

**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

Memorandum

Date: **JAN 27 2017**

From: **Acting Secretary (00)**

Subj: **Exemption to Hiring Freeze Under Presidential Memorandum dated January 23, 2017**

To: **Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and other Key Officials**

1. Under the authority conferred to me by subject memorandum (Attachment 1), I am exempting certain positions from the hiring freeze because they are necessary to meet Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) public safety responsibilities. In regards to Veteran health care, the positions identified at Attachment 2 are located in various Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Medical Centers, Outpatient Clinics, Community Based Outpatient Clinics and Health Centers, and provide direct patient care, without which the safety and welfare of Veterans would be at stake. Also included are counselors at Readjustment Counseling Centers and a small number of positions in the following clinical operations program which augment patient care during periods of staffing shortages or emergencies: Interim Staffing Program (Locum Tenens/Traveling Nurse Core). A small number of mission critical support positions, without which patient care providers cannot function, are also included.
2. Given the critical role that VA plays in training the Nation's health care providers, the above exemptions should be interpreted in a way that does not disrupt ongoing health profession training programs and residencies within VA.
3. In addition, over the next several months, we are in the process of activating leases and construction projects at Monterey, CA; Palo Alto, CA; Riverside, CA; San Jose, CA; West Los Angeles, CA; Denver, CO; West Haven, CT; Pensacola, FL; South Hillsboro, FL; Tallahassee, FL; Tampa/Bay Pines, FL; South Bend, IN; Johnson City, KS; Lafayette, LA; Lake Charles, LA; New Orleans, LA; Worcester, MA; Binghamton, NY; Manhattan, NY; Rochester, NY; Cape Girardeau, MO; Springfield, MO; Portland, OR; and Bayamon, PR. To ensure Veterans are able to continue accessing state-of-the-art facilities and the quality care they deserve, I am granting exemptions to ensure the minimum staffing required to become or remain operational, and to ensure that the safety and health standards required by law are met (Attachment 3). Any support positions required to bring those facilities up to operating capabilities will also be exempted to avoid any delays, but VHA and the Office of Acquisitions, Logistics, and Construction must request and obtain Secretarial approval on a facility-by-facility basis for those exemptions.
4. Finally, as a public health and safety matter, I am also exempting the positions at Attachment 4 for the National Cemetery Administration that are directly involved in the burial of Veterans and their eligible family members.

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5. This memorandum should be reviewed in conjunction with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum, M-17-17 (Attachment 5), and Human Resources Management Letter No. 05-17-02 (Attachment 6) and should not be construed as "business as usual." VA will only exempt those positions from the hiring freeze that meet the intent of the Presidential Memorandum dated January 23, 2017. This is interim guidance and will be updated as we receive additional information from the Office of Personnel Management and OMB.
6. Additional requests for exemptions and any other questions should be directed to Nathan H. Maenle at (202) 461-7765 or via email to Nathan.Maenle@va.gov.


Robert D. Snyder

Attachments:

Presidential Memorandum, January 23, 2017
Veterans Health Administration List of Hiring Freeze Exempted Occupations
Major Construction List of Hiring of Hiring Freeze Exempted Occupations
National Cemetery Administration List of Hiring Freeze Exempted Occupations
Office of Management and Budget Memorandum, M-17-17, January 25, 2017
Human Resources Management Letter No. 05-17-02

Attachment 2: Veterans Health Administration
List of Hiring Freeze Exempted Occupations
As of: January 27, 2017

Hiring Authority	Series and Occupation
T38	0601 General Health Science/Chiropractor
T38	0601 General Health Science/Expanded Dental Function
T38	0602 Medical Officer
T38	0603 Physician's Assistant
T38	0605 Nurse Anesthetist
T38	0610 Nurse
T38	0662 Optometrist
T38	0668 Podiatrist
T38	0680 Dental Officer
T38 Hybrid	0101 Social Science/Licensed Prof Mental Health Counselor (includes Suicide Prevention positions)
T38 Hybrid	0101 Social Service/Marriage Family Therapist
T38 Hybrid	0180 Psychology
T38 Hybrid	0185 Social Work
T38 Hybrid	0601 General Health Science/Blind Rehab
T38 Hybrid	0601 General Health Science/Nuclear Medicine Technologist
T38 Hybrid	0601 General Health Science/Registered Respiratory Therapist
T38 Hybrid	0601 General Health Science/Therapeutic Medical Physicist
T38 Hybrid	0620 Practical Nurse
T38 Hybrid	0621 Nursing Assistant
T38 Hybrid	0630 Dietitian and Nutritionist
T38 Hybrid	0631 Occupational Therapist
T38 Hybrid	0633 Physical Therapist
T38 Hybrid	0635 Corrective Therapist
T38 Hybrid	0636 Rehabilitation Therapy Assistant/Occupational Therapy Assistant
T38 Hybrid	0636 Rehabilitation Therapy Assistant/Physical Therapy Assistant
T38 Hybrid	0640 Health Aid and Technician/Certified Respiratory Therapist
T38 Hybrid	0644 Medical Technologist
T38 Hybrid	0647 Diagnostic Radiologic Technologist
T38 Hybrid	0648 Therapeutic Radiologic Technologist
T38 Hybrid	0649 Medical Instrument Technician
T38 Hybrid	0660 Pharmacist
T38 Hybrid	0661 Pharmacy Technician
T38 Hybrid	0665 Speech Pathology and Audiology
T38 Hybrid	0667 Orthotist and Prosthetist
T38 Hybrid	0669 Medical Records Administration
T38 Hybrid	0672 Prosthetic Representative
T38 Hybrid	0675 Medical Records Technician
T38 Hybrid	0679 Medical Support Assistance
T38 Hybrid	0681 Dental Assistant
T38 Hybrid	0682 Dental Hygiene

Attachment 2: Veterans Health Administration
List of Hiring Freeze Exempted Occupations
As of: January 27, 2017

Hiring Authority	Series and Occupation
T38 Hybrid	0858 Biomedical Engineering
T5	0018 Safety and Occupational Health Management
T5	0060 Chaplain
T5	0081 Fire Protection and Prevention
T5	0083 Police
T5	0085 Security Guard
T5	0089 Emergency Management
T5	0181 Psychology Aid and Technician
T5	0186 Social Services Aid and Assistant
T5	0187 Social Services
T5	0188 Recreation Specialist
T5	0189 Recreation Aid and Assistant
T5	0405 Pharmacology
T5	0413 Physiology
T5	0601 Health Science Specialist - Veterans Crisis Line
T5	0622 Medical Supply Aide and Technician
T5	0636 Rehabilitation Therapy Assistant (Title 5)
T5	0638 Recreation/Creative Arts Therapist
T5	0640 Health Aid and Technician (Title 5)
T5	0642 Nuclear Medicine Technician
T5	0645 Medical Technician
T5	0646 Pathology Technician
T5	0651 Respiratory Therapist
T5	0670 Health System Administration - Medical Center Director
T5	0673 Hospital Housekeeping Management
T5	0690 Industrial Hygiene
T5	0683 Dental Laboratory Aid and Technician
T5	0698 Environmental Health Technician
T5	0962 Contact Representative
T5	3566 Housekeeping Aid
T5	5026 Pest Controller
T5	7304 Laundry Worker
T5	7408 Food Service Worker

Attachment 3 - Major Construction
List of Hiring Freeze Exempted Occupations
As of: January 27, 2017

Hiring Authority	Series and Occupation
T5	0340 - Project Manager
T5	0800 - Professional Engineer
T5	1102 - Contracting Officer
T5	1170 - Realty Specialist

Attachment 4 - National Cemetary Administation
List of Hiring Freeze Exempted Occupations
As of: January 27, 2017

Hiring Authority	Series and Occupation
T5	0303- Cemetery Representative
T5	0303- Program Support Assistant (AO) (Scheduling Office Only) ¹
T5	1630 - Cemetery Administrator
T5	3502 - Laborer
T5	4701 - Operations Supervisor
T5	4749 - Maintenance Mechanic
T5	4754 - Cemetery Caretaker / Foreman
T5	5026 - Pest Control
T5	5352 - Industrial Equip Mechanic
T5	5703 - Motor Vehicle Operator
T5	5705 - Tractor Operator
T5	5716 - Engineering Eqpt Operator
T5	5803 - Heavy Mobile Equip Mech
T5	5806 - Mobile Equipment Service
T5	5823 - Automotive Mechanic
T5	6904 - Tools And Parts Attendant
T5	6907 - Materials Handler

¹Only the Program Support Assistants that Determine Burial Eligibility and Schedule Burials