

**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