

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

News Release

Office of Public Affairs
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(202) 461-7600
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Rosemary Williams Appointed as VA Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald today welcomed the appointment of Rosemary Freitas Williams as Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Public Affairs.

In this post, Williams will oversee public affairs, media relations, consumer affairs, community outreach and engagement including Veteran homelessness and six national rehabilitative sports events. She also represents VA on the executive committee of the National Alliance for Suicide Prevention, on behalf of Veterans, their families and survivors. She will play a critical role in guiding VA's public engagement to implement Secretary McDonald's vision to transform VA into a Veteran-centric, high-performing and responsive organization.

"Rosemary is a proven communications leader," said McDonald. "Her dedication to the military community - servicemembers, Veterans, their families and survivors, is vital in meeting VA's mission of serving the great men and women who have proudly worn this nation's uniform. This is especially important with more than two hundred thousand servicemembers transitioning every year over the next five years."

Prior to coming to VA, Williams served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy since July 2013. In that position, she was responsible for policy, advocacy and oversight of all community support to service members, their families and survivors, child care and youth programs, family violence prevention and intervention, casualty and mortuary affairs, MWR programs, commissaries and exchanges, military spouse career advancement, and state liaison office.

Williams previously worked in government as director for communications and public liaison at the Office of Personnel Management, and as the senior advisor for strategic communications to VA Secretary Eric Shinseki. During her time at VA, Williams also served as the Department of Veterans Affairs representative to the White House Council on Military Families. Prior to that, Williams worked in the nonprofit sector as communications director for a national 501c3 non-profit network of military families. Her work with military families and veterans follows a 25-year broadcast journalism career, during which she received numerous awards including a National Emmy Award for Team Coverage of the attacks on September 11th. She was a principal for many network start-ups, including MSNBC, NBC and Microsoft's 24-hour news channel where she was the Executive Producer of News.

Ms. Williams was awarded fellowships in Ethical Decision Making at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies in St. Petersburg, Fla., and in National Security at the Air War College, part of the U.S. Air Force's Air University in Montgomery, Ala. She has been published on the topic of mental health and today's military families and is author of the local history book, *Maritime Annapolis – A History of Watermen, Sail & Midshipmen*.

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