VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Tier 1 Graphic Standards:

Foundation for Brand Maintenance and Evolution

Version 1.0 August 2012

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Introduction

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Tier 1 Graphic Standards showcases major elements of the VA brand identity system and provides guidelines for their correct use in creating new components of the VA brand identity. The purpose of establishing a brand identity is to create more accessible communication products which are well designed and consistently provide clear and accurate information to Veterans about VA benefits and services.

As outreach and communications efforts continue to grow, VA must project a strong, consistent identity to further shape the way Veterans, their families, and other constituents view VA. This authoritative resource has been formed accordingly, organizing the presentation of core brand attributes to improve overall confidence in VA and better assert its value in the marketplace. Careful observance and compliance with these guidelines is critical in conveying VA progress and relevance, and contributes to distinguishing VA as the primary and essential organization serving Veterans in the U.S. Employing this guidance ensures that approval processes for ongoing creative for communications and outreach are more efficient, and the output more effective.

Within this document are both set requirements which cannot be altered, as well as inspirational guidelines providing creative flexibility for more original interpretations. For design ease and brand consistency, key elements such as the VA Signature are provided as accompaniments to this document as ready-to-use images in various electronic formats, (EPS, JPG, etc.) eliminating the need for font matching, color selection and Identifier construction.

This document is the solely-approved standard graphic identity guide for VA, authorized by the Office of the Secretary. It is to be used to mark all programs, projects, initiatives, campaigns, activities, and public communications that require Department identification. Always use the provided files, and never attempt to recreate or modify the fixed VA Seal or VA Signature options.

Absolutes: Essential and Unchangeable Elements of the VA Brand

This document is intended to illustrate not only the basic brand tenets of the VA identity, but to inspire a wide range of creative design options that fit within a cohesive family. With this in mind, there are some elements that are not to be modified.

Pages six through 42 delineate core brand attributes which may not be altered or rearranged (with the exception of specific name/contact information needed on stationery items). Primarily, these refer to the VA Seal and Signatures, which are provided in a number of ready-to-use electronic formats, and within pre-designed templates.

Neither the VA Seal, Signature, nor Administration and Office Level Identifier arrangements should ever be recreated manually (using only the provided templates), or altered in any way. On page seven, you will see the approved template options—including horizontal and stacked, as well as an array of full-color and one-color options—which represent the only approved versions of this key brand component.

Organizational Identifiers

The most crucial element of the VA Tier 1 Graphic Standards is the system by which VA identifies itself and its organizational components to public and Veteran audiences. This document therefore establishes required combinations of the VA Seal and accompanying naming text—called “Signatures”—in order to ensure clear communication of the VA brand across the entire Department. The following section illustrates approved Signature arrangements for use in all creative for materials where the Department seal is used.

Also addressed is the important issue of legacy VA Identifiers. The stylized, illustrated VA “logo”—competing with the VA Seal for brand relevance—should no longer appear in general VA communications and should only be used for challenging sizes and surfaces such as in signage, small giveaways, etc. The newly established VA Parent Signature—which also incorporates a newly illustrated VA Seal, shown on page 10—must be the dominant Identifier of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs both to minimize confusion and emphasize the fact that VA is a U.S. Federal Government Cabinet-level agency.

The VA Parent Signature must appear in an approved prescribed form on all VA materials. Each approved VA Parent Signature is provided in a number of ready-to-use electronic formats, and within pre-designed templates. Official Signature options are provided in the VA Brand Graphics Repository and must never be recreated manually, or altered in any way.

The VA Parent Signature

In order to facilitate progress in the way VA presents itself, build public confidence, and assure its relevance to both public and Veteran audiences, The Office of the Secretary has commissioned the new VA Parent Signature to return focus to the core VA brand, with the VA Seal featured as the primary element and naming text for optimal readability.

More than just a "logo," the VA Parent Signature is a combination of elements comprising the essence of the VA brand identity.

The VA Signature is comprised of four elements:

1. **"VA" lettering, rapidly identifying VA by its well-known acronym**
2. **Vertical divider rule**
3. **The timeless, uncompromised VA Seal**
4. **"U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs" title typography for optimal readability at smaller sizes**

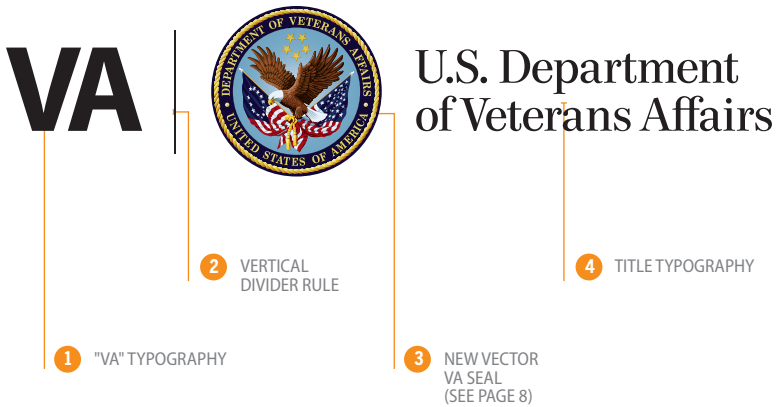
The VA Signature is the core design element around which the brand is created. It focuses exclusively on the VA Seal, and introduces title text which appears in a timelessly elegant but warm and approachable serif font.

The horizontal VA Signature shown below is the primary version and should be used whenever possible. However, in some instances a vertically-stacked VA Parent Signature option may be necessary for more narrow, vertical brochures, ads, banners, etc. As with all VA Parent Identifiers, this arrangement is provided in a variety of electronic file formats (EPS, JPG, etc.) and should not be recreated, rearranged or distorted in any way.

Ready-to-use VA Signatures are available in the VA Brand Graphics Repository.

Important:
The designs shown at right are set layouts which are not to be rearranged or re-proportioned. They are provided as ready-to-use, indivisible graphics in various electronic formats, (EPS, JPG, etc.) eliminating the need for font matching and component arrangement. Always use the provided files, and never attempt to recreate the VA Seal or Signature.

Anatomy of the VA Parent Signature



Stacked VA Parent Signature



Download Signature templates from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

VA Parent Signature: Color Options

The options on this page show approved color applications and arrangements for both full-color and one-color versions of the VA Parent Signature. The one-color version is mostly to be used for one- or two-color printing. In such scenarios, the one-color VA Parent Signature must be printed in either all VA Navy (see page 18) or all black. In such cases where black is the only color being applied, the 100% black version of the VA Signature should be used.

The approved full-color VA Parent Signature (horizontal or stacked) is to be printed in all full-color printing applications, and must be placed on an appropriate background color or suitably solid area of a given image or appropriate imagery. For consistent presentation—a critical component of maintaining brand integrity—do not alter these prescribed options in any way, including color density (tints or gradients), arrangements, etc.

Download Signature templates from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

Special vector PDF options are supplied for one- or two-color printing, which provide sufficient Seal contrast. For such projects, the VA Signature should only be printed in black or VA Navy on white—or very light—backgrounds; or reversed as shown on this page.

Full-Color Printing

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

One- or Two-Color Printing

In certain situations, it may be determined that inclusion of "VA" next to the Seal as shown right is not optimal for a given layout, and that an abbreviated Signature (shown below) would be more appropriate for the overall design.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA Administration & Office Identifiers: Distractions from Brand Clarity

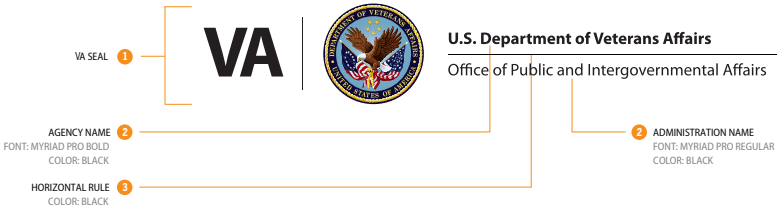
This page shows an array of past VA Sub-Identifiers that appear as individualized identities or initiatives, each with an unclear connection to VA. Although the design quality and executions exhibited in many such marks are strong, the collective visual presence of such branding diversity does little to convey affiliation with VA. This condition creates unnecessary obstacles for communicating VA involvement, unity, and relevance—leaving viewers to wonder how and where each fits with VA and how much each is relevant to their future. This illustration demonstrates the certain need for VA communicators and participating creative professionals to support VA in establishing standards for basic brand appropriateness. It is of utmost importance to clearly and immediately identify VA affiliation in all components of Administration and Office level outreach and communications. Programs, initiatives, services, and resource groups should clearly establish VA authority in the minds of Veterans and their families seeking earned benefits and services, as well as public, legislative and media constituents for efficient navigation of the VA organization and greater understanding of its strengths and accomplishments.



VA Administration & Office-Level Identifiers: Format Solutions for Unison

The following format solutions—appropriate alternatives to creating unnecessary departmental “logos” or “sub-brands”—show how all divisions of VA are to be identified using a single unified formula. Below are the sole approved template-based treatments for both Administration and inter-office identification. These format settings are required for use in identifying all segments of VA in order to eliminate undue Veteran confusion from "logo clutter" in communications and outreach vehicles. This solution provides clear and exact information on which Administration and Office is providing a given message, eliminating the distraction brought on by visually randomly devised organizational Identifiers.

Administration Level Signatures: Horizontal and Stacked Versions



VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Benefits Administration

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
National Cemetery Administration

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Benefits Administration

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
National Cemetery Administration

Example Inter-office or Program Signatures

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Health Information

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Health Information

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Health Information

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Health Information

Download Signature templates from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

See pages 46-49 on best practices for creating Sub-Identifiers for special programs, events, etc.

VA Seal: New Scalable Vector Rendering

Download Seal varieties from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

The original Official VA Seal was created in 1989 to represent the newly established Department of Veterans Affairs, converted in 1988 from the Veterans Administration. Its regally distinguished rendering respectfully reflects the VA mission and esteemed Cabinet-level status within the U.S. Federal Government. This symbol purely and effectively represents the core essence of the VA brand with timeless and stately illustration and colorization techniques. In maintaining a proper VA brand image, consistent quality and appearance in all reproductions of the VA Seal is paramount.

Bitmap-formatted files (.JPG, .TIF, .GIF, etc.) present inherent challenges in both enlargement, with significant image degradation, and placement in certain publishing formats with surrounding white boxes without proper masking. Therefore, vector-formatted files (.AI, .EPS and vector .PDFs) are used ubiquitously for identifier files in most major brands. Given that, a vector illustration was created in the past to address this need and has been commonly used for some time. However, the colorization and rendering style are not deemed adequately similar to the official original Seal, and a new vector rendering has been created to replace it.

This new, accurately-depicted version of the VA Seal provides all of the image quality, visual consistency, scalability, and flexibility needed by creative and communications professionals in achieving the highest visual quality standards. It replaces the previously used version and is recommended for use in all print applications of the VA Seal. Use of a bitmap (i.e., JPG) version of this new Seal illustration is encouraged for use in presentation formats, such as Microsoft™ Office® products, for smaller document files sizes (the complex nature of this vector illustration adds approximately 2MB for each appearance).

Absolutely NO changes to the new vector Seal are permitted.

Official Primary Bitmap VA Seal



ZOOM IN FOR COMPARISON

Newly Rendered Primary Vector VA Seal



ZOOM IN FOR COMPARISON

Retired Vector VA Seal



VA Seal: Approved Seal Source File Review

The files below are the official electronic versions of the VA Seal. These files are provided as the principle component of the complete VA Signature (with "U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs" naming text) in a variety of formats and rendering styles so one can select the version that best fits the many varied reproduction situations that must be met with appropriate branding source files. **Carefully note the differences between each available format option shown below.**

Use these source files to incorporate into your artwork, scaling them as necessary. The Seal designated by asterisks below should always be the first options considered for common print and web uses respectively. The other designs are provided for specific situations as described for each.

Primary VA Seal: Full-Color



*** Newly rendered version of Seal in scalable vector file format.**
This Seal (almost indistinguishable from the official original version as shown on the previous page) is to be used for all forms of full-color printing.

Vector-formatted files are infinitely scalable without image degradation or inconsistent output and are ideal for all forms of printed materials, display panels, banners, motor vehicles, etc. on surfaces which do not detract from image quality and consistency at the size to be printed.

In order to achieve minimum file sizes when using Signatures with the full-color vector Seal (i.e., for online or email dissemination of PDF or Microsoft® Office® files), it is recommended that the officially-prepared, optimized PDF versions be used.



*** Bitmap version of new Seal illustration.**
A bitmap (pixel-based) version of the new Seal illustration is also available in the VA brand graphics repository for use when file size, rather than scalability, is an issue.

Although this format has very limited enlargement capabilities, it is ideal for use in web/screen uses, in internal communications programs such as Microsoft™ Office®.

NOTE: Each time you re-scale a file that is in bitmap format, you lose detail and image quality in the artwork. Always start with the highest resolution source file to create newly-sized bitmap files—preferably convert the new vector Seal illustration slightly larger than the size needed.

Image quality varies with bitmap imagery due to the amount of compression and optimization applied in order to reduce file size (the Seal shown above left was heavily optimized in the creation of this PDF).

VA Seal: One-Color





Use ONLY for printing the Seal in one solid ink color—VA Navy, black or knocked out white only, see page eight— on a high contrast background color.

The vector format allows for unlimited scaling without any image deterioration, and is intended for use primarily in one-color printed materials, or in full-color materials which are flooded with color to the point where the presence and/or readability of the full-color Seal would be diminished.

This Seal version is well suited for use on items such as signage, banners, ad specialties, screen printing, etc. or in one- or two-color printing. It is not intended for use or as any sort of background or "watermark."

Given the small file size of these one-color versions of the Seal, there should be no need to convert from vector to bitmap for file size reduction.

Download Seal varieties from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

VA Seal: Retired Seals & Logo

No further use of the Legacy Identifiers shown on this page is permitted.

The Official VA Seal—regal, honorable and exuding strong authority—is deemed the core of the VA visual brand. It is lasting, well-known and unchangeable. It adequately and appropriately conveys VA's status as a Cabinet-level agency. Proper use of the new VA Parent Signature will lay a strong foundation for a timeless visual identity that more accurately represents a modern and unified U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Appropriate, consistent reproduction of the Official VA Seal (in both full- and one-color) is critical for instant recognition, and any renderings appearing noticeably different or unbalanced must be retired. Below are example Seal renderings, and Legacy Logotype, in circulation which are no longer approved for any sort of use. If you have these files on your computer, it is advised that you delete them and obtain the newly updated and approved files for optimal brand consistency.

Retired VA Seals:





Legacy "Vector" (scalable) Full-color Seal

The colorization and rendering style in this legacy vector version of the VA Seal is no longer deemed adequately similar to the official Seal. A new vector rendering has been created to replace it for more consistent color and composition. Please use the newly developed vector version of the Official VA Seal shown on page 10.

Legacy "Vector" (scalable) One-color Seal Options

The above one-color variations of the VA Seal have been replaced with a single, re-colorized version which has been updated to reproduce more cleanly and visually balanced at all sizes. The approved new one-color vector VA Seal required for use is shown on the previous page.

Retired VA Logotype:

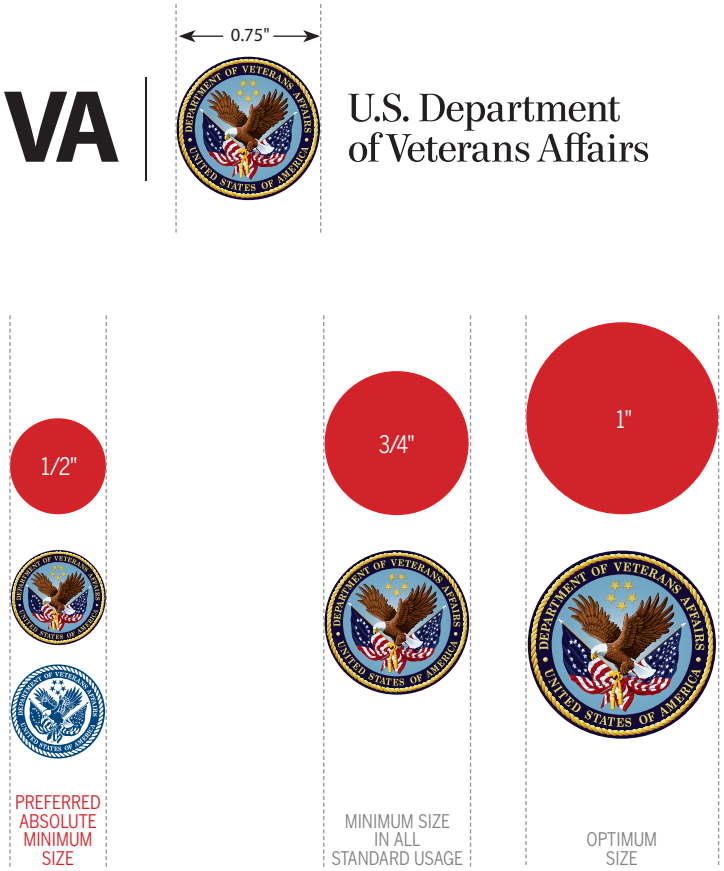


Legacy One-color VA "Logotype"

The illustrated legacy VA "Logotype" shown above should no longer be used in any circumstances (except limited applications to signage, per the VA signage standards manual). Its stylized design does not incorporate the VA Seal, the core of the VA visual brand. Widely used throughout VA branding and communication design in lieu of the VA Seal, the VA "Logotype" was originally designed for use when VA was an Administration-level agency several decades ago. Its heavily distinct and dated illustration style evokes a bygone time when this graphic look was popular and ubiquitous, and it is reminiscent of an era prior to many significant advancements in VA technology, operations, status, and public perception.

VA Seal: Minimum Size Usage

Preferred Minimum VA Signature Size in General Usage



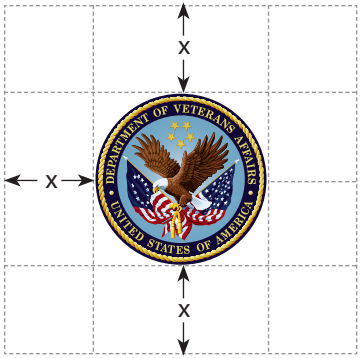
To retain the visual integrity of the VA Parent Signature, the VA Seal should never be reduced to smaller than 0.75" x 0.75", with the title typography no smaller in relative proportion.

The illustration at left shows the preferred minimum size for the VA Parent Signature and how it is measured.

The VA Parent Signature should be reduced to its minimum size only when absolutely necessary when used in the smallest applications or formats. Detail in the VA Seal becomes lost when the Signature is greatly reduced, particularly the lettering.

The Signature is provided in various electronic formats (EPS, JPG, etc.) and should not be recreated or distorted in any way. It has been designed to accommodate standard applications and page sizes, and is included in the corresponding templates for your convenience.

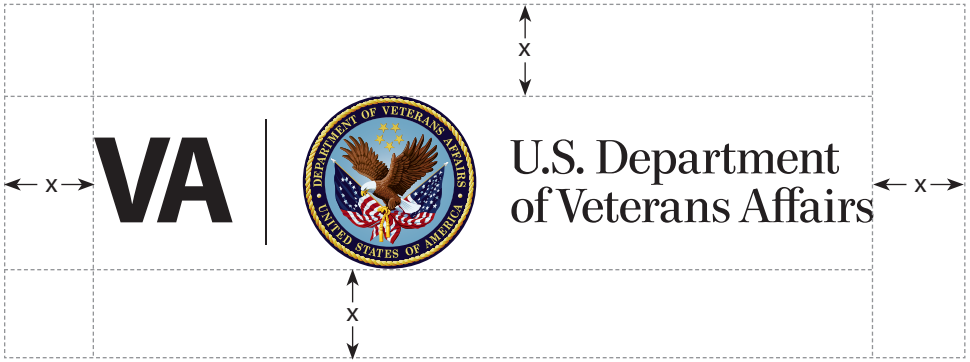
VA Seal/Parent Signature: Minimum Clear Space



"X" illustrates the minimum amount of clear space that should be used around the Seal and typography at all times.

A specified clear space ensures the integrity and impact of the VA Seal and Signatures. It is important that enough space is maintained around the logo to clearly convey the identity without competition.

A space equal to half of the height of the VA Seal should be maintained around the entire VA Parent Signature.



VA Seal/Parent Signature: Incorrect Usage

The following restrictions are in accordance with those originally provided for the VA Seal at http://vaww4.va.gov/6102/seals.asp. In addition, the only correct configurations of the New VA Parent Signature are as shown on pages seven, eight and ten—horizontal or stacked formats, either in full-color or one-color solid VA Navy or black (see these colors on page 18). No other color combination is allowed for the reproduction of the New VA Parent Signature under any circumstances, nor is the omission of any Parent Signature element. A few typical incorrect examples are shown below.

1 Never use the VA Seal/Parent Signature at an opacity less than 100% or use it as a faint "watermark" behind text.

2 Never overlay any graphic/element/type onto the VA Seal/Parent Signature.

3 Never alter or replace the text in the VA Seal/Parent Signature.

4 Never alter any element of the VA Seal/Parent Signature, such as substituting logos.

5 Never apply effects to the VA Seal/Parent Signature, such as simulated embossing or altering colors.

6 Never add drop shadows to the VA Seal/Parent Signature.

1



2



3



4



5



6



VA Seal/Parent Signature: Incorrect Usage

CONTINUED

7 Never reposition or re-proportion elements of the VA Signature.

8 Never skew, rotate, distort, or otherwise alter elements.

9 Never blur or ghost VA Signature elements, or apply any type of digital effects.

10 Never place the VA Signature over a distracting photographic image.

11 Never omit elements/words from the VA Signature.

12 Never alter or substitute VA Signature fonts.

13 Never use the one-color VA Signature on a dark background without converting the type and rule to white.

14 Never use the full-color VA Signature on a dark background without converting the type and rule to white.

15 Never reverse/invert the one-color VA Signature.



7



8



9



10



11



12



13



14



15

Color

Appropriate use of color is key in establishing brand identity. The established primary colors on page 18 set the tone, while a family of secondary accent colors on pages 19–20 can be applied as to divide and code information, punctuate layouts, and provide adequate diversity in the look of VA corporate communication vehicles. Used discretely and consistently, these top-level color sets will complement an array of other fixed corporate brand elements and suitable photography, provide contrast in layouts and create visual patterns necessary for VA brand recognition and unity.

In all color usage for corporate-level communications, screens/tints of both blues should be used very sparingly, and reds should only be used at full saturation to avoid appearing pink. Effects such as gradients and tints should be applied sparingly, as not to overpower the layout or draw attention from the VA brand.

Within VA there is substantial variation in the audiences and objectives pursued by individual stakeholders, and additional considerations have been given to facilitate creative expression which would otherwise be inappropriate for corporate-level communications. Therefore, color usage in Sub-Divisional campaigns and initiatives provides more flexibility through a broader selection of color ranges. These are for qualified creative professionals to use as a design element that allows greater individuality. When in doubt though, following the Primary and Secondary corporate-level colors is always a brand-safe option.

For guidelines on appropriate color with typography, see pages 29 through 31, photography on page 38 and general design on pages 51 through 69.

Color: VA Primary Brand Colors

The following Primary Brand Colors have been established to aide in maintaining a consistent VA brand identity. They reflect the colors used in the New VA Signature, provide ample contrast on the page, and engage the viewer with positivity and patriotism.

These colors can be effectively used as type and/or solid fields of color—see pages 29 through 31 for guidelines on appropriate color typography usage. The main VA Brand color is VA Navy. Reds should be used leanly as accent and trim—too much red can be overly distracting.

Using the Primary Brand Color palette helps to establish and strengthen the VA brand. Don't forget to bring them into your designs.



SPOT COLOR
PMS 541 C
PMS 541 U

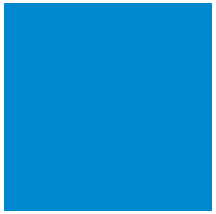
4-COLOR PROCESS
DS 206-1 C
C = 100
M = 60
Y = 0
K = 40

DS 209-1 U
C = 100
M = 50
Y = 0
K = 20

ON SCREEN
R = 0
G = 63
B = 114

WEB
Hex
003F72

LIGHT BLUE



SPOT COLOR
PMS 7461 C
PMS 2995 U

4-COLOR PROCESS
DS 221-2 C
C = 100
M = 30
Y = 0
K = 0

DS 225-3 U
C = 100
M = 10
Y = 0
K = 0

ON SCREEN
R = 0
G = 131
B = 190

WEB
Hex
0083BE

RED



SPOT COLOR
PMS 1797 C
PMS 1797 U

4-COLOR PROCESS
DS 77-1 C
C = 10
M = 100
Y = 100
K = 0

DS 90-1 U
C = 100
M = 80
Y = 0
K = 0

ON SCREEN
R = 198
G = 38
B = 46

WEB
Hex
C4262E

DARK RED



SPOT COLOR
PMS 188 C
PMS188 U

4-COLOR PROCESS
DS 106-1 C
C = 30
M = 100
Y = 70
K = 30

DS 93-1 U
C = 0
M = 100
Y = 80
K = 40

ON SCREEN
R = 119
G = 36
B = 50

WEB
Hex
772432

C=Coated U=Uncoated

Color: VA Secondary Brand Colors

In addition to the VA Primary Brand Colors illustrated on page 18, the following VA Secondary Brand Colors may be used sparingly for accents and tones, and are ideal in more creative applications. For an even wider range of creative colors, see page 20.

GREEN

SPOT COLOR
PMS 575 C
PMS 575 U

4-COLOR PROCESS
DS 297-1 C
C = 50
M = 0
Y = 100
K = 40

DS 305-3 U
C = 25
M = 0
Y = 95
K = 35

ON SCREEN
R = 89
G = 133
B = 39

WEB
Hex
598527

GOLD

SPOT COLOR
PMS 129 C
PMS 128 U

4-COLOR PROCESS
DS 5-4 C
C = 0
M = 10
Y = 100
K = 0

DS 5-4 U
C = 0
M = 10
Y = 100
K = 0

ON SCREEN
R = 243
G = 207
B = 69

WEB
Hex
f3cf45

ORANGE

SPOT COLOR
PMS 1575 C
PMS 1585 U

4-COLOR PROCESS
DS 49-3 C
C = 0
M = 50
Y = 70
K = 0

DS 49-3 U
C = 0
M = 50
Y = 70
K = 0

ON SCREEN
R = 247
G = 149
B = 91

WEB
Hex
f7955b

BLUE GRAY

SPOT COLOR
PMS 7544 C
PMS 7545 U

4-COLOR PROCESS
DS 327-6 C
C = 10
M = 0
Y = 0
K = 50

DS 327-4 U
C = 20
M = 0
Y = 0
K = 70

ON SCREEN
R = 131
G = 144
B = 151

WEB
Hex
839097

LIGHT GRAY

SPOT COLOR
PMS Cool Gray 3 C
PMS Cool Gray 3 U

4-COLOR PROCESS
DS 325-8 C
C = 0
M = 0
Y = 0
K = 15

DS 326-8 U
C = 20
M = 10
Y = 15
K = 0

ON SCREEN
R = 220
G = 221
B = 222

WEB
Hex
dcddde

SAND

SPOT COLOR
PMS 4525 C
PMS 4525 U

4-COLOR PROCESS
DS 26-8 C
C = 10
M = 15
Y = 35
K = 0

DS 49-3 U
C = 0
M = 7
Y = 39
K = 17

ON SCREEN
R = 194
G = 180
B = 143

WEB
Hex
cccc99

OLIVE

SPOT COLOR
PMS 5777 C
PMS 453 U

4-COLOR PROCESS
DS 312-6 C
C = 5
M = 0
Y = 50
K = 25

DS 312-6 U
C = 5
M = 0
Y = 50
K = 25

ON SCREEN
R = 163
G = 168
B = 107

WEB
Hex
bec292

C=Coated U=Uncoated

Color: VA Extended Palettes

Given that VA communications reach many different audiences for a variety of purposes, this Extended Palette is provided for use in Sub-Divisional campaigns and initiatives. Qualified creative professionals can utilize the colors below to evoke a certain mood or distinguishing colors for multiple-piece products. As well, the Primary and Secondary Palettes shown on the previous two pages are always good to use when in doubt. Please note the characteristic for each grouping of colors, and try to use them within a single piece. In other words, stay within the same color grouping. For hypothetical design examples, see pages 65 through 69.

Don't forget to build the Primary Brand Colors into your design of corporate-level publications.

The Extended Palettes help to create different moods within VA-branded pieces.

VA Deep Tones

PMS 392 C	PMS 132 C	PMS 1405 C
PMS 1265 C	PMS 5835 C	PMS 453 C
PMS 549 C	PMS 7535 C	PMS Cool Gray 11 C
PMS 117 C	PMS 5205 C	PMS 5473 C
PMS 476 C	PMS 3435 C	PMS 471 C
PMS 518 C	PMS 532 C	PMS 466 C

CHARACTERISTICS: earthy, neutral, rich, solid, robust, quiet, experienced, grounded, historic, muted

VA Light Tones

PMS 607 C	PMS 1345 C
PMS 645 C	PMS 7525 C
PMS 2716 C	PMS Warm Gray 3 C
PMS 570 C	PMS 134 C
PMS 7499 C	PMS 310 C
PMS 366 C	PMS 657 C

CHARACTERISTICS: cool, engaging, youthful, feminine, light, airy, soft, muted, cheerful

VA Vibrant Tones

PMS 2725 C	PMS 7406 C
PMS 715 C	PMS 7461 C
PMS Cool Gray 8 C	PMS 104 C
PMS 368 C	PMS Orange 021 C
PMS 312 C	PMS 130 C
PMS 585 C	PMS 1797 C

CHARACTERISTICS: dynamic, bright, energetic, warm, fresh, strong, youthful, focused

Color: Screens & Tints

Colors with sufficient density may occasionally be used at lighter percentages to achieve a softer effect. This is known as screening. Darker colors offer a wider range of screens.

Similarly, darkening a color is known as tinting. In some instances, you may desire to have type and/or design elements appear just a few shades darker than your background color. This effect can be achieved by using a lighter background percentage.

While many colors in the VA Palette can be screened, reds—particularly Red and Dark Red within the VA Primary Brand Colors—should always be used at full saturation to avoid appearing as pink.

The swatches at right illustrate various screens of some of the more common colors in the VA Palette.



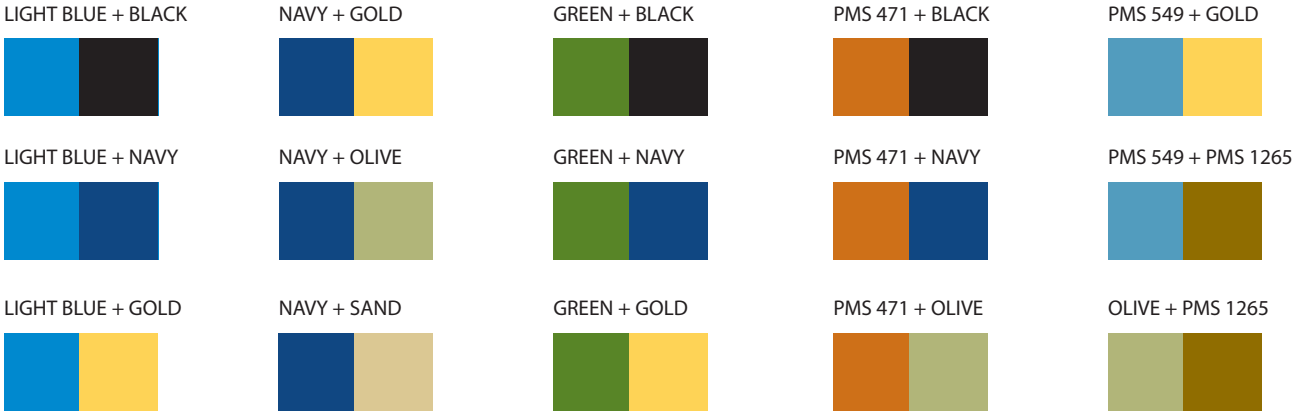
Color: Two-Color Printing

Certain projects may require two-color printing only. Or, perhaps the tone of the project simply warrants a two-color treatment. Ensure that a harmonious pairing of colors is used that allows for sufficient contrast and a range of screen/tint options.

Avoid using red in two-color applications, unless it is used at full density (100%) throughout. Below are some examples of acceptable two-color combinations, as well as some to avoid.

Approved Two-Color Printing Combinations

This is just a small example of acceptable two-color combinations. Explore the possibilities and find a set that suits your project. See page 20 for an expanded palette that includes VA Deep Tones and VA Light Tones for even more variations.



Incorrect Two-Color Printing Combinations

Avoid combinations that lack adequate or appropriate contrast.



Typography

The typography of the VA brand identity can be broken down into two basic categories: general body text and title/accent text. In most instances, general body text should be set in Myriad Pro, as shown in pages 24 through 25. This typeface includes a number of different weights, including condensed fonts which will ensure clean, legible text in your documents.

Title/Accent text is to be set in Georgia, as shown in pages 26 through 27. This elegant serif font provides contrast to the general sans serif body text, and conveys a modern yet traditional look and feel.

Occasionally, a layout may require a serif font for body text. In these cases, Georgia can be used instead of Myriad Pro without compromising the brand. Similarly, Myriad Pro can be used occasionally for title/accent text when a more progressive tone is required. See pages 52 through 69 for example design with proper typographical applications.

It is understood that many users (particularly non-creatives) may not have access to Myriad Pro. In these cases an alternate sans serif font, Calibri, (commonly available on PCs) may be used instead—or, Georgia may be used throughout. See page 28 for full information on typography for non-graphics professionals, as well as important notes on use in Microsoft® Office®.

The goal of branded fonts is to maintain simple, straightforward layouts. Pages 32 through 33 provide examples of ways not to use type. Never rotate, skew, manipulate, or add dropshadows or outlines. For more layout options using color, see pages 29 through 31. For grid versatility see the Design Inspirations section, beginning on page 43.

Typography: General Body Text

Myriad Pro Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 (~!@#$%^&*}

Myriad Pro Italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 (~!@#$%^&}*

Myriad Pro Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 (~!@#$%^&*}

All fonts used by personnel creating communication vehicles for VA must be properly licensed. The Myriad Pro font family is bundled with Adobe® creative products but licensing limitations apply. All users are required to reference their respective Adobe licensing agreement to ensure proper usage. Any illegal or unauthorized usage of any fonts or other such intellectual property is strictly prohibited.

Proper and consistent application of typography to all VA vehicles of communication is paramount in conveying both legible and clear messaging and providing brand recognition. The typographical personality inherent in the approved fonts, in their pure and unaltered forms, must be continually repeated across a span of pieces in order to preserve their contribution as identifiable brand characteristics.

Myriad Pro is the typeface for use in all communications from VA. Examples of these fonts are shown at left. The Myriad Pro family is very versatile and provides excellent legibility in both print and digital media, and is readily available for both PCs and Macs.

Myriad Pro Regular—with Myriad Pro Bold and Myriad Pro Italic for emphasis within text—should be used for all general body text in both print and on-screen communications in most situations. It can also be used occasionally for headlines and/or display copy when a sans serif font is more desirable than Georgia, seen on page 26. Several examples of suggested Myriad Pro headline treatments appear on pages 65 through 69.

Typography: General Body Text

CONTINUED

Myriad Pro Condensed

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 (~!@#$%^&*}

Myriad Pro Condensed Italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 (~!@#$%^&}*

Myriad Pro Bold Condensed

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 (~!@#$%^&*}

Myriad Pro Bold Condensed Italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 (~!@#$%^&*}

In some instances, a condensed font is necessary due to limited space, excess copy, and/or narrow column width. The Myriad Pro Condensed font family can be used in these cases, but should not be the first option. Whenever possible, use the standard non-condensed fonts.

Although the specific weights and thicknesses shown on these two pages are generally preferred, the entire Myriad Pro font family is approved for use as well.

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Typography: Title/Accent Text

Georgia Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 (~!@#$%^&*}

Georgia Italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 (~!@#$%^&}*

Georgia

Georgia should typically be used for titles and accent text. This serif font includes Regular, Italic, Bold, and Bold Italic. Georgia Regular and Italic will likely be most used.

In most instances, the lighter weights (Georgia Regular and Georgia Italic) should be used.

While body copy is ideally to be set in Myriad Pro (see pages 24 through 25), there may be some instances when a serif font is simply more appropriate for certain sections of body copy. When necessary, Georgia may be used as well.

Typography:
Title/Accent Text

CONTINUED

Georgia Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890 (~!@#$%^&*}

Georgia Bold Italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890 (~!@#$%^&*}

Georgia Bold & Bold Italic

Use Georgia Bold and Bold Italic sparingly for additional emphasis. In most instances, use the lighter weights shown on page 26.

Typography: Non-Graphics Professionals & Microsoft® Product Usage

Myriad Pro fonts are stipulated for use by all creative and graphics professionals in creating all offset-printed and publicly-distributed communication vehicles (pages 23 through 24). However, in light of the fact that most business professionals will not have ready access to Myriad Pro fonts—which are more ubiquitous in the creative industry—VA will require all future internal and presentation materials (i.e., Microsoft® Word® and PowerPoint® documents created by non-graphics professionals) to be created using the more universally available PC font family, Calibri, wherever sans serif font usage is desired.

Calibri, like Georgia, is a font family actually built into most PC operating systems which provides the ability for document authors to create typographical contrasts for accent purposes such as captions, subheads, call-outs, and so on. However, please note that in such communications Georgia remains the preferred primary font for use in main titles and headlines (as it appears more formal and stately at larger sizes). Body text may be rendered in either Georgia or Calibri per the document creator's discretion—sans serifs convey a more modern or technical feel, while serifs connote a more conservative and official feel.

These requirements both help to ensure that most everyone has immediate access to needed fonts, and facilitates consistent viewing of a given piece by all recipients (i.e., text is less likely to re-flow, distort or disappear). For these reasons, Myriad Pro is NOT to be used for any presentations or internal communications which are intended to be distributed, viewed and/or edited in Microsoft® Word® and PowerPoint®, even if the original author has a licensed copy of Myriad Pro on their work station.

Georgia Bold and Regular (as well as an all-caps title option) are shown in the approved new main PowerPoint® intro slide template (right).



Calibri Font Family

ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 (~!@#$%^&*}

Note: Myriad Pro fonts have been replaced in Microsoft®-based templates because they are not part of the fonts that come with the PC Operating System. Please use Calibri instead so that viewing/editing does not require the download of Myriad Pro.

Typography: Appropriate Color Usage

Secondary colors should be used sparingly. Whenever possible, Navy, Light Blue, Red and Dark Red should be your first option.

Approved colors for title/headline/call-out text on white background:



Navy | Light Blue | Red | Dark Red | Black



Green | Orange | Blue Gray

Approved colors for title/headline/call-out text on dark background/photo:



Light Blue | Red | Gold | Light Gray | White

Approved colors for title/headline/call-out text on gray background/photo:



Dark Blue | Gold | White

White type should be used on backgrounds of dark VA colors:



This page shows preferred colors for special sections or headlines in a number of different situations. Colors should be high-contrast to ensure readability, and should always utilize the VA color palette.

Consistent, appropriate use of color in typography is integral to maintaining a recognizable brand across a body of communication vehicles.

See page 20 for an expanded palette of approved colors, including Deep Tones and Light Tones, which may be used sparingly. Follow the same basic guidelines that are illustrated here for optimal contrast: dark colors should only appear on light backgrounds, and light colors should only appear on dark backgrounds.

Typography: Appropriate Color Usage

CONTINUED

Body text that is not on a color background should appear in 100% black or Navy.

Examples of general body text:

Lorem ipsum dolar sit amet, consect-etuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volupat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy euisolutpat.

Black on White (positive)

Lorem ipsum dolar sit amet, consect-etuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volupat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy euisolutpat.

White on Black (reversed)

Lorem ipsum dolar sit amet, consect-etuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volupat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy euisolutpat.

White on Navy

Lorem ipsum dolar sit amet, consect-etuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volupat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy euisolutpat.

White on Light Blue

Lorem ipsum dolar sit amet, consect-etuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volupat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy euisolutpat.

White on Red

Lorem ipsum dolar sit amet, consect-etuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volupat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy euisolutpat.

White on Dark Red

One- or Two-Color Printing

Certain print projects may require one- or two-color printing only. In these cases, general body text color must be either Black or Navy, or reversed to white.

Lorem ipsum dolar sit amet, consect-etuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore.

Navy on White (positive)

Lorem ipsum dolar sit amet, consect-etuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore.

White on Navy (reversed)

This page displays approved color applications for type used as **general body text** on various background colors in the VA palette. Body text should typically appear in either 100% Black or Navy, or reversed to White.

Because body text typically appears between 10pt. and 12pt. weights, thin strokes may not reproduce properly if the type color lacks contrast. For this reason, only Black, Navy or White type should be used for general body text to provide adequate contrast—in both hue and density—against the background on which it appears.

If the background color is sufficiently dark, (see examples at left) body text should be reversed to white. On lighter backgrounds, use Black or Navy body text.

Body text should be no smaller than 10pt., particularly if reversed to White, which typically makes the type appear smaller.

POSITIVE TEXT (NON-REVERSED):
One- to two-color body text color(s) should be Black or Navy.

FULL-COLOR PRINTING:
Body text color should be Black or reversed to White.

Typography: Appropriate Color Usage

CONTINUED

Examples of call-out text:

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat duis aute irure dolor.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat duis aute irure dolor.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat duis aute irure dolor.

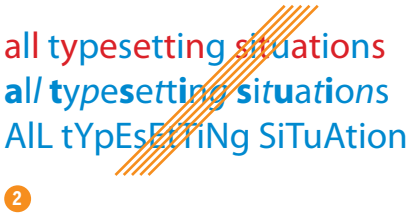
Call-out text may often dictate additional colors from the extended VA Palette. Because call-outs inherently consist of larger, bolder letterforms, lighter colors can safely be used. The examples at right show call-out text in Blue Gray, Light Blue, and Olive, respectively.

See pages 17 through 22 for a complete range of color options and guidance.

Typography: Incorrect Applications



1



2



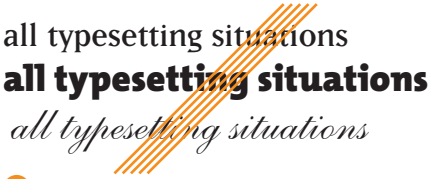
3



4



5



6

1 Never set type to overlap a color/photo edge or on top of a distracting texture.

2 Never vary character weights or styles.

3 Never expand or contract character spacing in body text. Sparingly, smaller heads or subheads may be set in all caps (non-bold, non-italic) and tracked open to a max of 30.

4 Never apply any sort of garish effect to type, such as outlines, dropshadows, or gradients.

5 Never expand or contract character width or height, and never slant/skew type.

6 Never use any unapproved typefaces.

Avoid over-designing. Maintain simplicity in designs and allow the interaction between consistent typography and photography usage to convey the recognizable "feel" of VA materials. The visual personality of VA is clean, graphic lines supported by strong imagery. Keep pages and spreads clean of needlessly distracting devices. "Less is more."

Typography must be set without such inappropriate treatments as dropshadowing, outlining, etc., which would both disrupt brand harmony and diminish legibility.

Neither height nor width may ever be expanded, condensed or skewed in any way. Applied colors and color tints to typography must remain solid—without gradation, line patterns, fills, highlights, glow, color/style jumbles, rule borders, edge effects or other interfering motifs. Character spacing (space between characters) for all body text must always be set to zero. Only smaller heads and subheads, set in all caps only, may be tracked open to a maximum of 30—a technique to be used very sparingly.

Use only the approved typefaces: Myriad Pro, Georgia and Calibri. Only the approved colors and fonts in this Graphic Standards Guide are permitted.

Typography: Incorrect Applications

CONTINUED



7



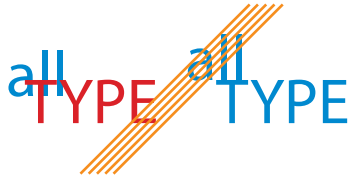
8



9



10



11



12

7 Never apply colors to type that don't provide enough contrast between the font and paper.

8 Never apply colors to type that don't provide enough contrast between the font and background color.

9 Headlines must only be set in approved colors (see page 28) at 100%—never apply shades or tints.

10 Always set type horizontally. Avoid rotating words.

11 Do not overlap type in ways that hinder readability.

12 Never fill characters with imagery, texture, highlights, etc.

Proper font and color usage, as well as artful employment of basic elements of typographical design, such as color/size/weight/style contrasts and layout composition will ensure that the VA brand is always clear and concise.

Type may never be overlapped or connected to form an element of design for basic text and headlines—the exception to this rule is in creating Special Signatures for programs and initiatives (must be used sparingly, cautiously and under authoritative guidance). See the example below for an appropriate use of typography as such a rare and subtly-incorporated design configuration in a national communications initiative (suitable for such treatment).

Healthcare
Beyond
Compare
For America's
Veterans

Do not overlap, rotate or fill any text with a texture or photo. Ensure legibility with appropriate hue/density contrast. See page 64 for an approved example of rotating type.

Design

Design elements consist of photos, color blocks, typography, and linear devices. The VA Graphic Standards system includes a number of ready-to-use elements that allow designers to create products that are visually appealing, strategically balanced, and brand-approved.

Using unapproved design elements—such as fonts, colors, or techniques—weakens the VA brand and undermines audience perception. It is important that designers and VA staff understand these guidelines and adhere to them at all times.

Conventional brand guidelines have long been proven to be highly-effective in founding organizational brand recognition and fostering public trust. VA depends on every creative and non-creative communications professional to help convey a unified VA identity and strengthen respect, confidence, and relevance among the Veteran and public audiences. The VA goals of quality and consistency will be met if all stakeholders earnestly adhere to basic standards.

Design:
Incorrect Applications

1 Do not apply prominent gradients or dropshadows to color shapes. Gradients can be subtly applied to graphics, but not occupy more than 25% of the page. See page 46 and 66 for more information.

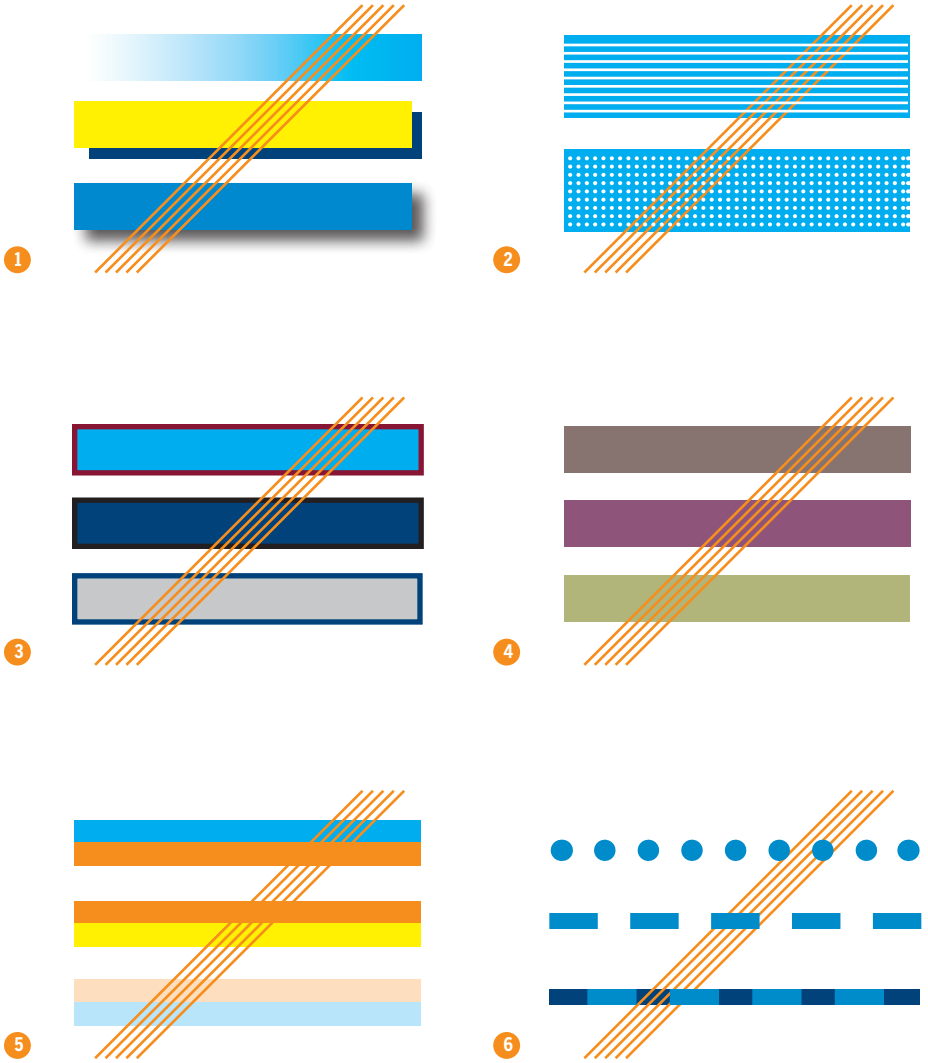
2 Do not apply graphic patterns or textures.

3 Do not add borders or lines around color blocks or photos.

4 Do not add tinted varnishes to printed pieces.

5 Contrasting colors should be next to each other, and they should be visually appealing.

6 Do not use decorative rules or borders.



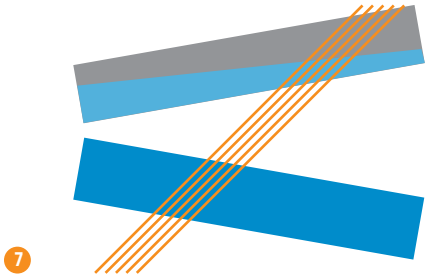
Designs should not include gradients, dropshadows, illustrated textures or patterns, use overly decorative borders or outlines, odd shapes or die-cuts, feathered photo edges, silhouettes, photo or illustration collages, unapproved colors or typography.

Photography and illustration should not be skewed, compressed, disproportionately sized, overlapped with typography or other photos, blended, etc.

Only approved colors should be applied to layouts, and colors should mostly remain solid, with sparing use of tints for subtle effect, and used in conjunction with each other appropriately. Elements of design such as typography, photography and illustration must always be set without such inappropriate and distracting treatments as skewing, condensing, overlapping, blending, feathering, etc. which visually degrade the respectability and credibility of the materials.

Design:
Incorrect Applications

CONTINUED



7



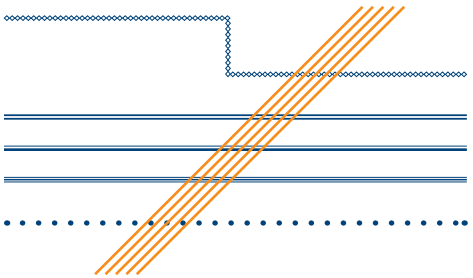
8

7 Never apply diagonal, rotated, stretched, condensed, or flipped design elements.

8 Only ***sparingly*** apply themed or oddly-shaped graphics, die-cuts to Imagery (subtle curves or clean straight edges are generally preferred). Never use severe zigzags or other overbearing edges.

9 Do not use decorative lines or borders.

10 Although certain high-quality royalty-free illustration is approved (sparingly, see page 42), never apply whimsical ornamentation such as clip art or decorative fonts which only serve to diminish the importance and credibility of VA materials.



9



10

Common design applications should never include such unsuitable motifs and effects as patterns, jagged or curved rules, or oddly-shaped (non-rectangular or non-circular) graphics/die-cuts/ photos.

Spend time and creativity on finding excellent imagery and/or illustration. Do not use decorative borders, curved type, rotated type, special effects or commonly used stock illustration as seen to the left. Focus on imagery of real people, VA employees and of course, Veterans.

Stock illustration and photography should be high-quality, and high resolution. At full size—without being enlarged or reduced in size—the file should be at 300dpi. Select images that are sharp, well-composed, and relevant to the piece.

Imagery: Philosophy and Guidance

Photography is one of the single most important devices available to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to convey the humanistic and patriotic nature of our efforts. An image portrays a moment in time that is representative of VA's work within the Veteran community, which is why it is one of the most important design elements.

Emotions generated by each image should include feelings of respectful observance, quiet urgency, deep importance, exalting dedication, and ceaseless progress.

Applied photography and illustration should be the highest quality obtainable within the limits of available resources, and produced by a qualified professional. Imagery should reflect quality, resolution, sharpness, contrast, brightness, composition, and relevance to the content. Imagery should be representative of the audience, show diversity, and show the scope of VA's work.

Use of photography is for education and inspiration. Applying unnecessary techniques only detracts from sincerity and authenticity. Beyond color correcting and minor Photoshop work, please limit unnecessary techniques and filters as they needlessly detract from the authenticity of photographs.

Imagery: Incorrect Photography Applications

1 Do not use imagery that is poorly scanned or too light ("blown-out").

2 Do not use imagery that is too dark or offers insufficient contrast.

3 Never incorporate or overlay graphic patterns or textures on imagery.

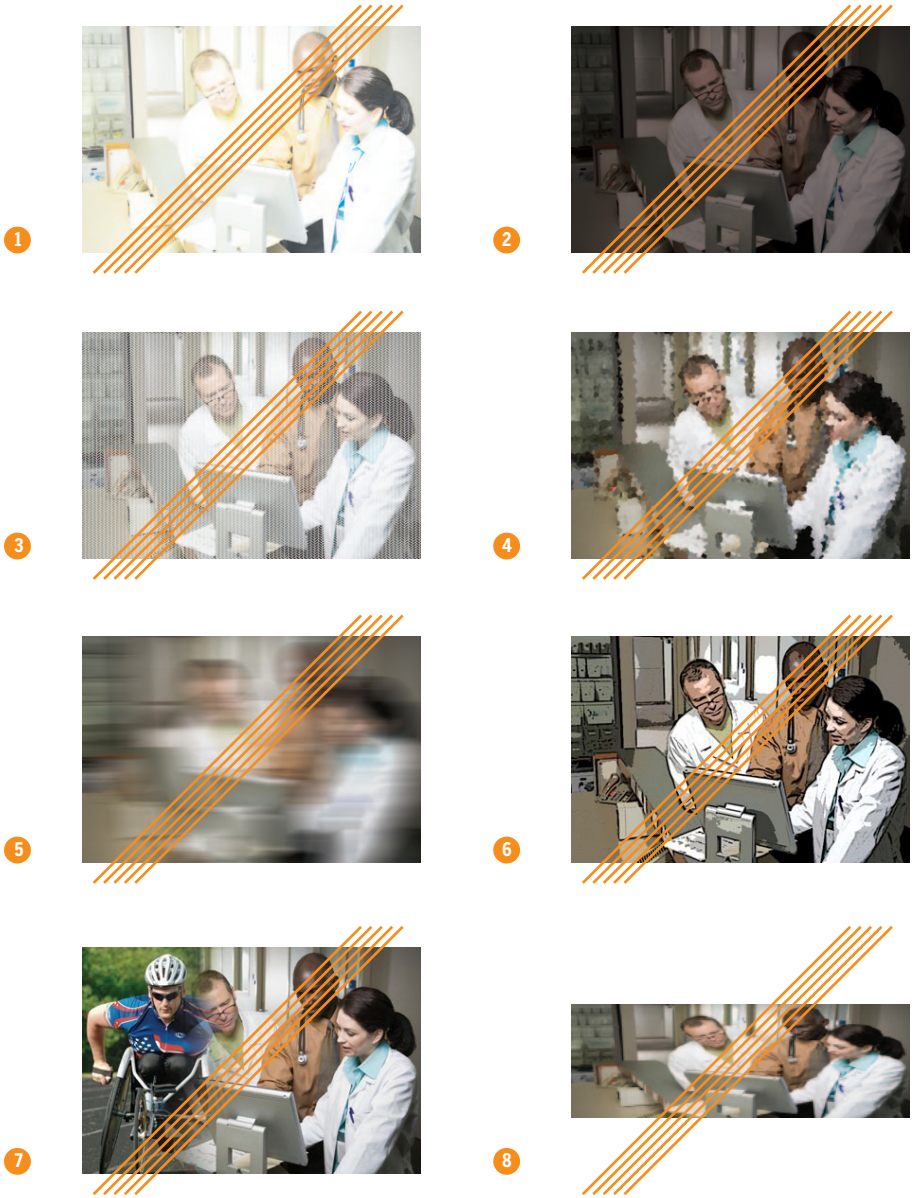
4 Never apply any sort of filter effect to imagery.

5 Never apply any sort of blurring to any part of an image.

6 Never apply contrast or posterization filters.

7 Never blend images into collages with other images in an unnatural manner.

8 Never distort, skew, condense, or expand the original proportions of an image.



Real is beautiful. Imagery must be as realistic as possible, with a minimal amount of retouching. Do not add heavy dropshadows, glows, fades, outline borders, overlapping images, or edge treatments that are feathered, wavy, jagged, etc.

Do not rotate or skew images, or place in unusual shapes—use square, rectangular, or circular shapes only.

Imagery should always be used at its original proportions—do not squeeze or stretch the image to fit within a certain size. Scaling an image need to be done proportionally.

Be aware of the brightness, sharpness, and contrast of an image. The image needs to "read" as clearly as possible, and without filters, blurs, textures, inverting or posterization. Blended collages should be use sparingly, and in as natural a way as possible

Visual effects often visually compete with the rest of the layout, and appears unnatural.

Imagery: Incorrect Photography Applications

CONTINUED

9 Apply gradients to imagery sparingly.

10 Silhouettes must have clean, natural edges, and not appear hastily rendered or cut out with scissors.

11 Do not use images that are of insufficient (low) resolution at the desired size.

12 Do not use images that appear grainy, dirty, dust-speckled, or low-quality.

13 Never apply colored borders, dropshadows, or background glow to images.

14 Never apply feathered, jagged, or ornamental edges to imagery.

15 Don't significantly alter image quality, invert, posterize, or distort color profile. With the exception of minor retouching and color correction, image quality and content need to be maintained.

16 Never apply duotone or tritone filters to imagery. Only full-color or monotone images are permitted.*

*In two-color printing situations, monotone images may be overlaid on a solid field (or solid area of tint) of another color, provided there is enough contrast for the image to be fully distinguishable.



Images should always be used at sufficient resolution in both printed materials and on-screen. Images at 72dpi are only usable for online purposes, and should never be enlarged. Printed images must be 300dpi at full size.

Wherever possible, crop images to show as much as possible—unless intentionally cropping in on a specific element within the composition. Cropping an image should enhance the photo, not reduce readability. Do not use distracting borders, feathered edges, jagged or wavy edges, gradients, textures, dropshadow or glow, unusual shapes or silhouettes, overlapping images, inverting, duotoning, or unapproved duotones.

Silhouettes are permitted, but must be executed by a professional graphic designer to ensure the edges are smooth and not choppy.

Needless ornamentation creates distraction, dilutes brand presence, and errantly promotes showy designer tricks, rather than VA integrity, maturity, and global importance.

Imagery: Incorrect Photography Applications

CONTINUED

Respect our flag.

American flag imagery will surely often be used in layouts. It is important to remember how the American flag should be represented. Avoid placing text or any other design elements over a photo of the American flag. Instead, allow the full beauty and reverence of our flag to show through in the photo itself.



17 Avoid placing type or design elements over images of the American flag.

The example below illustrates how type can be effectively and respectfully used in the open sky area, without covering the flag.

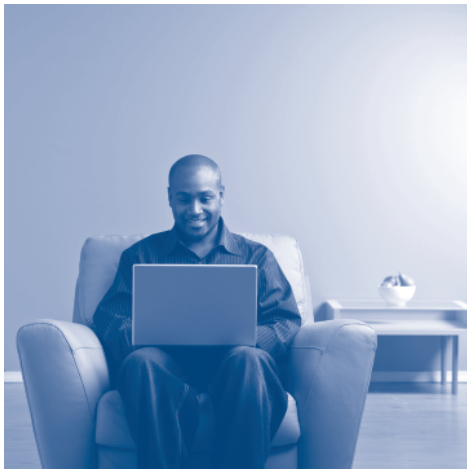


Imagery: Monotone Photography Usage

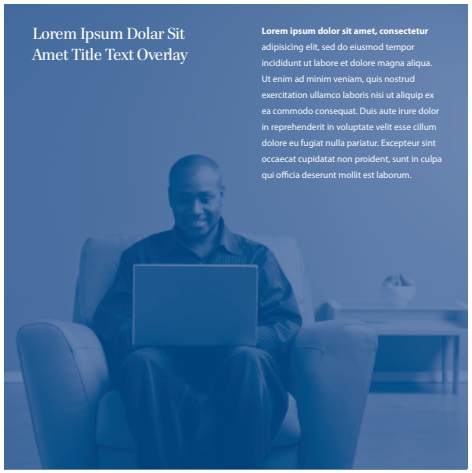
Correct uses of monotone imagery:

When applied tastefully and sparingly, monotone imagery can provide a subtle, elegant and respectful contrasting accent to layouts.

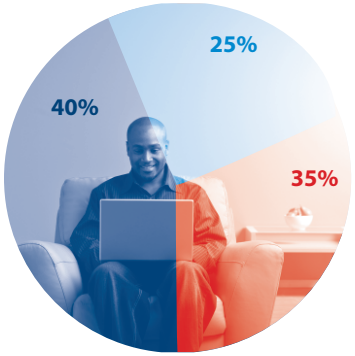
See pages 18 through 20 for a complete range of color options.



Monotone photo in Navy with White background



Monotone photo in Navy with 50% Navy background, for overlaying text elements.



Composition of monotone photo sections in Navy, Light Blue, and Red (optionally use this technique for charts and graphs).

Full-color photography is preferred in all pieces produced for uses online or in full-color printing. Monotone imagery is required in all other (one- and two-color) printing scenarios. Duotones, tritones and color-filtering for effect are prohibited.

Monotone images should be used sparingly, and use to provide visual contrast for special graphic call-outs, such as sidebars, profiles, etc.

Monotone imagery may also be sparingly used as backgrounds behind text for special pages, announcements, and collateral. Backgrounds can be darkened or lightened ("ghosted") providing there is sufficient contrast to ensure that the type is legible.

Ghosting of monotone imagery (without any gradation or feathering) is permitted for use sparingly in sidebars, call-out boxes, etc. Only images which offer sufficient contrast, texture and composition may be employed for such techniques.

Imagery: Appropriate Illustration Techniques

Illustration can help to communicate complex concepts or emotion more quickly than photography in certain situations. When using illustration, each image must be high-quality stock or original artwork produced by a qualified professional illustrator. As well, illustration should be used only when absolutely necessary to best communicate an idea and where photography cannot capture the desired feel.

Selected illustrations should be carefully scrutinized for quality, sharpness, contrast, brightness, composition, and relevance to the communication. The style should be respectful and dignified, and avoid overly technical, dramatic, whimsical, or otherwise inappropriate.

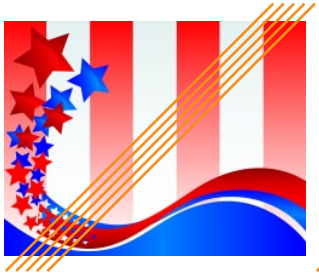
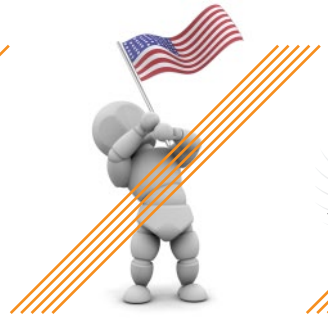
Example Suitable Illustration Techniques






Never apply whimsical ornamentation such as clip art or decorative fonts which only serve to diminish the importance and credibility of VA materials.

Example Prohibited Illustration Techniques



Design Inspirations

A Collection of Both Hypothetical Designs and Approved Templates to Help Get You Started

Design needs to emphasize the VA brand , as well as convey organizational sophistication and harmony. Clean, elegant compositions are encouraged for all VA communications materials. Make use of empty of negative space as it is a distinctive part of the VA identity system.

Intrinsic design methods employed across various media must remain consistent in order to convey a cohesive visual identity. Layouts should be simple, clean, elegant, and free from needless ornamentation, effects and shapes which detract from the essence of the brand and purity of its presentation and message.

Designs can be enhanced by artful use of approved typography, color and New VA Parent Signature as well as other basic elements of design such as proportion, contrast and compositional arrangement. Although the graphic standards are fairly specific, there is still ample room for creativity and exploration.

The layouts on the following pages show applications the approved palette, typography and imagery characteristics detailed throughout this guide. Many of the designs shown are hypothetical examples simply for inspiration, but others are actual templates provided in the VA Brand Graphics Repository online, which are available as approved, ready-to-use digital design files. Use them as the starting point for any new project, as they contain the correct design elements and typography, or follow the guidelines to create new brand appropriate design solutions.

The VA Thread

Designed and applied to subtly symbolize the weaving influence VA has in the lives of U.S. Veterans, their families, communities and key areas of federal government innovation, this imagery quietly adds depth and identifiable texture to layouts whenever deemed appropriate. Not always visibly present, never loud or boastful, the VA Thread is always there when VA communicators need it, reminding them that they, too, are part of the collective fabric of responsibility that covers, comforts and rewards our finest citizens.

Sub-Identifiers: Transition to Unison

From the three main Administrations to a legion of Sub-Divisions, Offices and Programs, there is currently an overwhelming number of individualized Sub-Identifiers—or "sub-brands"—being used across VA to represent and differentiate its various parts. Having to distinguish one VA sub-brand from another, figure out why they appear independent, or where they fit in the organization, creates undue confusion and frustration for Veterans. Given that the majority of these existing identifiers needlessly detract from the VA brand, the majority must be replaced with clear, brand-appropriate and template-based solutions (see pages eight and nine).

Sub-Identifiers require standards compliance as much as any other VA brand component as they represent VA to their respective audience. Each will need to be updated to appropriately convey VA brand allegiance. The first phase of corporate-level VA brand refresh has been outlined in this Version 1.0 document, however, Leadership will devote significant attention to the existing VA Sub-Identifiers and creating new ones. There will always be special, or short-term Identifiers, and creation of those elements should be crafted by experienced branding professionals to ensure clarity and adherence to brand standards.

This guide attempts to lay the groundwork for a larger review of Sub-Identifiers. Typical for large-scale brand metamorphosis, this guide is a "living document" that will evolve over time to incorporate ongoing discoveries. The key takeaway should be basic rules and recommendations for how to best communicate with the Veteran population, and groups associated with them.

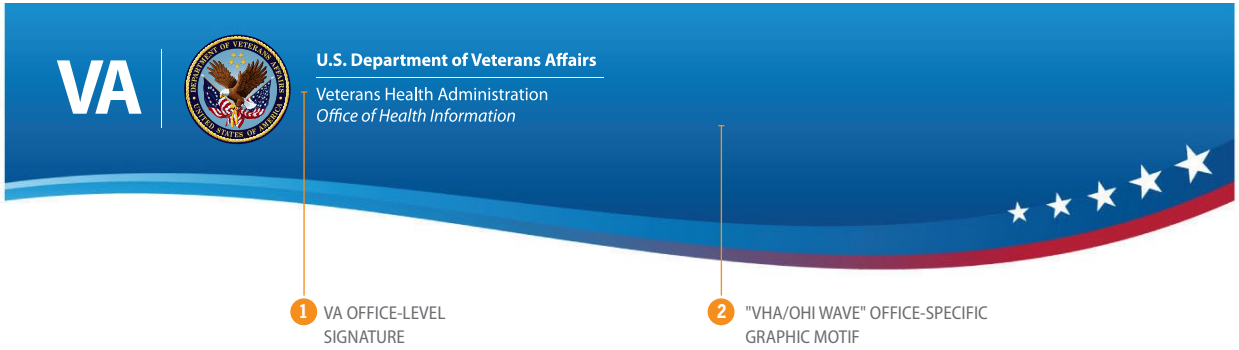
VA Sub-Identifiers: Administration Office Identifying Motif Option

The use of "logos" or "sub-brands" is not necessary for distinguishing one department, group, or program from another within an organization. Unique methods applied in layout, color, typography and composition techniques alone can visually separate a given entity. An appropriately customized motif—as shown below—can provide distinction without detracting from instant VA brand recognition. Note the careful and subtle application of gradients and support shapes (recommended for sparing use only), which provide just enough texture to give the design a touch of dimension and dynamism without overpowering the other more important branding elements.

This type of "masthead" solution could be be provided to those responsible for producing a given Office's creative products as a ready-to-use image in various electronic formats such as PDF, EPS, JPG, etc.

As with Identifiers, users are instructed to always use the provided graphics files to eliminate the continual need for font matching, color selection, and logo alignment—there should be no need to recreate or alter such motif for every use.

Example of Appropriate VA Sub-Divisional Identification Support Motif





VA Sub-Identifiers: Design Tactics for Special Situations

Under certain circumstances, some special programs may call for more visual distinction and recognizable visual characteristics than is provided for in the standardized VA Sub-Identifier template shown on page nine. In these situations, brand-safe executions for such VA Sub-Identifiers can be achieved without creating unnecessarily distracting "logos" or "sub-brands". The example below shows how new or existing Sub-Identifiers could be created to adequately convey allegiance to VA. Simply applying approved typography and colorization techniques, as well as apt juxtaposition and proportion in relation to the VA Seal provides a solid connection. Respectful, sparing application of illustrative motif as shown may also acceptable.

It is required that all such VA Sub-Identifiers be created or updated according to the techniques shown. Any designs currently in review must be scrutinized against these standards and updated accordingly prior to appearance in any new communication vehicles.

Although it is recommended that all existing VA Sub-Identifiers (and the materials on which they appear) be updated, it is understood that VA is a vast organization and this evolution will take place over time governed by scheduling and budgetary constraints. Ongoing study, patience and collaboration will be required in order to effect positive changes VA-wide in this area.

Note how appropriate color, typography and juxtaposition with VA Seal all work together to create brand clarity and consistency.

Artful type arrangements in these such rare Sub-Identifiers are recommended, rather than indulgent extraneous icons that needlessly conflict and compete with the VA Seal.

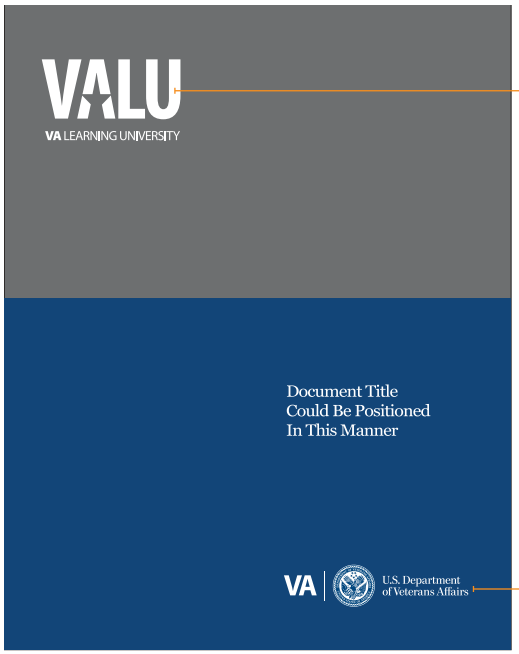
See page nine for standardized templates required for most VA Office Identifiers.

Example Sub-Identifier Evolved for Brand Appropriateness:

VALU
VA LEARNING UNIVERSITY

1 VA SEAL MUST APPEAR TO THE LEFT OR ABOVE ALL SUB-ID'S UNLESS IN LAYOUT

2 ARTFUL COMPOSITION OF APPROVED COLORS/FONTS; CLEVER MOTIF WORKED IN FOR SUBTLE DISTINCTION



GIVEN THAT THE VA SIGNATURE APPEARS AT BOTTOM, THERE IS NO NEED TO REPEAT THE VA SEAL NEXT TO THE SUB-IDENTIFIER

VA AFFILIATION AND AUTHORITY MUST ALWAYS BE PROMINENTLY VISIBLE IN EVERY APPEARANCE OF VA SUB-IDENTIFIERS

Ever-preferred Option: Standardized VA Sub-Identifier Format

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Human Resources and Administration
VA Learning University

VA Sub-Identifiers: Design Tactics for Campaigns, Events, Programs and Initiatives

Campaigns, events, programs, and initiatives identified to public and Veteran audiences also often call for more visual distinction and recognizable visual characteristics than is provided for in the standardized VA Sub-Identifier template shown on page nine. In producing such Identifiers, the same overall branding principles and elements (proper colors and typography, quality execution, and alignment with the VA brand) must be observed. Such specially arranged, repeatable graphic arrangements must all be visually consistent with VA brand standards. Each situation will be different, but each should be simple in composition, not over-designed and free from any overt effects, textures, icons, overly-ornamental illustrations or elements incompatible with VA brand character.

As with any other VA Identifiers, these mostly typographical designs must be created by qualified branding specialists, as not every participant working on VA creative products has the necessary experience or ability to meet VA brand development requirements. However, ideas and comments on concepts and executions from governing participants are always welcome and observed.

As with any VA Sub-Identifier, such special marks must be produced only by highly-skilled and experienced logo design specialists.

Example Appropriate Design Tactics for Campaigns, Event, Program and Initiative Identifiers:







Special VA Internal Initiative Identifier: I CARE

On June 20, 2011 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs approved a set of Core Values and Characteristics which apply universally across all of VA. **The Core Values** are collectively the foundation of how we go about our work, define "who we are," and form the underlying principles we use in our daily service to Veterans. **The Core Characteristics** define "what we stand for" and what we strive to be as an organization.

In recognition of the principles stated in The Core Values, the Office of the Secretary is enlisting VA communicators for continued support in the effort to clarify the VA brand and provide outreach vehicles which always stand together through **Integrity** in creative purpose, **Commitment** to participation, **Advocacy** for visual harmony, **Respect** for the VA brand, and **Excellence** in the execution of duties.

VA Core Values and Characteristics Quick Reference



Created prior to the establishment of this document, the "I CARE" acronym and legacy Program Identifier design shown above was developed to express VA Core Values and Characteristics.

These unique typographic and color techniques remain exclusive to the I CARE Identifier, and cannot be used in any other VA Identifiers.

	Because I CARE, I will...
Integrity:	Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.
Commitment:	Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.
Advocacy:	Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.
Respect:	Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.
Excellence:	Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

	VA Core Characteristics:
Trustworthy:	VA earns the trust of those it serves—every day—through the actions of all employees. They provide care, benefits, and services with compassion, dependability, effectiveness, and transparency.
Accessible:	VA engages and welcomes Veterans and other beneficiaries, facilitating their use of the entire array of its services. Each interaction will be positive and productive.
Quality:	VA provides the highest standard of care and services to Veterans and beneficiaries while managing the cost of its programs and being efficient stewards of all resources entrusted to it by the American people. VA is a model of unrivalled excellence due to employees who are empowered, trusted by their leaders, and respected for their competence and dedication.
Innovative:	VA prizes curiosity and initiative, encourages creative contributions from all employees, seeks continuous improvement, and adapts to remain at the forefront in knowledge, proficiency, and capability to deliver the highest standard of care and services to all of the people it serves.
Agile:	VA anticipates and adapts quickly to current challenges and new requirements by continuously assessing the environment in which it operates and devising solutions to better serve Veterans, other beneficiaries, and Service members.
Integrated:	VA links care and services across the Department; other federal, state, and local agencies; partners; and Veterans Services Organizations to provide useful and understandable programs to Veterans and other beneficiaries. VA's relationship with the Department of Defense is unique, and VA will nurture it for the benefit of Veterans and Service members..

Download I CARE logo from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

Special VA Internal Initiative Identifier: I CARE

CONTINUED

Below are hypothetical examples of how the I CARE Sub-Identifier could be applied to various internal communication vehicles. Given the visual weight and level of detail in the I CARE Sub-Identifier, it should not be closely juxtaposed with the VA Seal or Parent Signature, allowing ample white space. The I CARE logo should be separated from the VA Signature and featured somewhat larger in pieces promoting the initiative. Avoid using the I CARE Sub-Identifier in close proximity to the VA Signature (shown right).

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

I CARE

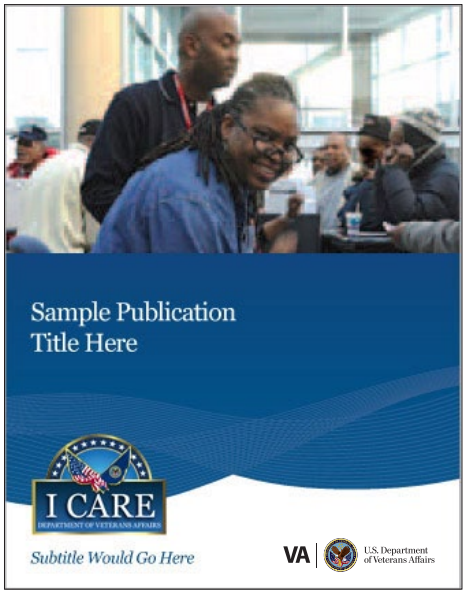
PowerPoint®



Poster



Brochure



Download I CARE logo from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

General Design Applications

The following sample layouts are representative of the approved palette, typography, design, and imagery detailed throughout this guide.

Many of the examples shown are available as ready-to-use Adobe® InDesign® templates, complete with correctly applied design elements, color, and typography. Use them as a starting point, but do not feel limited by them—they are intended to help set the tone for future design expansion.

Other purely hypothetical layouts are provided for further inspiration and guidance on how simplicity, discipline and careful observance of standards can maintain brand quality.

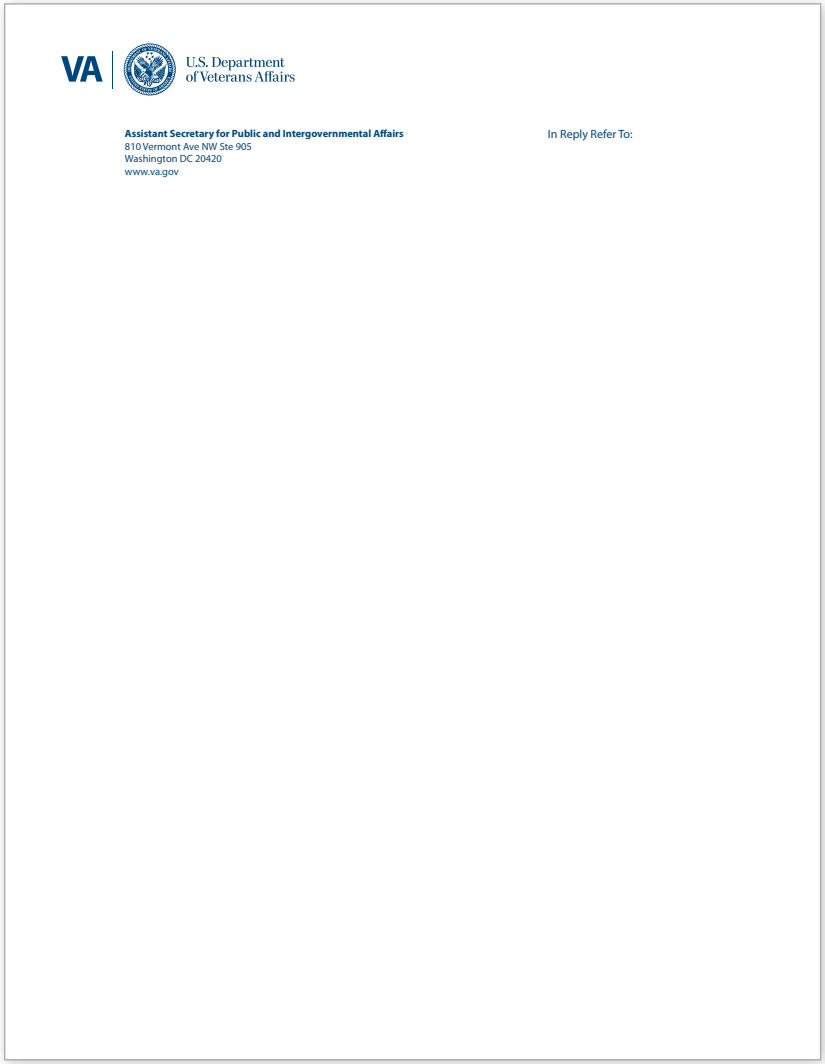
As well, there are layouts that are purely hypothetical that are intended to provide inspiration and guidance for creating brand quality through artful simplicity, discipline, and observance of standards.

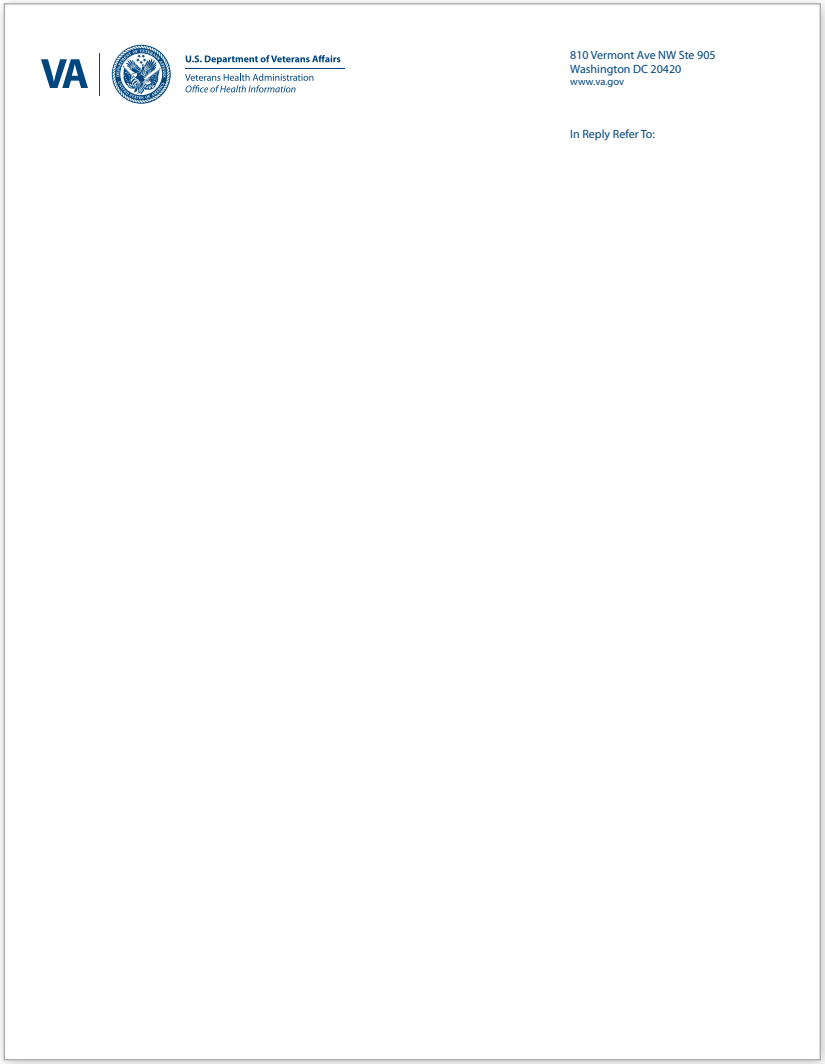
Stationery: Example Letterhead

Clearly identified and cohesively designed corporate and divisional stationery is vital for communicating the VA brand in all correspondence. Each component should present the appropriate VA corporate or divisional Signature, as well as key address and contact information.

Avoid adding any other elements, such as imagery, motif, watermarks, or unnecessary information. Since this is the official look for VA letterhead, all VA offices must follow this template. The following pages will show more examples of the VA stationary suite.

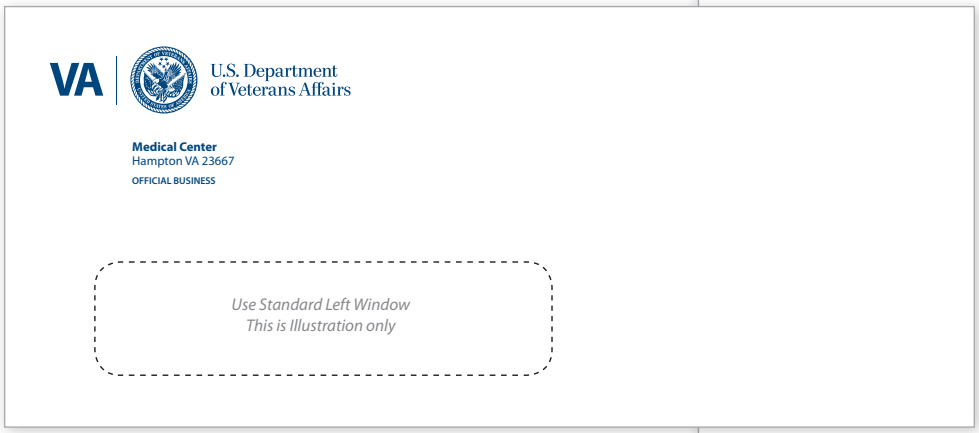
Note:
Per federal regulations, pre-printed second sheets are not allowed—only the front page of any given correspondence letter is allowed to display a pre-printed masthead.





Download design template from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

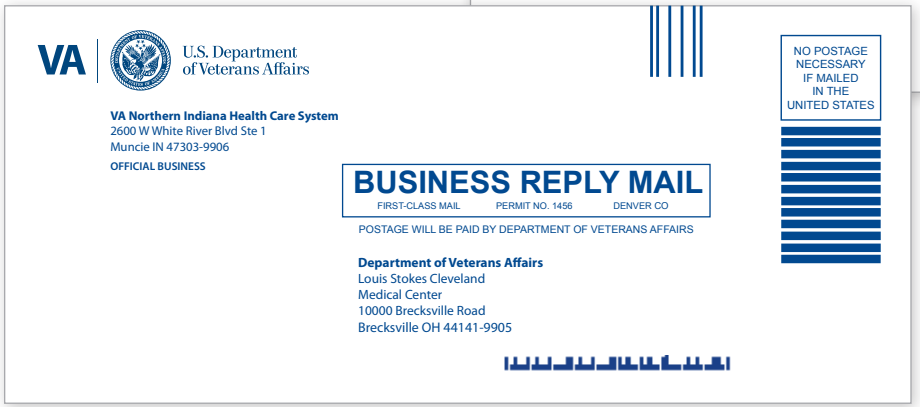
Stationery: Example Envelopes



4.125" x 9.5" #10 Window Envelope
(Must be printed in 100% PMS 541u)



9.5" x 12" Brown Kraft Envelope
(Must be printed in 100% black)



#9 Business Reply Envelope (BRE)
(Can be printed in either 100% PMS 541u or 100% black)

Download design template from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

Stationery: Example Business Card Options

Different levels within VA are eligible to obtain corresponding business card varieties shown below. GS levels one through seven may only receive the one-color black version. GS levels eight through 12 may obtain either the one-color black, PMS 541u or 2-color options. GS levels 13 and higher may obtain either of those, as well as the highest level of business card displaying the VA Seal in gold foil stamp (recommended).

100lb. plain white 25% cotton cover stock must be used for all business cards to convey the appropriate quality and formality.

1 LEVELS 13+: SEAL IN GOLD FOIL STAMP, BLACK TEXT



2 LEVELS 8-12: 2-COLOR SIGNATURE, BLACK TEXT



3 LEVELS 1-7: ONE COLOR SEAL AND TEXT (ALL NAVY OR ALL BLACK)



Download design template from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

PowerPoint®: Primary Template

When developing PowerPoint® presentations, follow the format and layout formula shown, applying similar photo usage, typography styles and simple layout technique as indicated. Always apply the full-color New VA Parent Signature and only use colors from the VA Color Palette.

All type should be set in Georgia and Calibri fonts as these are more commonly installed on most computers. Myriad Pro is NOT to be used for any presentations and internal communications which are intended to be distributed, viewed and/or edited in Microsoft® Word® and PowerPoint®, even if the original author has a licensed copy of Myriad Pro on their work station.

Use the templates to your advantage

The examples shown at right and on the following pages are available as ready-to-use electronic templates. Use them as the starting point for any project, as they contain the correct design elements and typography.

See page 44 for information on the VA Thread graphic illustrated here.

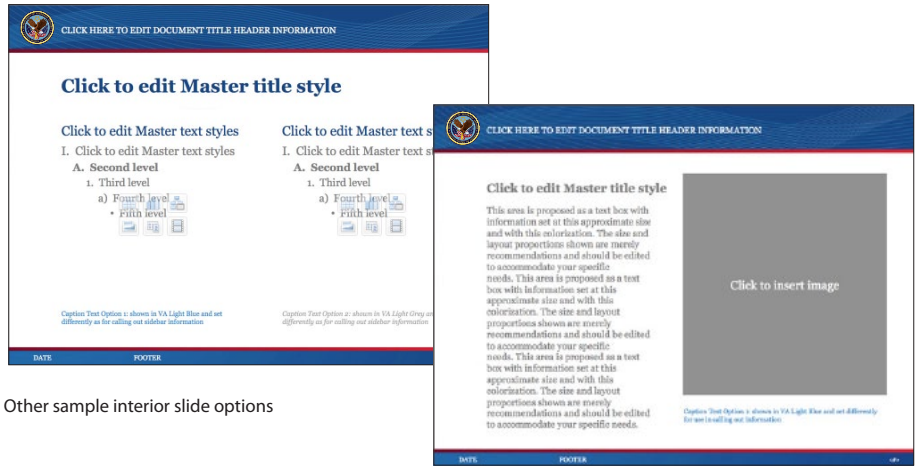


Sample title page

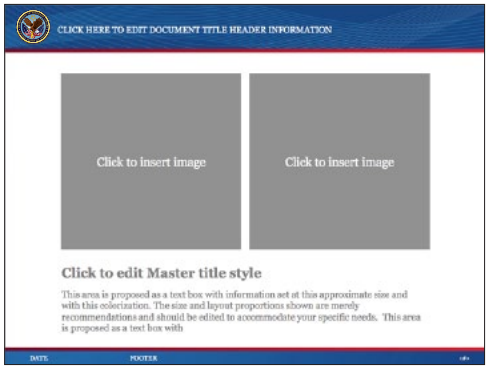


(Not actual size)

Sample interior transition slide



Other sample interior slide options



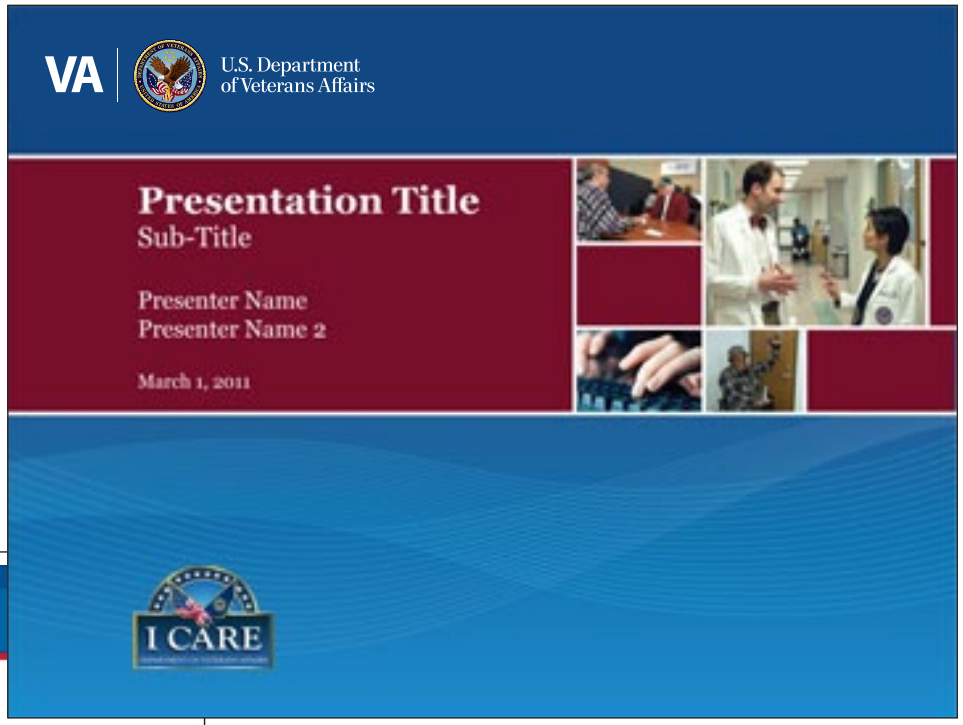
Download PowerPoint templates from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

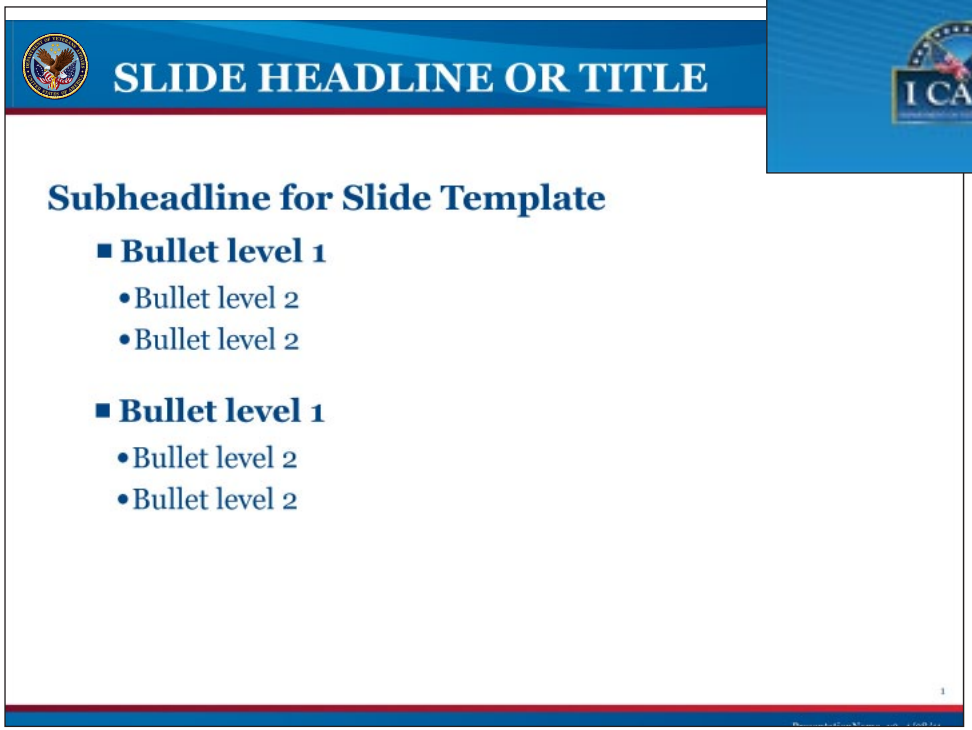
PowerPoint®

CONTINUED

Alternate layout options

The modular layout illustrated on this page shows how multiple images can be incorporated into a clean presentation that enhances the VA brand. The position and proportion of elements can be varied while maintaining a cohesive look. Images on the cover page are changeable and the grid provides additional versatility. Experiment with photo usage and vary the mosaic as needed, utilizing the recommended space. Photos should not break out of the designated grid, or crowd the title area.





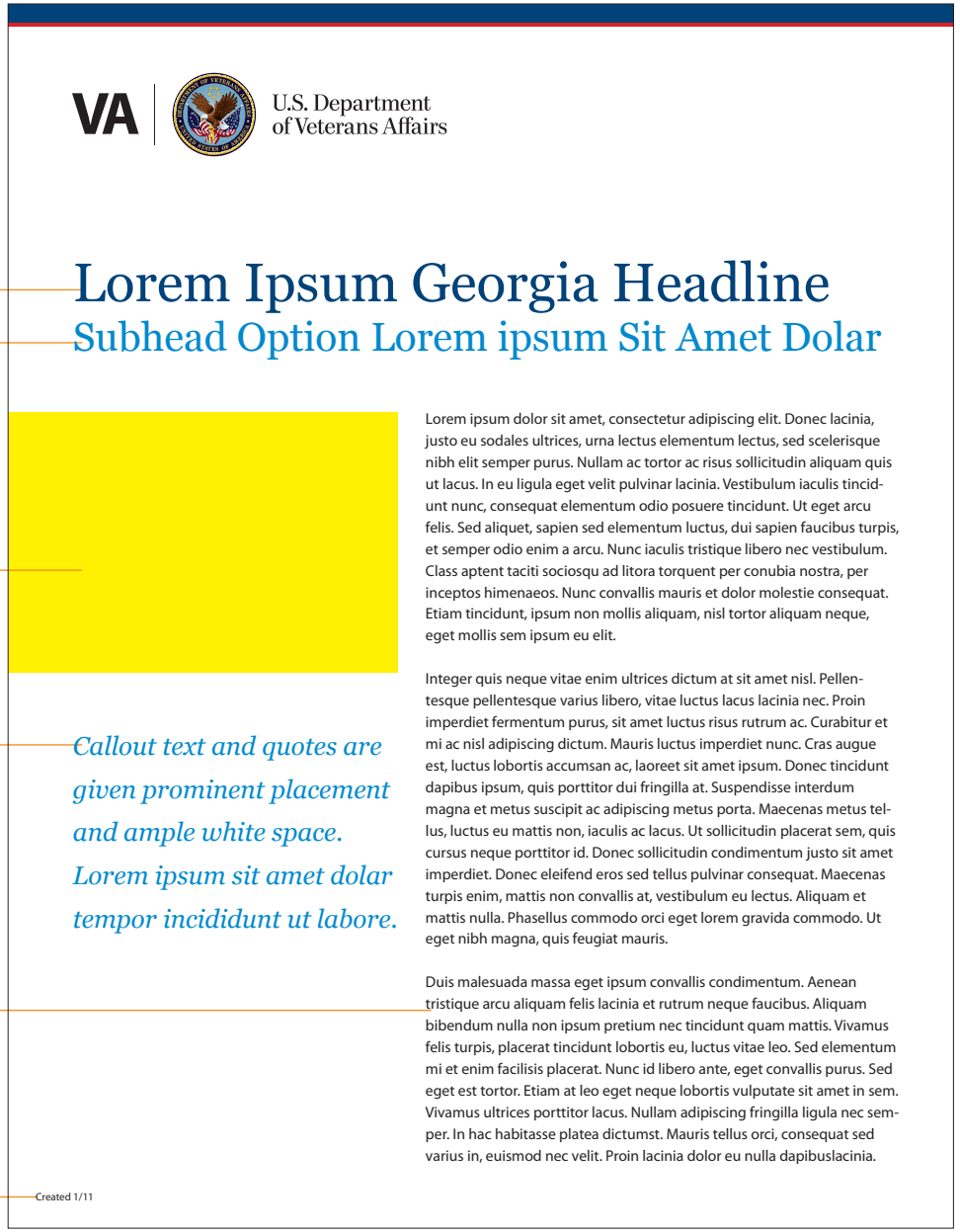
Example PowerPoint®: Sub-Divisional Applications

Administration Office Examples

Shown here are actual examples of PowerPoint® templates developed for an Administration Office utilizing the design principles outlined in their own innovative Design Guidelines. Note that the *Wave* motif—a key graphic element used to distinguish their Office within the Administration (see page 46)—is unique to that office. Specific Sub-Identification strategies such as this must be vetted by appropriate authorities before being implemented, but the example clearly illustrates how different offices can affect their Sub-Identities within the VA brand using special techniques such as gradients and unconventional shapes. Reserving special visual devices for specific, carefully/universally-applied purposes—and prohibiting them for all other common design purposes uses—they become useful in creating usefully distinctive Sub-Identities rather than distracting indulgences.



Example Fact Sheets: Small Photos



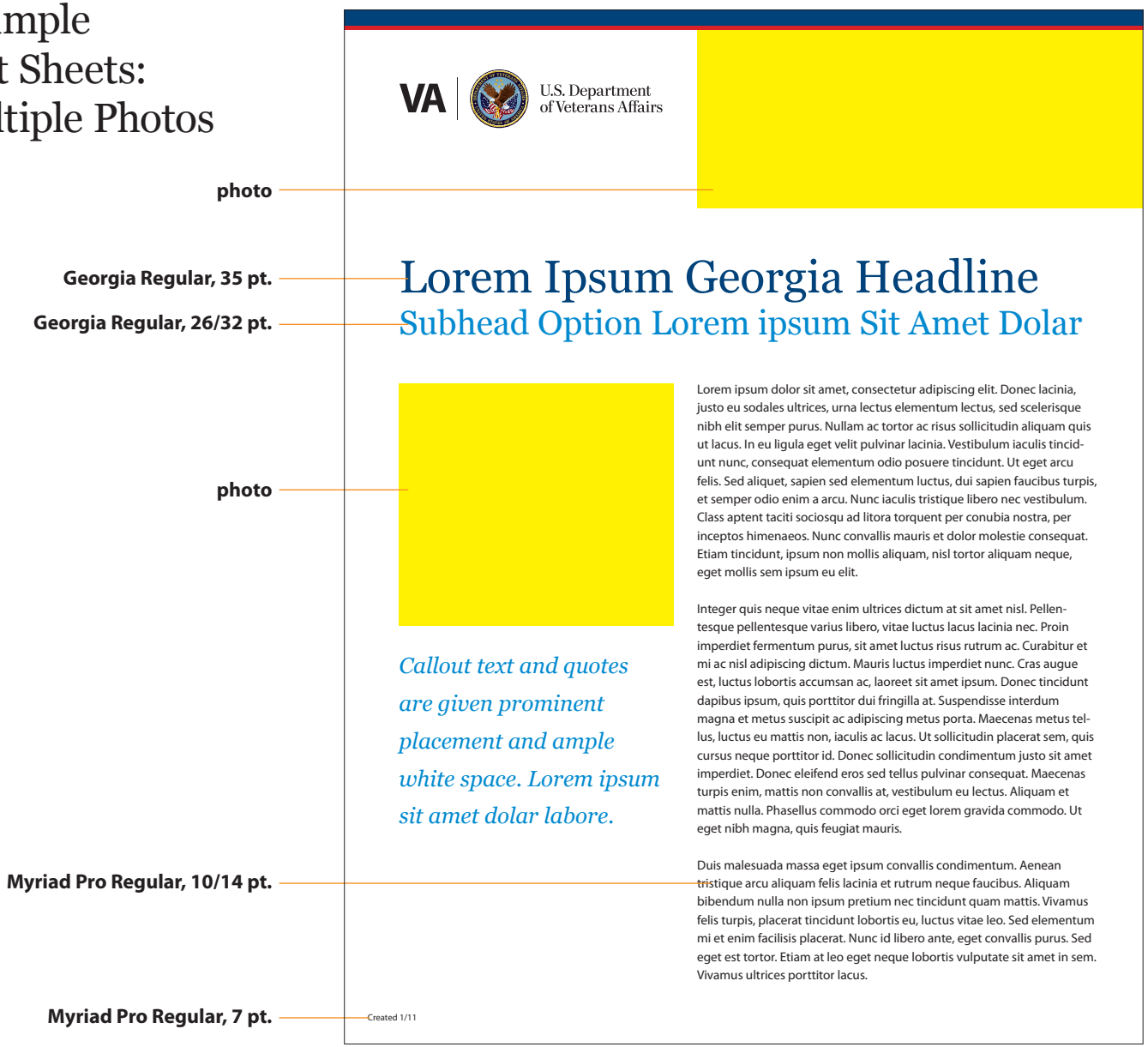
A simple, yet effective graphic element for any 8.5" x 11" fact sheet (or similar document) is a combination color bar utilizing the VA Color Palette and New VA Parent Signature. Beneath it, the layout options are versatile.

In this example, a small photo is used in the narrow left column, which allows greater emphasis on the headline—particularly useful with lengthier titles and subheads.

Always be sure to include the "Created/ Revised" date, along with the stocking/catalog number in a lower corner.

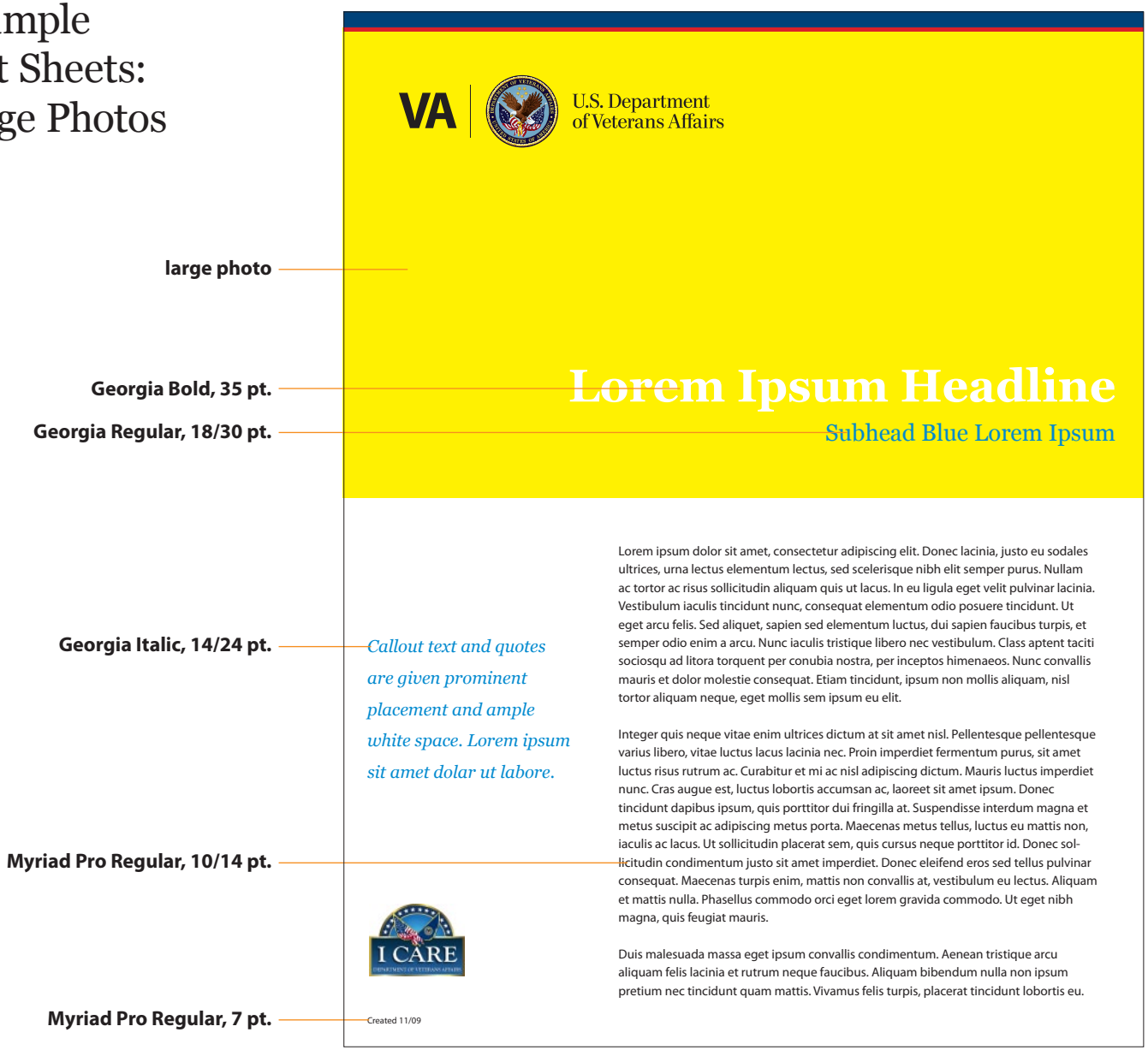
Download design template from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

Example Fact Sheets: Multiple Photos



Download design template from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

Example Fact Sheets: Large Photos



For a visually bolder fact sheet, you may wish to feature a large photo. Images can be used at full-width bleed directly below the masthead color bars.

When choosing a photo, care should be taken to ensure that critical elements within the photo aren't covered by the Thread or by the VA Parent Signature, and that ample clear space exists for your headline title.

The title can also be used outside (below) the photo if the image is too busy for text.

For certain internal pieces, the I CARE logo may be used in a manner which provides adequate distance from the VA Signature.

Always be sure to include the "Created/ Revised" date, along with the stocking/ catalogue number in a lower corner.

Download design template from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

Example Award Certificate

The example at right illustrates a potential visual treatment for award certificates.



Download design template from www.VA.gov/BrandRepository/

Hypothetical Applications

At right is a variety of possible design solutions for hypothetical applications. These can be adapted to suite everything from a publication to a large exhibition display panel.

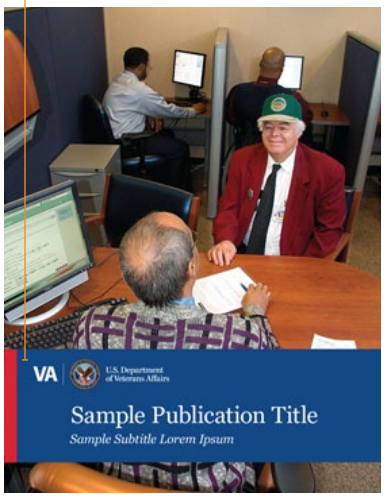
Using color, typography, and other basic principles outlined in this document can help guide designers as they explore alternate layouts that support the overall brand.

PHOTOS
Photos can be cropped to split layouts with color fields (below) and can be placed at either top or bottom. You can also use large, single images full frame (right), or feature multiple images in a modular grid (lower right).

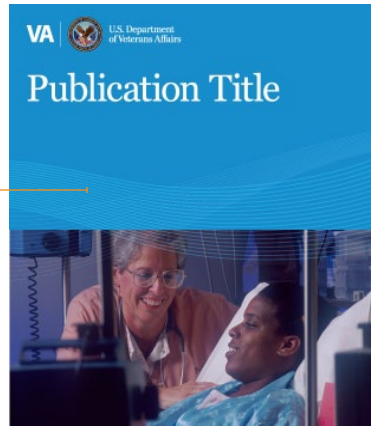
COLOR BANDS
Use bands of color from the VA Palette in various positions over photos. This device works well as a top anchor (left). Additional swatches of contrasting color can be used, such as this vertical stripe of red along the edge of the blue band (below).

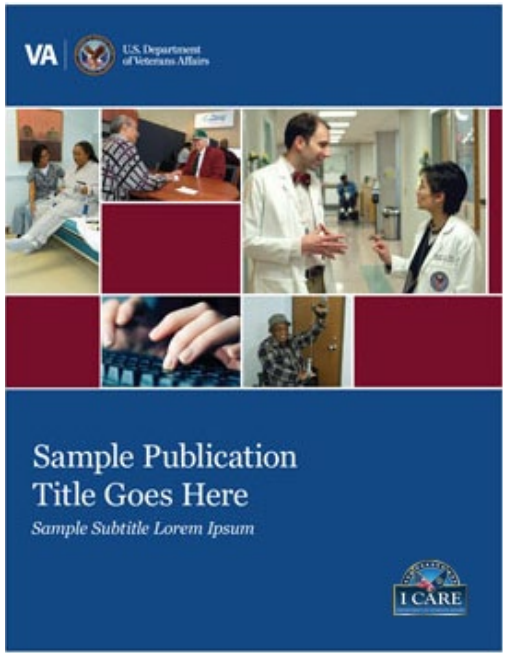






THE VA THREAD GRAPHIC
An abstract wave graphic designed specifically for VA use can be a strong visual element that links color fields to photos, or holds its own as a linear texture.





Hypothetical Applications

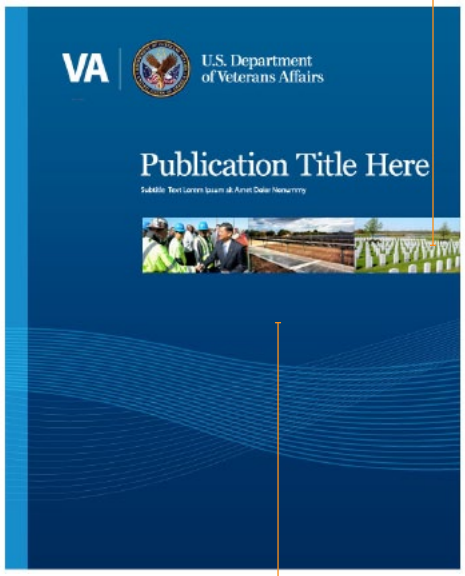
CONTINUED





SCALE CONTRAST

Not all photos have to be large. Sometimes a small band of images contrasted against a rich background color provides a nice alternative.

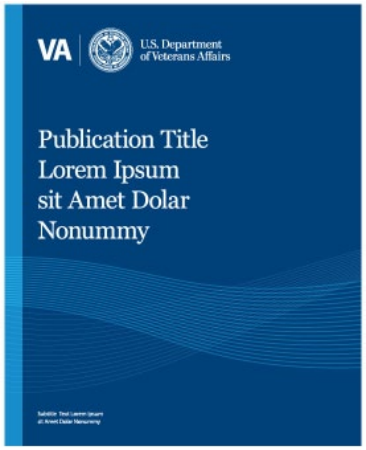


SUBTLE GRADIENTS

Color fields can be given a subtle gradient to create depth—a device particularly effective when overlaying additional elements.

MONOTONES, DUOTONES, ETC.

Some projects may require less than full-color printing (below left). Or, the tone of a piece may suggest a softer, warmer color scheme than that of the primary VA Palette (below right). Layouts can be clean and dynamic without going full-color, and in some instances, you may opt to use duotone photography in your full-color piece to set a particular mood and consistency.





SANS SERIF

While not recommended for frequent use, Myriad Pro can occasionally be used as a title font when the subject matter warrants.



TYPE ON THE EDGE

Some layouts may benefit from a slightly more progressive type treatment. Instead of centering the title in your color band, place the baseline of the text on the edge for an alternative approach.

Hypothetical Applications

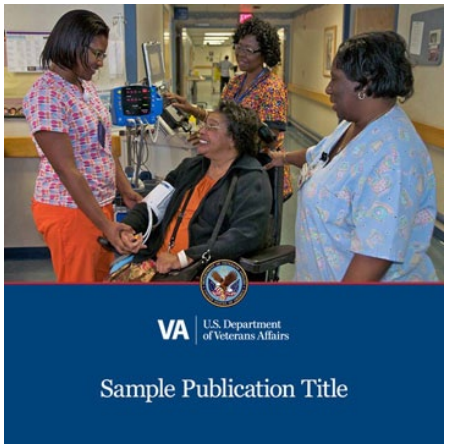
CONTINUED

OVERLAPPING THE SEAL

Another visual technique to consider is allowing the VA Seal to overlap a photo (below right) or color bar (below left). This can be done without compromising the integrity of the Seal, and can be an effective way of adding dimension to your layouts.







VERTICAL TITLES

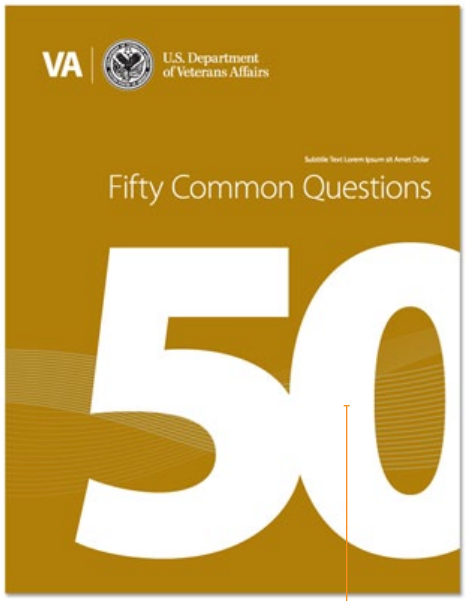
Some layouts may require vertical titles. A simple way to maximize your space without affecting the photo is to position the text vertically in a color band.



Hypothetical Applications

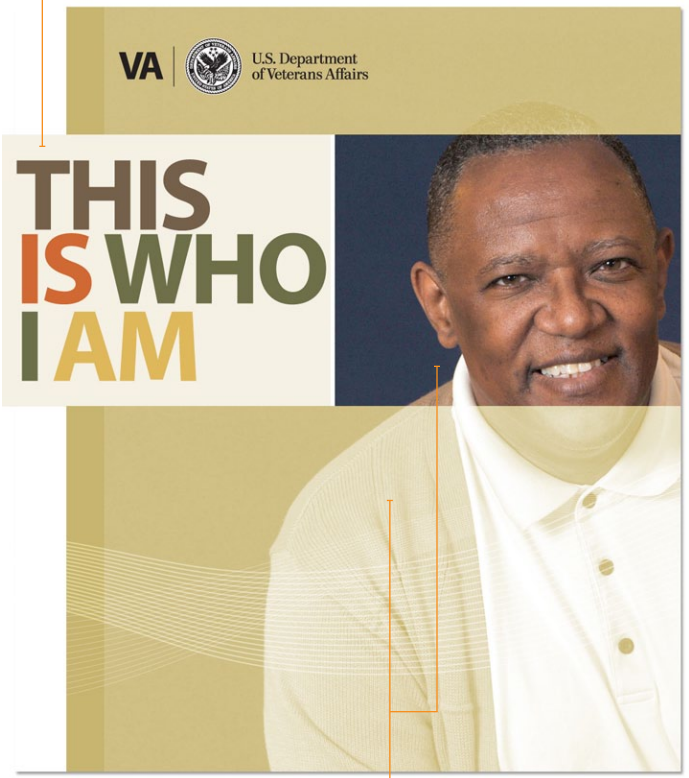
CONTINUED

The examples here and on the following pages show less conservative layouts—designs which employ the extended color palette and more progressive use of typography, but remain safely within brand guidelines.



LARGE TYPE
Consider using type as image, by using scale contrast. Here, a large "50", artistically kerned and cropped, becomes the primary design element on this cover.

MULTICOLORED TYPE
Using the Extended VA Palette, each word features a different color.



COMBINE DUOTONES & FULL-COLOR
This cropped full-color image adds focus and depth to the larger duotone, creating a unique mood for this piece.

NON-TRADITIONAL SHAPES
Not everything has to be a rectangle, square, or 8.5" x 11". When appropriate, try an interesting new size or format.



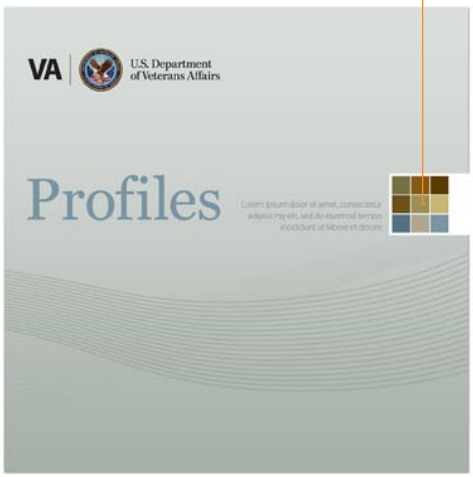
ADDITIONAL MOTIFS
Simple design motifs such as this arrow (a character in the Meta Plus Black font) can be used when appropriate. Other geometrical elements such as squares (see page 66) can be used as subtle design elements throughout.

Hypothetical Applications

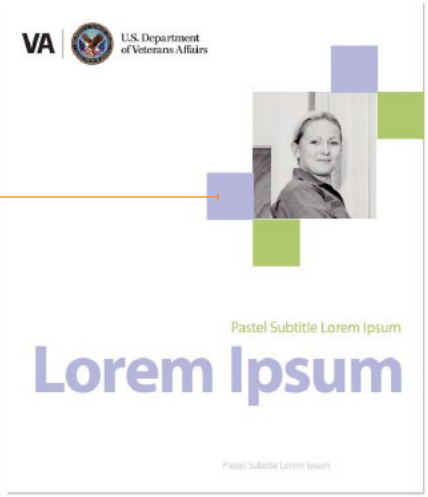
CONTINUED

GEOMETRICAL MOTIF

A grouping of colored squares (below) is used here as a subtle design motif, which can be carried throughout a publication. At right, squares are used to "frame" a cover photo.

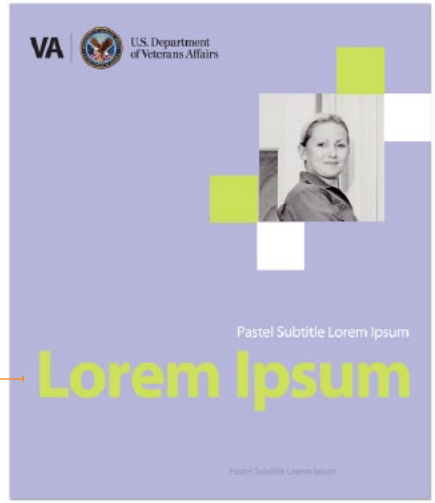






SOFT TONES

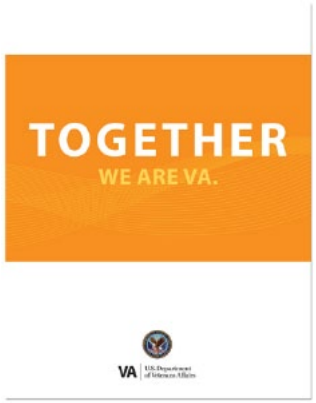
In some instances, a softer palette may be required. For this purpose, a set of pastel colors has been developed.
See the VA Light Tones on page 20.



Hypothetical Applications

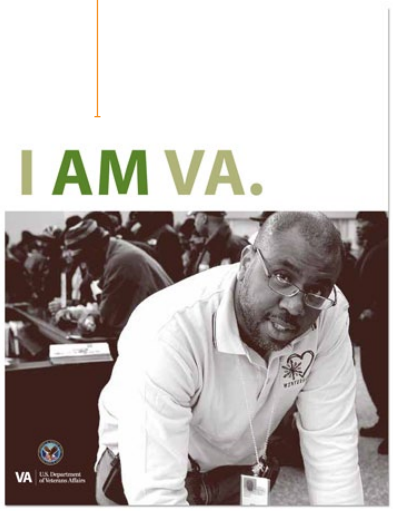
CONTINUED

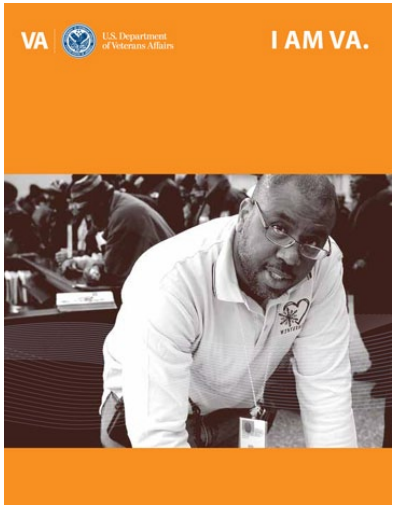
COLOR TYPE / BLACK & WHITE IMAGERY
Below is a sample campaign featuring strong black and white photos paired with large title typography set in all caps and various tints/screens of colors.

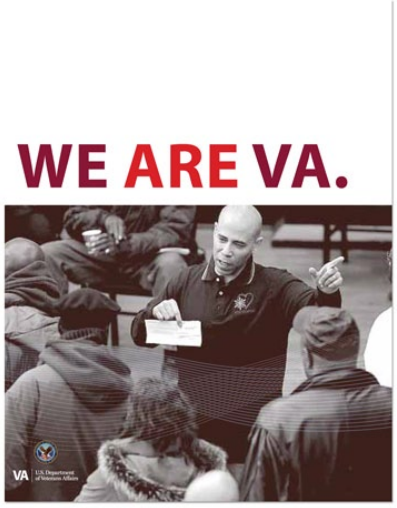


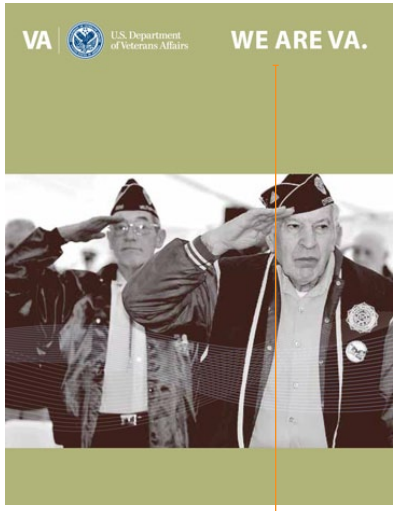


COLOR FIELDS / THE VA THREAD GRAPHIC
Focusing on a singular message can be achieved by using a strong background color.



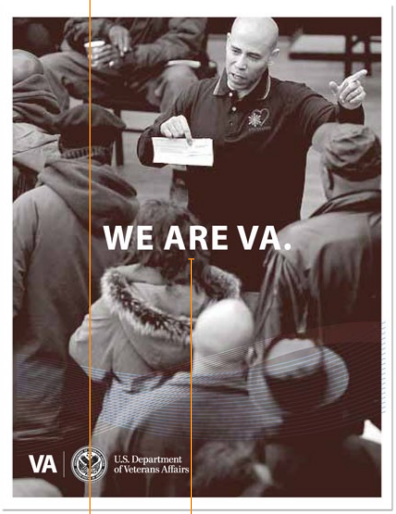






COLOR FIELDS / BLACK & WHITE IMAGERY
An alternate solution that still makes use of strong black and white photography is shown above, as large fields of color serve as backgrounds for the photo, with the title text smaller and reversed out to white.

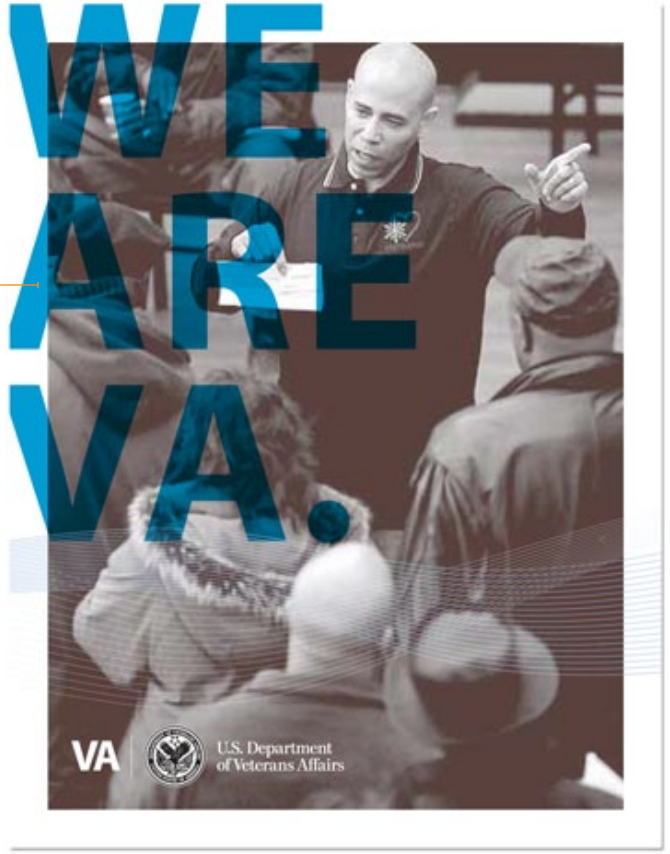




STARK BLACK & WHITE
Above, a black and white image is used full frame, (and with a white border) and paired with simple, white typography. In some cases, large, dramatic type may be appropriate, while in others, a more subtle, centered approach can be successful.

Hypothetical Applications

CONTINUED



TRANSPARENCY / TYPE OVERLAY
Oversized type can be used effectively as a transparent overlay in some instances, creating a bold effect.



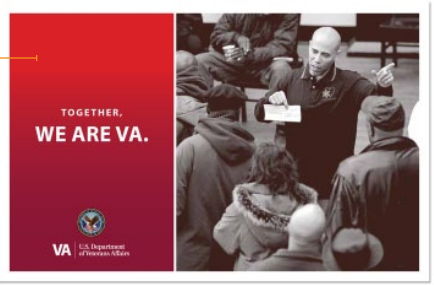
GRAPHIC LABELS / BADGES
A simple rectangle of color becomes a clean setting for a title treatment. Centered on the design, this label effect is a strong graphic device that works successfully.

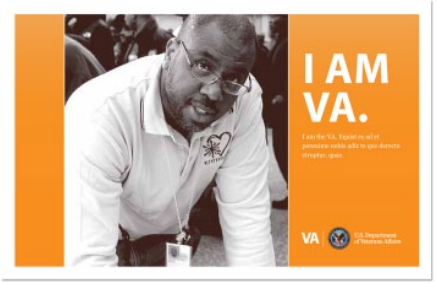
Hypothetical Applications

CONTINUED

SAMPLE POSTCARDS / MAILERS
These horizontal pieces show how small fields of color (with a subtle gradient applied) can be used to create a bold campaign.

Color field width can be adjusted as necessary—use your discretion.











SAMPLE NEWSLETTER
This sample newsletter shows a simple grid and photo usage.

Print Preflight Checklist

Before sending files to a printer, always be sure to carefully review the following production guidelines—not only to ensure printing quality, but also to ensure that specific VA criteria has been met (i.e., internet/intranet URLs, creation/revision dates, etc.).

Design Element Checklist

❏ Are you using the correct New VA Parent Signature and/or Seal?

❏ Are all of the colors and typography used in the design approved by these guidelines?

❏ Are all of the images properly treated/styled, cropped, and arranged in the layout?

❏ Is the VA internet URL "www.va.gov" (required on any material to be used for external audiences).

❏ Is there a creation/revision date (i.e. "Created 6/12" or Revised 6/12) included and formatted according to standards (see page 58)? Type should be 7pt. Myriad Pro Regular, bottom left or right corner (back panel for brochures and double-sided fact sheets).

Production Checklist

❏ Has the design been approved by the author and/or supervisor?

❏ Are all high-resolution (300 dpi) images included, and non-300 dpi images identified?

❏ Are all font files (screen and printer) included?

❏ Have the latest PDFs of your project been included?

❏ Has text been checked to ensure against overflow?

❏ Is there is a 1/8" bleed on the outside edge of bleed areas?

❏ Have crop and registration marks been included?

❏ Are the correct CMYK or PMS colors being used?

VA

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