

## DIRECTIVES MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE.** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes the policy and responsibilities for managing, distributing, and communicating VHA numbered administrative documents.
- 2. SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES.** Major changes include the updating of mandatory policy, responsibilities, and definitions.
- 3. RELATED HANDBOOKS.** VHA Handbook 6330.01
- 4. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE.** The VHA Office of Information, Forms, Publications, and Records Management Service (19E1) is responsible for the contents of this Directive. Questions may be referred to 202-461-5867.
- 5. RESCISSIONS.** VHA Directive 6330, May 8, 1996, is rescinded.
- 6. RECERTIFICATION.** This VHA Directive is scheduled for recertification on the last working day of December 2013.

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## DIRECTIVES MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

**1. PURPOSE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes the policy and responsibilities for managing, distributing, and communicating VHA numbered administrative documents. *NOTE: All VHA Directives Management System (DMS) issues distributed nationwide must be coordinated through the VHA Directives Management Officer (DMO), also known as the VHA Publications Control Officer (PCO) (19E1).*

**2. POLICY:** It is VHA policy that VHA Central Office, VHA Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs) and their field facilities establish and maintain a DMS, in accordance with this VHA Directive and corresponding Handbooks, regarding "directive" and "non-directive" media. Directive documents contain mandatory policies, procedures, and, as indicated, oversight monitoring requirements. Non-directive documents contain non-directive information.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **Under Secretary for Health.** The Under Secretary for Health has the delegated approval authority to issue VHA policy. (*Authority: Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 2.6(a)(1)*). In compliance with Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Directive 6330, the Under Secretary for Health is responsible for:

(1) Designating a VHA DMO (19E1) located in VHA Central Office.

(2) Ensuring an effective VHA DMS is established.

(3) Approving a VHA DMS document when:

(a) There is a change in VHA's basic mission, objectives, or policies.

(b) The document itself is used as a mechanism for delegating the Under Secretary for Health's authority.

(c) The policy or procedure governs the benefits, rights, or responsibilities of veterans, their beneficiaries, or members of the public.

b. **Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health.** The Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health, or designee, is responsible for ensuring oversight in the establishment and implementation of an effectiveness directives management system in VHA.

c. **Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (10N).** The Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management must concur or non-concur on all VHA numbered administrative documents.

d. **VHA Chief Officers and Equivalent Directors.** VHA Chief Officers and equivalent Directors are responsible for:

- (1) Designating a liaison to VHA's DMO to coordinate publication issues under the jurisdiction of the Chief Officer, or equivalent Director, and providing the name, telephone number, and email address to the VHA DMO.
- (2) Concurring or non-concurring on numbered administrative issues, within the designated time frame, when the particular issue addresses the program area under the official's jurisdiction.
- (3) Ensuring that all directives management documents developed in their areas of jurisdiction meet the requirements of VHA's DMS, as set forth in this VHA Directive and VHA Handbook 6330.01 and provide a summary (briefing sheet) of the Directives purpose, proposed revisions and/or oversight monitoring requirements (as indicated).
- (4) Reviewing for rescission or replacement, in accordance with an established schedule provided by VHA DMO (19E1), all active directives, handbooks, and numbered memoranda for which their organization is responsible, and:
  - (a) Coordinating with VHA DMO (19E1) to rescind those documents that are obsolete,
  - (b) Maintaining lists of those documents that are current, and
  - (c) Complying with the recertification process (see VHA Handbook 6330.01).
- (5) Incorporating appropriate automation into every aspect of VHA's DMS, including data links where oversight monitoring is required.
- (6) Following established formats and procedures as prescribed in VHA Handbook 6330.01 for each type of VHA issue.
- (7) Ensuring the appropriate concurrences outside the originating office are completed in a timely manner (see VHA Handbook 6330).

e. **VHA DMO (19E1).** The VHA DMO (19E1) is responsible for:

- (1) Coordinating and maintaining VHA's DMS in compliance with VA Directive 6330, as appropriate, by publishing DMS policy in VHA Directive and Handbooks 6330. This includes:
  - (2) Maintaining the VHA Publications Web sites and Archives (see <http://www1.va.gov/vhapublications/>; and <http://vaww1.va.gov/vhapublications/>).
  - (3) Maintaining the VHA policy history files as required by Records Control System (RCS) 10-1.
  - (4) Establishing VHA policy and procedures for facility DMS Programs.

(5) Numbering VHA official documents for all the types of media as defined in VHA Handbook 6330. All numbering systems are assigned by the VHA DMO.

(6) Preparing all numbered administrative documents for the signature of the Under Secretary for Health.

(7) Ensuring the electronic publication and distribution of all numbered administrative documents.

f. **VHA VISN Director.** Each VISN Director, or designee, is responsible for:

(1) Designating a PCO who is responsible for the VHA DMS within their VISN.

(2) Providing the name and any change to the PCO, to the VHA DMO (19E1).

(3) Ensuring that the VISN DMS Program is conducted in accordance with the policies and requirements set forth in this VHA Directive and Handbook 6330.01.

(4) Issuing any supplemental VISN or facility instructions necessary to carry out the provisions of VHA DMS.

(5) Ensuring a process is established to review and revise related policies.

(6) Ensuring the VISN PCO:

(a) Coordinates and maintains VHA's DMS in compliance with VHA Directive 6330 and Handbook 6330.01 in collaboration with the VHA and facility PCO.

(b) Establishes and maintains the VISN Directive Library containing VA and VHA publications.

(c) Establishes VISN policy and procedures for the VISN and facility DMS Program.

(d) Establishes a process to ensure implementation of Directives at the VISN and facility, including the review of required oversight monitoring requirements.

g. **VHA Facility Director.** Each facility Director, or designee, is responsible for:

(1) Designating a PCO who is responsible for the VHA DMS within their facility.

(2) Providing the name and any change to the PCO, to the VHA DMO (19E1).

(3) Ensuring that the facility DMS Program is conducted in accordance with the policies and requirements set forth in this VHA Directive and Handbook 6330.01.

(4) Issuing any supplemental facility instructions necessary to carry out the provisions of VHA DMS.

(5) Ensuring the facility PCO:

(a) Coordinates and maintains VHA's DMS in compliance with VHA Directive 6330 and Handbook 6330.01.

(b) Establishes and maintains the facility Director's Library containing VA and VHA publications.

(c) Establishes facility policy and procedures for the facility DMS Program.

## 5. REFERENCES

a. VA Directive and Handbook 6330.

b. VHA Handbook 6330.01.

## 6. DEFINITIONS

a. **Directive Media.** There are four VHA directive documents:

(1) **VHA DMS Directives.** A VHA DMS directive establishes mandatory VHA policies for VHA Programs. These Directives must be recertified every 5 years.

(2) **VHA Temporary Directives.** A VHA Temporary Directive defines policy that has a limited time span or new program policies that will be incorporated in DMS Handbooks at a later date. A Temporary Directive carries an expiration date and is not issued for longer than 5 years. If the policies prescribe short-term requests for reports, data collection or implement special short-term programs, they are issued as temporary directives with a 5-year (or less) expiration date specified.

(3) **VHA DMS Handbooks.** VHA DMS Handbooks prescribe mandatory VHA procedures or operational requirements implementing policies contained in DMS Directives. This term is not used for any other publication. Each Handbook relates to policy established in a VHA Directive.

(4) **VHA Numbered Memorandums.** VHA numbered memoranda establish mandatory VHA policies which apply within VHA Central Office only. A VHA numbered memorandum carries a rescission date of 5 years, unless a shorter period of time is appropriate.

b. **Non-directive Media.** Non-directive documents contain non-directive information.

(1) **VHA Notices.** VHA notices announce or provide significant information involving, or of interest VHA-wide. Examples include special events, appointments of senior management personnel, and major organizational changes, announcement of a new award, a request for proposal, the rescission of a directive document, etc. A VHA notice carries an automatic rescission date of no more than 4 years.

(2) **VHA Numbered Information Letter (IL).** A numbered IL is used to release

non-directive information of one-time interest or short duration; i.e., applications for training opportunities, describing new programs, clinical recommendations, or final reports. Usually a numbered IL is issued over the signature of the Under Secretary for Health. Occasionally a numbered IL is issued over the signature of the Chief Officer, when information is of interest only to field activities under their jurisdiction.

(a) An IL is automatically rescinded at the end of 6 months.

(b) ILs are not used to issue guidelines or procedures (see VHA Handbook 6330.01).

(3) **VHA Program Guide (PG).** PGs contain non-mandatory and non-directive procedures for development of a program defined in VHA Directives. Program guides are issued with the approval of the Under Secretary for Health, or designee, and for the signature of the appropriate originating Chief Officer (see VHA Handbook 6330.01).

(4) **VHA Training Program (TP) Guide.** TP Guides contain non-directive guidelines and instructions for conducting a specific course of training. TP Guides are issued with approval of the Under Secretary for Health, or designee, and for the signature of appropriate office official (see VHA Handbook 6330.01).

(5) **VHA Information Bulletin (IB).** IBs contain non-directive material intended for the assistance and information to veterans and personnel. IBs may be reissued or revised and maintained for continual distribution. IB subject matter must pertain exclusively to official business, and is not to include news of employee social activities, personal items, or material which is appropriate for publication in PGs. The printing of IBs is coordinated by the DMO.