

RESEARCH EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

1. REASON FOR ISSUE. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook establishes procedures related to the Research Equipment Management Programs in place for Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development or Clinical Science Research and Development Services.

2. SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES. The VHA Handbook includes the following principal changes throughout the document; it:

a. Adds the Research Equipment Quick Initiative Program (REQUIP).

b. Enables Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers to request upgrades of equipment as an alternative to the purchase of new equipment.

3. RELATED DIRECTIVE. VHA Directive 1202 (to be published).

4. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE. The VHA Office of Research and Development, Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development and Clinical Science Research and Development Services (121) are responsible for the contents of this VHA Handbook. Questions may be addressed to 202-254-0482.

5. RESCISSION. VHA Handbook 1201.11 dated June 25, 1998, and VHA Handbook 1201.12 dated August 3, 1998, are rescinded.

6. RECERTIFICATION. This VHA Handbook is scheduled for recertification on or before the last working date of July 2013.

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RESEARCH EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE

This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook establishes procedures related to the management, procurement, and disposition of research laboratory equipment or laboratory animal management equipment purchased with Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) appropriated dollars.

2. BACKGROUND

The mechanisms for this management include the Shared Equipment Evaluation Program (ShEEP), the Laboratory Animal Management (LAMb) program, and the Research Equipment Quick Initiative Program (REQUIP).

- a. ShEEP awards funding for common resource or shared equipment for either basic biomedical or clinical research.
- b. The LAMb program awards funding for core equipment used in laboratory animal research facilities.
- c. REQUIP supports the reassignment of usable research equipment between VA facilities to extend the useful life of equipment and to reduce the amount of research equipment being surplus or warehoused before the end of the equipment's productive life.

3. ShEEP

ShEEP accepts requests for funding new or replacement research laboratory equipment. The program considers funding for upgrades that will expand the features or capabilities of existing equipment. ShEEP requires in-kind partnering or direct contribution from other sources for each item of equipment requested. Annual deadlines and guidelines for submitting proposals for ShEEP are described in a guidance document located on the Office of Research and Development (ORD) website at: <http://www.research.va.gov>.

- a. In-kind partnering includes, but is not limited to, the cost of minor renovations to allow installation of the equipment or provision of dedicated technician(s) or both to operate the requested equipment.
- b. Direct contributions include monetary contributions from all sources other than VA Central Office. If ownership of the requested equipment is to be shared (i.e., shared between the VA facility and its academic affiliate), the Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development (BLR&D) or Clinical Science Research and Development (CSR&D) Director must approve a sharing agreement or memorandum of understanding, signed by all parties before VA Central Office releases any funds.

4. LAMb PROGRAM

The LAMb program accepts requests for funding for new or replacement research animal facility equipment. The program will also consider upgrades that will expand the features or capabilities of existing equipment. Deadlines and guidelines for submitting proposals for LAMb are described in a guidance document located on the ORD website at:

<http://www.research.va.gov>.

5. REQUIP

REQUIP allows for the redistribution of quality, excess, nonexpendable research laboratory and animal facility equipment. VA facilities may list excess equipment available for transfer to another VA facility, request the transfer of research laboratory equipment listed as excess, or submit inquiries regarding the availability of an instrument for transfer. Guidelines for posting excess equipment, requesting equipment, and transferring equipment are described on the ORD website at: <http://www.research.va.gov>.

6. MAJOR FACTORS CONSIDERED FOR EQUIPMENT REQUESTS

a. The Directors of BLR&D and CSR&D consider the following factors in evaluating requests for laboratory and animal facility equipment:

(1) Does the request fall within the program scope as described paragraphs 3, 4, and 5?

(2) Are the plans for sharing the cost of purchasing each item of equipment sufficient? The program must evaluate each item of equipment independently, and each item must have its own cost sharing arrangement.

(3) Is the proposed purchase or upgrade of the equipment items well justified? How important are the requested equipment items to research at the facility and to VA-funded investigators who will use the equipment? Is the equipment requested the most appropriate for their needs?

(4) Are the investigators who will share the equipment productive members of the research service?

(5) What is the status of research at the facility? Is the facility maintaining its level of VA funded research? Is the level of VA funding increasing or decreasing?

(6) Does the facility have the means to house and maintain the equipment items? Does the equipment have special installation or maintenance requirements? Has the facility addressed these requirements in the proposal?

b. The Directors of BLR&D and CSR&D give additional consideration to the following factors in evaluating requests for animal facility equipment:

(1) What is the importance of the item to maintaining compliance with applicable Federal regulations and maintaining Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care, International (AAALAC) accreditation?

(2) How will acquisition of the item improve the quality or efficiency of animal care?

(3) Does the size of the animal research program (i.e., daily inventory or total annual use of animals by species, or both) support the need for the requested equipment?