

Department of Veterans Affairs
Washington, DC 20420

VA Directive 5002
Transmittal Sheet
January 15, 2003

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)
WORKFORCE AND SUCCESSION PLANNING**

1. REASON FOR ISSUE: This directive establishes a uniform, Department-wide workforce and succession planning process, aligned with the strategic planning, budget, and legislative processes.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS: This directive prescribes Department-wide policy for a uniform workforce and succession planning process to be used for the cultivation and management of VA's workforce. The workforce and succession planning process is an ongoing activity intended to align VA's workforce with the critical needs of the Department's mission. This policy establishes the requirements for:

a. The assessment of: (1) the workforce necessary to accomplish program goals; (2) the current and projected workforce in terms of these goals, leadership needs, and workforce diversity; and (3) strategies to obtain the required workforce for the future;

b. Organizational workforce and succession plans for VA Administrations, Staff Offices, and Boards with 100 employees or more; and

c. A Department-wide workforce and succession plan.

3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: The Office of Human Resources and Administration, Office of Human Resources Management, is responsible for the contents of this directive and will provide annual guidance to meet the requirements of this directive.

4. RELATED HANDBOOK: None.

5. RESCISSION: None.

CERTIFIED BY:

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:**

/s/

/s/

**John A. Gauss
Assistant Secretary for
Information and Technology**

**Jacob Lozada, Ph.D.
Assistant Secretary for
Human Resources and Administration**

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**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)
WORKFORCE AND SUCCESSION PLANNING**

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE.

a. This directive establishes a uniform, Department-wide workforce and succession planning process, aligned with the strategic planning, budget, and legislative processes. Workforce and succession planning is the continuous management process of determining the kinds of employees and infrastructure required to accomplish VA's mission and the development and implementation of strategies to meet those needs. The workforce and succession planning process is not a product or activity with a specific arbitrary end date; rather, it is an ongoing activity intended to keep VA's workforce aligned with the critical needs of the Department's mission.

b. This directive applies to all VA Administrations, Staff Offices, and Boards with 100 or more employees. Other organizations are encouraged, but not required, to comply with this directive. The Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) will provide annual guidance to meet the requirements of this directive.

2. POLICY

a. OHRM will provide annual planning guidance and timelines to Administrations, Staff Offices, and Board(s) to ensure workforce and succession planning efforts occur in alignment with VA's business planning cycles (e.g., strategic, budget, and legislative planning).

b. VA's major components will develop workforce and succession plans as follows:

(1) **Administration Plans:** Each Administration will develop workforce and succession plans that incorporate its major components (i.e., Veterans Integrated Service Networks, Memorial Service Networks, Area Offices), using the information requirements stated in paragraph 2.e. and in the OHRM annual planning guidance. Updated national plans for each Administration will be submitted to OHRM within 90 days of the beginning of each fiscal year.

(2) **Assistant Secretary, Staff Office, and Board Plans:** Each Staff Office and Board with 100 or more employees shall develop a workforce and succession plan using the information requirements stated in paragraph 2.e. and in the OHRM annual planning guidance. Each Assistant Secretary, Staff Office, and Board will submit its plan to the Director of the Central Office Human Resources Service (COHRS), who will develop a Central Office workforce and succession plan. An updated Central Office plan will be submitted to OHRM within 90 days of the beginning of each fiscal year.

(3) **Departmental Plan:** Using the Administrations' national workforce and succession plans and the Central Office Workforce and Succession Plan, OHRM will develop a Departmental workforce and succession plan. Each fiscal year, the plan will

be updated during the second quarter to be used to inform the strategic, budget, and legislative planning cycles.

e. The minimal requirements for VA's workforce and succession plans include the following elements:

(1) Review of strategic goals, objectives, and strategies to identify future workforce needs;

(2) Historical workforce analyses, including:

(a) Analyses of employee counts, retirements, other losses, new hires;

(b) Analyses of workforce diversity; and

(c) Analyses of leadership (i.e., SES and GS/GM 13–15) retirements.

(3) Workforce projections, including:

(a) Analyses of employee counts, retirements, other losses, new hires;

(b) Analyses of workforce diversity; and

(c) Analyses of leadership (i.e., SES and GS/GM 13–15) retirements.

(4) Comparison of current workforce, projected workforce, and projected business needs to determine workforce gaps;

(5) Identification of strategies to close workforce gaps;

(6) Identification of budget and legislative needs to implement strategies; and

(7) Monitoring and evaluation of strategies in organizational workforce and succession plans and the Departmental Workforce and Succession Plan.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. The Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration shall:

(1) Serve as the principal advisor to the Secretary on all VA workforce and succession planning matters;

(2) Have overall responsibility for directing the activities of workforce planning;

(3) Ensure Department-wide compliance with the policies contained in this directive; and

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(4) Lead Department-wide efforts to develop legislative, policy, and other initiatives to address identified workforce gaps.

b. The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management shall:

(1) Develop workforce planning policy, procedures, schedules and training; and coordinate the development of VA's Workforce and Succession Plan;

(2) Develop and maintain appropriate information systems to support workforce planning; and

(3) Monitor overall agency progress in meeting workforce planning goals.

c. The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Diversity Management and Equal Employment Opportunity shall:

(1) Develop diversity management policy, procedures, schedules, and training that will assist VA in integrating diversity management into the workforce planning process;

(2) Coordinate the development of VA's diversity goals, in alignment with workforce needs identified in workforce plans; and

(3) Monitor overall agency progress in meeting diversity goals.

d. The Workforce Planning Council shall:

(1) Champion workforce and succession planning with VA's leadership;

(2) Identify Departmental workforce and succession planning priorities and cross-cutting issues and assist the Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration in developing appropriate strategies to address issues at the Departmental level; and

(3) Oversee implementation of the workforce and succession planning process.

e. Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, and other Key Officials shall:

(1) Establish the Departmental strategic and programmatic goals that will serve as the foundation of all workforce and succession planning efforts;

(2) Implement, oversee, and ensure accountability for the policies contained in this directive within their organization;

(3) Perform quality assurance reviews of organizational workforce plans during the planning process, prior to submission to OHRM;

(4) Perform quality assurance reviews of organizational workforce plans during the planning process, prior to submission to OHRM;

(5) Monitor and evaluate progress toward meeting workforce planning and diversity goals in their organizations and developing recommendations for change(s); and

(6) Ensure adequate funding and commitment to workforce planning initiatives identified as critical to their organization.

f. Veterans Integrated Service Network, Memorial Service Network, and Area Directors are responsible for developing workforce and succession plans at their organizational level.

g. Director, Central Office Human Resources Service is responsible for developing a Central Office workforce and succession plan using input provided from the Staff Offices and Board(s).

h. Supervisors and managers are responsible for implementing detailed action plans, ensuring workforce planning strategies and action items are implemented.

4. REFERENCES

a. General Accounting Office, *Major Management Challenges and Program Risks: A Governmentwide Perspective*, GAO-01-0241 (Washington, D.C.: GAO, January 2001).

b. Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 (Public Law 103-62).

c. Office of Management and Budget Bulletin 01-07, dated May 8, 2001.

d. Office of Personnel Management Human Capital Scorecard, dated December 7, 2001.

e. Office of Personnel Management Report of Oversight Review at the Department of Veterans Affairs, dated April 2002.

f. President's Management Agenda, dated Summer 2001.

5. Definitions

a. Competencies – underlying attributes of an employee, which result in effective and/or superior performance.

b. Gaps – amount by which current or future workforce needs exceed current or projected resources essential to the organization in order for it to carry out its mission and accomplish its strategic objectives.

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c. Succession Planning – a deliberate and systematic effort designed to ensure the continued effective performance of an organization, division, service, department or work group by making provisions for the development and replacement of key people over time, ensuring continuity in mission critical positions, and encouraging individual achievement.

d. Workforce Forecasting – the systematic process of collecting and analyzing internal and external data related to mission, resource trends, technology and productivity enhancements, diversity, and other factors affecting workforce size, competencies, and infrastructure in order to project future workforce requirements.

e. Workforce Plan – a long-term plan that identifies anticipated workforce needs including workforce goals, strategies to meet those goals, and performance targets that measure success in meeting the goals.

f. Workforce Planning – the continuous management process of determining the kinds of employees and infrastructure required to accomplish an organization's mission and the development and implementation of strategies to meet those needs.

g. Workforce Planning Council – chaired by the Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration, consists of the three Deputy Under Secretaries for VA's Administrations. The Council meets quarterly to discuss Departmental workforce and succession planning issues and ensures a better level of coordination among VA leaders on resource requirements and implementing workforce and succession planning initiatives.