



THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

January 16, 2020

**MEMORANDUM FOR UNDER SECRETARIES, ASSISTANT SECRETARIES, AND
OTHER KEY OFFICIALS**

SUBJECT: Non-Retaliation Statement for Small Entities Seeking Assistance from the Small Business Administration's Office of the National Ombudsman

The Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act (SBREFA) requires agencies to take steps to collect input from small entities on regulations and to determine whether a rule is expected to have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. The Small Business Administration's Office of the National Ombudsman (Ombudsman) was created to assist small businesses when they experience excessive or unfair Federal regulatory enforcement actions, such as repetitive audits or investigations; excessive fines and penalties; threats; retaliation; or other unfair enforcement action by a Federal agency.

This memorandum communicates the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy on non-retaliation and small entities' rights under SBREFA, including the right to file a comment or complaint with the Ombudsman. VA prohibits retaliatory actions by VA employees against any small business regarding Ombudsman assistance, or questions or complaints about VA regulatory enforcement actions, requirements, or policies.

VA takes allegations of retaliation against small businesses very seriously and will thoroughly investigate those allegations, including referring all allegations of threats or retaliation against small businesses to the cognizant senior executive, the Inspector General, or other responsible official, and take appropriate corrective action. The content of this notice will be made available to the public on the Web site of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU).

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Ruby B. Harvey, Executive Director, OSDBU, by email at Ruby.Harvey@va.gov or at (202) 461-4600.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. M. Byrne", is located below the text.

James M. Byrne