

NG/R Servicemembers: Use of VA Facility to Maintain Clinical or Administrative Skills

Background: NG/R Servicemembers (SMs) who are fulfilling their military duties may spend some of their weekends or part of their annual two weeks of active duty in training exercises and are sometimes referred to by their units as trainees. However, they are not trainees in the sense that VA uses when describing Medical and Nursing students, or Interns or Residents, which are governed by the VHA Office of Academic Affiliation. If VAMCs wish to partner via an approved “VA/DoD Resource Sharing Agreement” with NG/R units to provide opportunities for NG/R SMs to maintain clinical competencies (aka “clinical currency”) the following guidelines apply:

- The use of VAMCs to help NG/R Servicemember maintain clinical or administrative competencies or currency is bound by Joint Commission standards identical to any employee.
- If the individual must maintain a state license, certification, or registration (Nurse, Pharmacist, Radiology Tech, etc.) they must be *credentialed using VetPro and receive a HR appointment* following the VHA DIRECTIVE 2012-030 titled “CREDENTIALING OF HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS” for non-LIPs.
- If they fall into a profession that VA also privileges as a *Licensed Independent Practitioner (LIP)* (such as a physician, Advanced Practice Nurse, PA) then the individual must also be *credentialed and privileged* following the VHA HANDBOOK 1100.19 titled “CREDENTIALING AND PRIVILEGING” for Licensed Independent Practitioners (LIP), to include having their credentials and privileging request presented and approved by the appropriate committees at the VA facility.
- Additionally, HR would need to appoint them as a *Without Compensation (WOC) employee* that will require a background check, etc., and they must meet *all mandatory training* requirements. This would also apply to Servicemembers seeking Healthcare Administrative skill experiences, and who do not meet the Credentialing or Privileging criteria. The WOC process is outlined in VA HANDBOOK 5005/21 titled “Staffing.”
- If the NG/R SMs are only going to shadow an employee, and will not be directly involved in care/services then they would need to go through the *Volunteer process*, which also requires background checks/certain *mandatory trainings*, etc.

Additionally:

- The processes are time and resource intensive and the local VA facility would need to assess if the time and effort for occasional use, which could vary between one day to two weeks, would compete with other priorities of the VAMC.
- While at the VA facility, the NG/R SMs need to be supervised/monitored very closely and an assigned a “proctor” who would need to be available to provide the oversight.

NOTE: For NG/R SMs who are still in need of training to complete educational and clinical experience as part of course work at a College, University, or other educational institution, the facility must follow guidance from OAA.