



# Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Workforce and Service Population Initiatives

## *Committing to Diversity & Inclusion in VA*



Office of Diversity and Inclusion  
Office of Human Resources and Administration  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

# Value Statement

In order to be a high performing organization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that best serves our Veterans, VA must define diversity broadly to include all that makes us unique, including our sexual orientation and gender identity. Diversity and inclusion are more than legal or ethical imperatives; they are business imperatives to achieve high performance in public service.



# Meeting the Needs of the LGBT Workforce

- In 2009, VA included sexual orientation as a protected basis in the Secretary's EEO, Diversity, and No FEAR Policy Statement.
- In 2010, VA implemented an internal complaint process to provide formal redress for complaints based on sexual orientation.
- In 2011, VA added gender identity and parental status to the list of protected bases in the Secretary's Policy Statement (signed on June 13, 2011).
- In 2012, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) held its third annual LGBT Program to increase awareness of LGBT issues in the workplace and in our service population. This past June, ODI sponsored its third LGBT Observance Program that focused specifically on the needs of LGBT Veterans.



## Meeting the Needs of the LGBT Workforce, cont.

- ODI has also developed and delivered training to educate our leadership and our workforce on issues of cultural competency for the LGBT community.
- ODI has developed and implemented ***Mandatory EEO, Diversity, & Conflict Management Training for Managers and Supervisors*** covering LGBT diversity; In FY 11, over 27,000 executive, managers, and supervisors were trained.
- In FY 12, VA's Diversity Council is launching an LGBT work group to address emerging LGBT issues in the VA workforce and in our service delivery.
- In FY 13, ODI is adding a survey item in VA's Voice of VA Survey to assess perceptions of fairness and treatment of LGBT employees.



# Meeting the Needs of the LGBT Community

- With respect to delivery of health care, our Veterans Health Administration (VHA) issued a directive on June 9, 2011 establishing a policy on providing respectful delivery of health care to transgender and intersex Veterans enrolled in the VA health care system.
- In July, ODI joined other VA officials from VHA and VBA in a meeting with the National Coalition of LGBT Health representing over 70 LGBT organizations to engage in a dialogue about emerging LGBT issues and their impact on VA health care and benefits services.
- VA continues to engage the LGBT Coalition on issues such as health care disparities and adoption of an LGBT Healthcare Equality Index.
- We are proud that VA anticipated and has taken the lead in addressing many emerging issues involving the LGBT community, especially in light of the repeal of “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” as well as other related legislative matters currently being reviewed.



# ***QUESTIONS?***

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