National Rules – The Competition

1. **ELIGIBILITY:** Veterans must be enrolled to receive care at a VA medical facility before entering a local competition. This facility should be the site where he/she receives their primary care. He/she can submit an entry in creative writing, dance, drama or music categories with a Veteran or group from another VA facility, but still represents and must go through his/her originating VA facility to enter the competition. Veterans are only permitted to enter through one VA facility competition each year.
2. Each Veteran must work with a VA staff person from the VA facility at which he/she receives his/her primary treatment to submit entries into the competition.
3. Veterans may only submit one entry per category.
4. No one Veteran will be allowed to enter more than three art categories and one group category in the art division. No one Veteran will be allowed to enter more than three creative writing categories in the creative writing division. No one Veteran will be allowed to enter more than three solo categories and three group categories in the dance, drama and music divisions.
5. Veterans may not expand the number of their entries in any one division using a different name (for example: pen names, stage names, different artist names, etc.).
6. A single entry may not be submitted into two or more categories within the same division. It is acceptable however for an entry to be submitted into multiple divisions if the rules are followed for each division.
7. First-place ties in a category at the local competition MUST be re-judged at the local level as only one entry for each category will be accepted from each VA facility. A formal competition is not required at the local level but is strongly encouraged. All eligible Veterans should be given the opportunity to participate regardless of degree of talent.
8. Veterans who have received a gold medal in the same category from any of the 5 divisions (art, creative writing, dance, drama, and music) for two consecutive years must enter a different category the third year. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the entry being disqualified.
9. Veterans may not enter the same art, creative writing, dance, drama and music entry again after it has won first-place nationally. Failure to comply with this rule will result in disqualification of the entry. Additionally, Veterans should be encouraged to enter new material each year.
10. References to diagnosis and explanations of emotional or personal content related to the Veteran will not be read or communicated to the national judges. The exception to this rule is an entry submitted into a category that requires a write-up.
11. Veterans in national first, second and third place groups of up to five in art, creative writing, dance, drama and music will each be presented a medal. Groups of 6 or more will be presented a medal if possible or will be provided an award certificate. Non-Veterans and Veterans serving as accompanists, or dance partners, or dramatic readers that enhance an entry will not receive medals or certificates.
12. Prior to submitting entries in the competition, eligible Veterans who are also VA employees should discuss leave options/restrictions with their supervisor in the event they might be invited to attend the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.
13. **Final results of each of the five divisions of competition will be sent via E-mail to VA staff contact persons by mid-December.**