DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
CHARTER OF THE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN VETERANS

A. OFFICIAL DESIGNATION: Advisory Committee on Women Veterans

B. OJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITY: The Committee provides advice to the Secretary on the needs of women Veterans with respect to health care, rehabilitation benefits, compensation, outreach, and other relevant programs administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

C. PERIOD OF TIME NECESSARY FOR THE COMMITTEE TO CARRY OUT ITS PURPOSE(S): There is a continuing need for the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans to assist the Secretary in carrying out the responsibilities under 38 U.S.C. § 542. Authorized by law for an indefinite period, the Committee has no termination date.

D. OFFICIAL TO WHOM THE COMMITTEE REPORTS: The Advisory Committee on Women Veterans reports to the Secretary through the Director, Center for Women Veterans.

E. OFFICE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING THE NECESSARY SUPPORT TO THE COMMITTEE: The Center for Women Veterans is responsible for providing support to the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans.

F. DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE: In carrying out its primary responsibility of providing advice to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Committee will provide a report to the Secretary not later than July 1 of each even-numbered year which includes (1) an assessment of the needs of women Veterans and the benefits and programs provided by VA to meet those needs, (2) a review of the programs and activities at VA that affect women Veterans, and (3) such recommendations (including recommendations for administrative and legislative action) as the Committee considers appropriate.

By statute, the Committee shall consist of members appointed by the Secretary from the general public, including representatives of women Veterans; individuals who are recognized authorities in fields pertinent to the needs of women Veterans, including the gender specific health-care needs of women; and representatives of both female and male Veterans with service-connected disabilities, including at least one female Veteran with a service-connected disability and at least one male Veteran with a service-connected disability. The committee shall include ex officio members as specified by statute. The Secretary shall determine the number and terms of service of members of the Committee, except that a term of service of any such member may not exceed 3 years. The Secretary may reappoint any such member for additional terms of service.

The Committee will be comprised of not more than 12 members. Several members may be Regular Government Employees, but the majority of the Committee's membership will be Special Government Employees.

The Committee may establish subcommittees to carry out specific projects or assignments. The Committee chair shall notify the Secretary, through the Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Committee, of the establishment of any subcommittee, including its function, membership and estimated duration. Subcommittees will report back to the Committee.

Records of the Committee shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 26 or other approved agency records disposition schedules. Those records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552.

G. ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS IN DOLLARS AND STAFF-YEARS: The estimated annual operating costs for the Committee are $190,000 and .75 staff-years. All members will receive travel expenses and a per diem allowance in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulation for any travel made in connection with their duties as members of the Committee.

H. ESTIMATED NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS: The Committee is expected to meet at least three times annually. The DFO, a full time VA employee, will approve the schedule of Committee and subcommittee meetings. The DFO or a designee will be present at all Committee and subcommittee meetings, and each meeting will be conducted in accordance with an agenda approved by the DFO. The DFO is authorized to adjourn any meeting when he or she determines it is in the public interest to do so, and to chair any meeting when directed to do so by the Secretary.

I. COMMITTEE TERMINATION DATE: None

J. DATE CHARTER IS FILED:

Approved: _____ Date: 8/13/09
Eric K. Shinseki
Secretary of Veterans Affairs