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VA employee survey shows improving morale

Increase in workforce retention rates tied to uptick in job and VA satisfaction scores

WASHINGTON — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that results from a recent VA job satisfaction survey showed a general trend of improving employee morale.

VA issued the [2018 All Employee Survey \(AES\)](#) in June to its workforce of more than 375,000 employees, and 235,884 employees, or 62 percent, completed the assessment, surpassing the national response rate goal of 60 percent for this voluntary workplace survey.

Results of the AES are available [here](#). The survey indicated progress in a number of key areas: satisfaction with one's job (+8.8 percent); satisfaction with VA (+11.1 percent); and willingness to recommend VA as a good place to work (+10.9 percent).

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie called the results positive, saying he remains committed to improving employee engagement, a critical precursor for strong customer service, one of his key priorities.

"VA employees are talented and committed professionals who rally behind a great mission," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "Veterans deserve a VA workforce that demonstrates pride in its work that results in strong customer service, and the survey shows we are making important progress in that direction."

Employees also reported seeing the results of employee surveys more often (+33.2 percent from 2014 to 2018), and employees reported improvements were being made based on survey results (+53.7 percent). Employees were also more likely to respond positively to items related to supervisor goal setting (+25.6 percent) and supervisor addressing employee concerns (+11.8 percent).

This improved employee experience relates directly to employee retention. Recent data show that VA employee retention rates are better than comparable private-sector rates. Publicly reported employee-turnover rates in health care average between 20 to 30 percent. VA's employee-turnover rates average 9 percent.

While VA officials said they are excited about the positive shifts happening in the workplace, they also acknowledged that, based on employee feedback, there are still areas for continued improvement.

When asked in this year's survey what they care most about, VA employees listed the following areas as important ongoing focal areas for the department: having a civil and respectful work environment, having their concerns addressed by supervisors and having their talents used well in the workplace.

To reduce survey fatigue among employees, VA included the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) Employee Engagement Index, the Partnership for Public Service Ranking items, and the required FEVS items as a part of its AES, located at the following link: https://www.va.gov/NCOD/docs/AES2018_FEVS_Percent.pdf.

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