated system for artwork acquisition, deaccession and inventory (see paragraph 2.f. and 2.g.).
- g. Establishes requirements to comply with the VA Office of Construction and Facilities Management standards (see paragraph 2.g.).
- h. Strengthens language to ensure the VA medical facility IDP is staffed with qualified VA medical facility Healthcare Interior Designers and VA medical facility IDP staff are supported as the subject matter experts (see paragraphs 2.h. and i.).
- i. Establishes requirements for annual staffing analysis (see paragraph 2.h.).
- j. Establishes the VA medical facility Healthcare Interior Designer as the governing authority for specification and procurement and approver for items within the scope of the VA medical facility IDP (see paragraph 2.i.).

2. RELATED ISSUES: VA Directive 7531, Acquisition of Artwork, Decorative Furnishings and Decorative Items, dated March 1, 2017; VHA Directive 1330.01(6), Health Care Services for Women Veterans, dated February 15, 2017; VHA Directive 1608, Comprehensive Environment of Care Program, dated June 21, 2021; VHA Directive 1850, Environmental Programs Service, dated March 31, 2017.

3. POLICY OWNER: The Office of Environmental Programs Service (19HEFC) is responsible for the content of this directive. Questions may be referred to the Director, EPS at VHA19HEFCAction@va.gov.

4. RESCISSIONS: VHA Directive 1850.05, Interior Design Operations and Management Program, dated September 22, 2017, is rescinded.

5. RECERTIFICATION: This VHA directive is scheduled for recertification on or before the last working day of January 2028. This VHA directive will continue to serve as national VHA policy until it is recertified or rescinded.

6. IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE: This directive is effective upon publication.

**BY DIRECTION OF THE OFFICE OF THE
UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH:**

/s/ Alfred A. Montoya Jr., MHA, FACHE
Acting Assistant Under Secretary for Health
for Support

NOTE: *All references herein to VA and VHA documents incorporate by reference subsequent VA and VHA documents on the same or similar subject matter.*

DISTRIBUTION: Emailed to the VHA Publications Distribution List on January 12, 2023.

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INTERIOR DESIGN PROGRAM

1. POLICY

It is Veterans Health Administration (VHA) policy that each Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facility maintain an Interior Design Program (IDP), staffed with qualified VA medical facility Healthcare Interior Designers, which provides a safe and functional environment for Veterans, their families, visitors and employees. **NOTE:** *This program must adhere to applicable Joint Commission requirements, VHA Comprehensive Environment of Care (CEOC) standards, Federal regulatory requirements, VA regulations, VA Design Guides, applicable building and fire codes, Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards, VA Barrier Free Design Standards, patient-centered care principles, VA and VHA directives and the requirements of this directive.* **AUTHORITY:** 38 U.S.C. § 7301(b).

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **Under Secretary for Health.** The Under Secretary for Health is responsible for ensuring overall VHA compliance with this directive.

b. **Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Support.** The Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Support is responsible for establishing policy and providing guidance and oversight as necessary to ensure the timely and successful implementation of this directive.

c. **Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Operations.** The Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Operations is responsible for:

(1) Communicating the contents of this directive to each of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs).

(2) Assisting VISN Directors to resolve implementation and compliance challenges in all VA medical facilities within that VISN.

(3) Providing oversight of VISNs to ensure compliance with this directive and its effectiveness.

d. **Executive Director, VHA Healthcare Environment and Facilities Program.** The Executive Director, VHA HEFP is responsible for:

(1) Overseeing the development and implementation of VHA IDP and policies.

(2) Periodically assessing the VHA IDP for continued need, currency and effectiveness.

(3) Coordinating with the VISN Directors and VA medical facility Directors to ensure all necessary action is taken and funding is obtained to address IDP performance in a

manner that meets the requirements of Federal, State and local statutes and regulations; applicable Executive Orders and VA and VHA directives.

e. **Director, Environmental Programs Service.** The Director, EPS is responsible for:

(1) Overseeing VISN and VA medical facility compliance with this directive and ensuring that corrective action is taken when non-compliance is identified.

(2) Serving as the national interior design subject matter expert (SME).

(3) Administering, managing and ensuring the uniform and effective application of IDP elements as outlined in the VHA EPS IDP Guide. **NOTE:** For additional information about the elements of IDP, see <http://vaww.hefp.va.gov/resources/eps-interior-design-program-guide>. This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

(4) Developing and approving VHA policies and guidance impacting the VHA IDP.

(5) Providing guidance and support to all VA medical facilities in the operation of their VA medical facility IDPs.

(6) Establishing standardized technical requirements for health care grade furnishings and accessories for VA medical facilities. **NOTE:** For additional information about the standardized technical requirements, see <https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VACOOALC/SAC/AS5/Furniture%20IDIQ>. This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

(7) Communicating to the VA medical facility Healthcare Interior Designers how any policy and procedural changes will affect the built environment or VA operations related to the VHA IDP.

(8) Serving as the Delegated Administrative Authority (DAA) for VA Directive 7531, Acquisition of Artwork, Decorative Furnishings, and Decorative Items, dated March 1, 2017.

(9) Coordinating with HEFP when required for concurrence on VA medical facility requests for:

(a) Executive Suite Expenditures. **NOTE:** For additional information about Executive Suite Expenditures, see <http://vaww.hefp.va.gov/resources/executive-suite-expenditures-request-requirements>. This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

(b) Design Deviation Requests. **NOTE:** For additional information about Design Deviation Requests, see <https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VACOVHADUSHOM/10NA/10NA5/HealthcareEngineering/waiver/Pages/Waiver%20Requests.aspx>. This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

f. **Veterans Integrated Service Network Director.** The VISN Director is responsible for:

(1) Ensuring that all VA medical facilities within the VISN comply with this directive and informing leadership when barriers to compliance are identified.

(2) Ensuring that VA medical facilities are provided adequate resources and support to implement and continue to operate comprehensive VA medical facility IDPs.

(3) Coordinating with the Executive Director, HEFP and VA medical facility Directors to ensure all necessary actions are completed and funding is obtained to address IDP performance in a manner that meets the requirements of Federal and local statutes and regulations; applicable Executive Orders and VA and VHA directives.

(4) Ensuring that VA medical facilities utilize the automated system for artwork acquisition, deaccession and inventory established by the DAA for VA Directive 7531.

g. **VA Medical Facility Director.** The VA medical facility Director is responsible for:

(1) Ensuring VA medical facility compliance with this directive and appropriate corrective action is taken if non-compliance is identified.

(2) Ensuring the overall performance, financial support and long-term stewardship associated with the VA medical facility IDP.

(3) Coordinating with the Executive Director, HEFP and VISN Directors to ensure all necessary actions are completed and funding is obtained to address IDP performance in a manner that meets the requirements of Federal and local statutes and regulations; applicable Executive Orders and VA and VHA directives.

(4) Supporting the hiring process to ensure the VA medical facility IDP staff possess the necessary qualifications by means of education, examination and experience to successfully carry out the duties and responsibilities of the position.

(5) Ensuring VA medical facility IDP staff utilize the automated system for artwork acquisition, deaccession and inventory established by the DAA for VA Directive 7531.

(6) Ensuring the VA medical facility IDP is given the authority as the SME to develop and implement healing and therapeutic environments using VA Office of Construction and Facilities Management (OCFM) standards and current interior design best practices which provide a safe and functional VA medical facility for patients, visitors and staff.

NOTE: For additional information, see the VA OCFM Design Manuals at <https://www.cfm.va.gov/til/dManual.asp>.

(7) On an annual basis, communicating to VA medical facility IDP staff the VA medical facility goals and master plans related to space planning, organization and construction.

(8) Providing VA medical facility IDP office and support space in compliance with VA Space Criteria PG-18-9, Chapter 230. **NOTE:** For additional information about VA Space Criteria, see <https://www.cfm.va.gov/TIL/planning.asp>.

h. **VA Medical Facility Interior Design Program Supervisor.** The VA medical facility IDP Supervisor is responsible for:

(1) Ensuring the development of a comprehensive VA medical facility IDP management plan in compliance with this directive.

(2) Establishing program-specific performance measures in alignment with national performance measures developed by EPS. **NOTE:** For additional information about EPS national performance measures, see <https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VHA10NA5C/SitePages/Performance-Standards.aspx>. This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

(3) Submitting an annual budget request by the VA medical facility budget call due dates reflecting VA medical facility IDP needs which include, but are not limited to:

(a) IDP operations to include continuing education, training, technical supplies and equipment, hardware and software. **NOTE:** For additional information about training, see paragraph 3.

(b) IDP operations to include products and services for recurring expenditures, construction, activations, maintenance and repair projects, ergonomic requests and reasonable accommodations.

(4) Ensuring position descriptions of VA medical facility IDP staff accurately reflect IDP responsibilities.

(5) Ensuring the VA medical facility IDP is staffed with qualified VA medical facility Healthcare Interior Designers who have the necessary education, training, resources, space and equipment to maintain an effective program.

(6) Providing dedicated support staff or establishing agreements with stakeholders (e.g., department SMEs from Logistics, Engineering and Facilities Management Service, Environmental Management Service (EMS)) who directly impact the VA medical facility IDP to provide support staff that carry out IDP functions including labor, trade and administrative services.

(7) Conducting an annual staffing analysis to determine whether staffing levels are adequate to support the VA medical facility IDP.

(8) Ensuring VA medical facility IDP engagement in project planning, design and execution to include Strategic Capital Investment Planning, preliminary/conceptual design, schematic design, design development, contract documentation, bidding, construction, commissioning, timeline development, activations and post occupancy evaluations.

(9) Ensuring the VA medical facility IDP complies with standards established by the VA OCFM. **NOTE:** For additional information about the VA OCFM standards, see <https://www.cfm.va.gov/til/>.

(10) Providing VA medical facility IDP staff with the necessary program-specific supplies, hardware and software to perform job functions.

(11) Supporting program-specific continuous learning and training opportunities through e-learning, hands-on training, coaching, mentoring and external and internal VA conferences. **NOTE:** For additional information about training, see paragraph 3.

(12) Supporting program engagement with EPS to maintain current knowledge of VHA-wide initiatives, mandates, advisories and policies.

(13) Fostering relationships between VA medical facility IDP staff and key stakeholders including, but not limited to, Infection Prevention and Control, Engineering and Facilities Management Service, Procurement and Logistics, Fiscal Service, EMS, VA medical facility Executive Leadership team and EPS.

i. **VA Medical Facility Healthcare Interior Designer.** The VA medical facility Healthcare Interior Designer is the design SME and is responsible for:

(1) Developing and executing the comprehensive VA medical facility IDP management plan that includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Written standard operating procedures.
- (b) Master schedule of furniture, fixtures and finishes.
- (c) Annual budget forecast.
- (d) Automated work order management system.

(2) Effectively implementing IDP elements found in the VHA EPS IDP Guide, which include, but are not limited to, the following. **NOTE:** For additional information about the elements of IDP, see <http://vaww.hefp.va.gov/resources/eps-interior-design-program-guide>. This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

- (a) Budgeting.
- (b) Planning and standardization.
- (c) Programming and project development.
- (d) Fiscal responsibilities.
- (e) Customer service.

(3) Executing and approving items within the scope of the VA medical facility IDP related to design, specification and procurement as the SME and governing authority.

(4) Maintaining compliance with procurement regulations in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (48 C.F.R. Chapter 1) and VA Acquisition Regulation (48 C.F.R. Chapter 8) and VA and VHA processes, mandatory procurement vehicles and timelines to develop contracting packages or purchase card orders legally and ethically for procurement of products and services.

(5) Maintaining compliance with VA Financial Policy Volume XIII – Cost Accounting, Chapter 2 – Budget Object Class Codes, Appendix A – FMS Budget Object Class Code Listing. **NOTE:** For additional information about VA Financial Policy Volume XIII, Chapter 2, see <https://www.va.gov/finance/policy/pubs/volumeXIII.asp>.

(6) Managing a comprehensive interior and exterior signage and wayfinding program in compliance with the VA Signage Manual. **NOTE:** For additional information, see <https://www.cfm.va.gov/til/dManual.asp>.

(7) Participating in project planning, design and execution activities as outlined in the VA Interior Design Manual. **NOTE:** The VA Interior Design Manual can be found at <https://www.cfm.va.gov/til/dManual.asp>.

(8) Complying with standards established by VA OCFM including, but not limited to; PG 18-1 Master Construction Specifications; PG-18-5 Equipment Guide List; PG-18-9 Space Planning Criteria; PG-18-10 Design Manuals; PG-18-12 Design Guides; PG-18-13 Topic Specific Standards and Criteria; PG-18-14 Room Finishes, Door, and Hardware Schedule. **NOTE:** For additional information about VA OCFM standards, see <https://www.cfm.va.gov/til/>.

(9) Assisting the VA medical facility in compiling IDP documentation for VA and VHA approvals, when required, including supplying documentation to the VA medical facility Chief Engineer for VHA Design Deviation Requests and Executive Office Expenditure Memoranda.

(10) Submitting artwork requests through the automated artwork request system to the VA medical facility IDP Supervisor for routing to the appropriate approval authority.

(11) Collaborating with internal and external technical professionals to plan spaces and environments that are functional, safe, inclusive and therapeutic.

(12) Implementing the VHA EPS Interior Design Elements of Excellence. **NOTE:** For additional information, see <https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VHA10NA5C/intdesign/SitePages/Best-Practices.aspx>. This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

(13) Coordinating with trades and contractors to execute the work required to implement technical solutions.

(14) Maintaining current knowledge of VHA-wide initiatives, mandates, advisories and policies to determine how they apply to the design of the built environment by engaging with EPS through collaborating opportunities such as:

- (a) Monthly VHA IDP conference calls.
- (b) Monthly EPS Educating for Excellence conference calls.
- (c) Monthly EPS conference calls.
- (d) VISN IDP conference calls.
- (e) Participation on integrated product teams for special projects.

(15) Participating as a core VHA CEOC rounding member, surveying items identified on the VHA CEOC Interior Design Checklist and remediating deficiencies as required by VHA Directive 1608, Comprehensive Environment of Care Program, dated June 21, 2021, and VHA Memorandum 2022-03-04, FY22 Environment of Care (EOC) Guidance, dated March 4, 2022. **NOTE:** For additional information about the attendance metrics, see <https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VHA10NA5C/EOCMonitor/SitePages/EOC-Policies-%26-Directives.aspx>. This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

(16) Providing data and documentation to support the annual VA medical facility IDP staffing analysis.

3. TRAINING

a. The following training is **required** for all VA medical facility Healthcare Interior Designers: Talent Management System (TMS) course number VA 131002224: Contracting 101.

b. The following training is highly **recommended** for all VA medical facility Healthcare Interior Designers:

(1) TMS course number VA 37123: VHA Healthcare Furniture IDIQ Training and Cost Estimating 2021.

(2) Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer's Representatives (FAC-COR) Level 1. **NOTE:** For more information, see <https://id.dau.edu/>. This course is offered through the Defense Acquisition University and requires account registration to access.

4. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

All records regardless of format (e.g., paper, electronic, electronic systems) created by this directive shall be managed as required by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) approved records schedules found in VHA Records Control

Schedule 10-1. Questions regarding any aspect of records management should be addressed to the appropriate Records Officer.

5. BACKGROUND

a. The Office of EPS provides direction and operational guidance for the scopes of service aligned to health care environmental programs at VA medical facilities. The Office of EPS provides oversight of IDP, regardless of where it is aligned at the VA medical facility. The IDP and associated EPS scopes of service ensure VA medical facilities are comprehensively maintained in a safe, clean, functional healing environment and are in an operationally effective condition.

b. According to the Council for Interior Design Qualification (CIDQ), interior design is a distinct profession requiring an applied specialized knowledge of the planning and design of interior environments that promote health, safety and welfare while supporting and enhancing the human experience. Interior design encompasses human-centered strategies that may address cultural, demographic and political influences on society. Interior designers provide resilient, sustainable, adaptive design and construction solutions focusing on the evolution of technology and innovation within the interior environment. Qualified by means of education, experience and examination, interior designers have a moral and ethical responsibility to protect consumers and occupants through the design of code-compliant, accessible and inclusive interior environments that address well-being, while considering the complex physical, mental and emotional needs of people. **NOTE:** For more information about CIDQ, see <https://www.cidq.org/>.

6. REFERENCES

- a. 38 U.S.C. § 7301(b).
- b. 48 C.F.R. Chapters 1 and 8.
- c. VA Directive 7531, Acquisition of Artwork, Decorative Furnishings and Decorative Items, dated March 1, 2017.
- d. VHA Directive 1608, Comprehensive Environment of Care Program, dated June 21, 2021.
- e. VHA Memorandum 2022-03-04, FY22 Environment of Care (EOC) Guidance, dated March 4, 2022.
- f. CEOC. Environment of Care Policies & Directives. <https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VHA10NA5C/EOCMonitor/SitePages/EOC-Policies-%26-Directives.aspx>. **NOTE:** This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.
- g. Design Deviation Requests. <https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VACOVHADUSHOM/10NA/10NA5/HealthcareEngi>

[neering/waiver/Pages/Waiver%20Requests.aspx](#). **NOTE:** This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

h. EPS Interior Design Elements of Excellence.

<https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VHA10NA5C/intdesign/SitePages/Best-Practices.aspx>. **NOTE:** This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

i. EPS Interior Design Program Guide. <http://vaww.hefp.va.gov/resources/eps-interior-design-program-guide>. **NOTE:** This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

j. EPS Performance Standards.

<https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VHA10NA5C/SitePages/Performance-Standards.aspx>. **NOTE:** This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

k. Executive Suite Expenditures Request Requirements.

<http://vaww.hefp.va.gov/resources/executive-suite-expenditures-request-requirements>. **NOTE:** This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

l. Standardized Technical Requirements for health care grade furnishings and accessories for VA medical facilities.

<https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VACOOALC/SAC/AS5/Furniture%20IDIQ>. **NOTE:** This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.

m. VA Financial Policy, Volume XIII – Cost Accounting.

<https://www.va.gov/finance/policy/pubs/volumeXIII.asp>.

n. VA OCFM. Design Manuals. <https://www.cfm.va.gov/til/dManual.asp>.

o. VA OCFM. VA Space & Facility Planning.

<https://www.cfm.va.gov/TIL/planning.asp>.

p. VA OCFM. VA Technical Information Library. <https://www.cfm.va.gov/til/>.

q. CIDQ. <https://www.cidq.org/>.

r. FAC-COR Level 1 training: <https://id.dau.edu/>. **NOTE:** This course is offered through the Defense Acquisition University and requires account registration to access.