

Department of
Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

Date: 27 MAY 2014

From: Executive in Charge, Office of Management, and Chief Financial Officer (004)

Subj: Mandatory Travel Accountable Official Training (TMS Item ID #3867465)
(VAIQ#7474791)

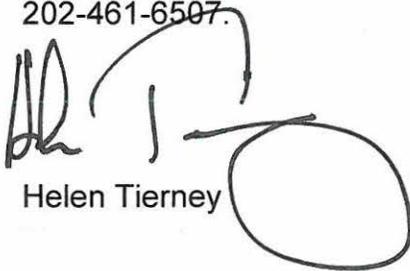
To: Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials

1. In the Office of Inspector General (OIG) "Administrative Investigation of the FY 2011 Human Resources Conferences in Orlando, Florida," dated September 30, 2012, (<http://www.va.gov/oig/pubs/VAOIG-12-02525-291R.pdf> - "Oversight of Travel Expenses Inadequate"), the OIG determined that VA approving officials did not provide adequate oversight to ensure that expenses associated with travel for these conferences were appropriate or in accordance with VA policy.

2. The Office of Management worked with VA Learning University (VALU) to publish mandatory training for travel approving officials (AO) on VALU Talent Management System (TMS). The "Travel Policy Services: Accountable Officials –TMS Item ID #3867465" (<https://www.tms.va.gov/learning/user/login.jsp>) is now live and available for travel AO and employee use. The Office of Management is requesting each Administration and Staff Office communicate to their organization that travel AOs are required to take this course annually.

3. It is important for travel AOs to understand that they are responsible for providing adequate oversight of travel authorizations and of travel expenses. The travel AO may be held personally liable¹ for authorization of items not allowed under Federal Travel Regulation or VA Travel Policy and for erroneous travel payments resulting from their negligent or fraudulent actions. This oversight includes ensuring that proper approvals were received prior to travel for any other-than-coach-class travel (e.g., first class and business class) as outlined in section 030202.02A and Appendix C of VA Financial Policy Volume XIV – Chapter 3, *Transportation Expenses* (<http://www.va.gov/finance/docs/VA-FinancialPolicyVolumeXIVChapter03.pdf>).

4. If you have any questions, please call me or have a member of your staff contact Katherine Palmer, Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Financial Policy, at 202-461-6507.



Helen Tierney

¹ VA Financial Policy Volume VIII – Chapter 1A, *Invoice Review and Certification* (<http://www.va.gov/finance/docs/VA-FinancialPolicyVolumeVIIIChapter01A.pdf>) 010209A states that VA's Certifying Officers and Certifying Officials may be monetarily liable for any payment resulting from illegal, improper or incorrect certifications in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3528 and other applicable laws. NOTE: Travel AOs are Certifying Officials (i.e., approving appropriate travel benefits, certifying appropriate funds are available when an obligation is established, and authorizing travel expense vouchers).