

**ACQUISITION OF ARTWORK, DECORATIVE FURNISHINGS, AND DECORATIVE ITEMS**

**1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To establish policy for the procurement of Artwork, Decorative Furnishings, and Decorative Items (artwork) for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

**2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS:** This new directive establishes:

a. Policy and the approval process for the procurement of artwork across the Department.

b. Approval thresholds for procurement, expectation for managing artwork inventory, and the VA approval process.

c. Policy that ensures all artwork procured by VA reflects the mission of the Department and promotes healing, memorial, and service environments for Veterans.

**3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** VA's Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction's, Office of Construction and Facilities Management, is responsible for the contents of this directive.

**4. RELATED ISSUES:** Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook 4721, VHA Handbook 1850.05.

**5. RESCISSIONS:** VHA Directive 1395

**CERTIFIED BY:**

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY  
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

/s/  
Dat Tran  
Acting Assistant Secretary for  
Enterprise Integration

/s/  
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Principal Executive Director, Office of  
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## ACQUISITION OF ARTWORK, DECORATIVE FURNISHINGS, AND DECORATIVE ITEMS

### 1. PURPOSE

This VA directive establishes policy and the approval process for the procurement of artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items for all VA facilities and locations, including, but not limited to new space acquired by major and minor construction and leasing, as well as existing space. This directive requires that VA exercise responsibility to be a good steward of public funds. **AUTHORITY:** Title 38 United States Code (U.S.C.) 2400, 2404, 7301(b), 7701.

### 2. POLICY

a. It is VA policy that the use of Veteran-produced artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items be given priority consideration in all approved procurements of artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items.

b. Each VA Administration and VA Central Office (VACO) Staff Office shall ensure compliance with operational policy and establish guidance in accordance with this directive.

c. Procurement of artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items must be approved by the VA Facility Director, the District/Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Director, and the appropriate VACO Staff Office for each Administration/Staff Office, as outlined in the Responsibilities Section of this directive (see paragraph 3), prior to acquisition. Procurements, including artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items loaned to VA, must be submitted through the appropriate authority, utilizing the acquisition and de-accession/disposal processes developed by each Administration in accordance with this directive.

d. There must be a facility or project Artwork Plan approved by the Facility Director which follows published guidance of each Administration and VA Technical Information Library (TIL). Artwork must be consistent with the Plan, appropriately reflect VA's mission of service to Veterans, and promote the healing and service delivery environment of the facility.

e. The procurement of donated artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items should be prioritized. Receipt of donated pieces must follow procedures outlined in the guidance of each Administration. Preparation, installation, and consultation costs that are not donated are considered artwork procurement and are subject to the same review thresholds as purchased artwork.

f. It is VA policy that the purchase of commissioned artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items is restricted to items approved by the Designated Administration Authority (DAA) of each Administration/Staff Office.

g. Architectural artwork elements planned, designed, or installed using construction funding will be reviewed for approval using the same threshold limits based on the estimated line item cost for that element within the total project cost. After VA accepts the building or space, the VA facility is responsible for artwork management.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **The Office of Construction and Facilities Management (CFM)** is responsible for:

(1) Establishing VA enterprise policy for acquisition of artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items.

(2) Establishing related VA standards and criteria.

(3) Assisting Administrations in interpretation and application of policies, standards, and criteria.

b. **Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and other Key Officials** are responsible for identifying the office that will function as the Designated Administration Authority (DAA) in the Administration's guidance. The representative DAA for each Administration or Staff Office is responsible for:

(1) Approving any single request for artwork which costs \$100,000 or more for major construction, \$50,000 or more for minor / non-recurring maintenance (NRM), and \$25,000 or more for other project types, or an accumulation of purchases exceeding \$75,000 in one fiscal year per facility.

(2) Approving all requests for a single piece of artwork, decorative furnishing, or decorative item that costs \$5,000 or more.

(3) Approving all purchases of \$5,000 or more for the service of restoration or refurbishment of existing artwork.

(4) Approving all requests for original/gallery and commissioned artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items.

(5) Approving artwork packages to ensure compliance with this directive.

(6) Notifying VA 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 the Office of General Counsel.

c. **District/Region/VISN Director** is responsible for:

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

(2) Approving all single requests for artwork which costs between \$50,000 and \$99,999 for major construction, \$25,000 and \$49,999 for minor / NRM, and \$15,000 and \$24,999 for other project types.

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

(4) Approving all purchases between \$2,500 and \$4,999 for the service of restoration/refurbishment of existing artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items.

(5) Review Facility Director requests for original / gallery and commissioned artwork and upon concurrence submit to the VACO/DAA.

d. **VA Facility Director or Designee** is responsible for:

(1) Ensuring facility staff adheres to this directive.

(2) Approving all single requests for artwork which costs between \$1,000 and \$49,999 for major construction, \$1,000 and \$24,999 for minors / NRM, and \$1,000 and \$14,999 for other project types.

(3) Reviewing all requests for a single item artwork, decorative furnishing, or decorative item purchases that cost \$2,500 or more and upon concurrence, submitting the requests to the District/Region/VISN Director for review and approval.

(4) Approving all purchases which cost \$1,000 or more for the service of restoration/refurbishment of existing artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items.

(5) Initial concurrence on requests for original / gallery and commissioned artwork and upon concurrence submit to District/Region/VISN Director for review and approval.

(6) Approving the Artwork Plan and ensuring the Plan does not exceed the allowance for artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items.

(7) Ensuring facility staff maintains an Artwork, Decorative Furnishings, and Decorative Items Inventory and submits the Inventory annually to the VACO DAA.

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

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

e. **VA Facility Interior Design Officer or Designee** is responsible for:

(1) Approving all artwork, decorative furnishings, decorative items, and refurbishing/restoration purchases that cost between \$0 and \$999.

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

(3) Developing an Artwork Plan for the facility and/or project 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.

(4) Developing an Artwork Plan budget that does not exceed the allowance for artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items.

(5) Developing the artwork package that includes all required documents and submitting for consideration to the appropriate approving authority and, whenever possible, partnering with other public or private organizations to leverage the procurement of artwork and decorative items.

(6) Developing and maintaining the Artwork, Decorative Furnishings, and Decorative Items Inventory and submitting the Inventory annually to the VACO DAA.

#### 4. REFERENCES

a. VHA Directive 1395 Acquisition of Artwork and Decorative Items (August 2016 – to be rescinded upon issuance of this Directive).

b. VHA Handbook 4721, VA General Post Fund Procedures,  
[http://www.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub\\_ID=1570](http://www.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=1570)

c. VHA Handbook 1850.05, Interior Design Operation and Signage,  
<https://vaww.cmopnational.va.gov/cmop/CEOSH/10nadocuments/Policy%20Library/Interior%20Design%20Operations%20and%20Signage%201850.05.pdf>

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

d. Environmental Program Services (EPS) Interior Design Program Guide,  
<https://vaww.vha.vaco.portal.va.gov/sites/DUSHOM/EPS/Projects/EPS%20Interior%20Design%20Program%20Guide/Interior%20Design%20Program%20Guide%20V5.pdf>

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

e. CFM TIL, <http://www.cfm.va.gov/TIL/>

f. VHA National Activations Office (10NA-NAO), Activation Process Guide Feb 2015. [https://vaww.cmopnational.va.gov/cmop/CEOSH/10nadocuments/Policy%20Library/Activation%20Process%20%20Guide%20%20\(Feb%202015\).pdf](https://vaww.cmopnational.va.gov/cmop/CEOSH/10nadocuments/Policy%20Library/Activation%20Process%20%20Guide%20%20(Feb%202015).pdf)

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g. The Center for Health Design, <https://www.healthdesign.org/>

**NOTE:** The Center for Health Design is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of healthcare through evidence based design, through an accredited research process.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

a. **Artwork.** A product creating visual interest in the environment. Although typically purely aesthetic in design, artwork can be functional such as using framed prints by theme to assist in wayfinding. Artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items may be located on the interior or exterior of the facility, applied to a façade, or features associated with site work and landscaping.

i. Examples of artwork: include: framed images (commercial off-the-shelf, original works or items purchased from an art gallery), sculptures, painted murals, costs to refurbish or restore artwork, decorative furnishings, and decorative items. Additionally, custom images added to commercial material are considered artwork if it increases the cost (for example: custom image added to wallcovering, only the additional cost for the custom image should be used when determining the approval authority necessary).

ii. Examples of items not considered Artwork: mandatory postings, photos of the President of the United States and the VA Secretary, the VA seal, and signage.

b. **Artwork Plan.** Documents developed during the design phase of the construction project to include artwork and decorative furnishings and decorative items that are refined throughout the project. The Artwork Plan includes the overall concept of art and the cost estimation for all artwork to be purchased.

c. **Decorative Furnishings and Decorative Items.** Items that are primarily aesthetic in value, with little to no practical use or function, or for which the cost of the piece is derived primarily from its uniqueness, originality or artistic expression, and the decorative value far outweighs and/or supersedes the basic function of the piece.