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VA confirms authority for its health care professionals to practice across state lines

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today it published an interim final rule affirming VA's current policy allowing VA health care professionals to practice across state lines in accordance with the scope and requirements of their VA employment, regardless of conflicting state requirements.

This regulation allows VA the flexibility to mobilize and hire qualified health care professionals from any state and quickly place them in areas of need — which is especially important during the [COVID-19 pandemic](#).

VA maintains and continues to exercise this authority. Reaching beyond the coronavirus pandemic and as identified in "[VA's Fourth Mission](#)", the rule confirms VA's authority to allow VA health care professionals, who may regularly cross state lines, to deliver care at other VA medical centers, as well as specific private hospitals, state Veterans homes and nursing homes.

"As the nation's largest integrated health care system, it is critical VA health care professionals are able to deliver services in regions other than where they may be licensed, registered, certified or limited by a state requirement," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "Whether we are assisting states dealing with natural disasters or even more so now with their pandemic response, VA is working diligently to get the appropriate, qualified staff to those communities in need as quickly as possible."

This regulation confirms VA health care professionals are able to practice where they are needed most, regardless of state license, certification, registration or other requirement, including professionals supporting assignments for "[VA's Fourth Mission](#)" or staffing smaller, rural locations, including mobile health units.

Since the start of the pandemic, VA has deployed more than 3,000 health care professionals to 47 states and the District of Columbia. They have served at civilian facilities, the Indian Health Service, State Veterans Homes and other VA medical facilities affected by COVID-19. These efforts helped Veterans and their communities by rapidly moving staff and equipment to assist various parts of the country experiencing serious and critical shortages of health care resources. This regulation ensures VA can continue to serve Veterans and support national, state and local emergency management, public health, safety and homeland security efforts.

Members of the public may comment on this interim-final rule so long as received on or before Jan. 11, 2021 at www.regulations.gov and search for RIN 2900-AQ94.

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