

## STAFFING

1. **REASON FOR ISSUE:** To revise the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) qualification standard for Medical Support Assistant (MSA), GS-0679, appointed under 38 U.S.C. § 7401(3) and 38 U.S.C. § 7405(a)(1)(B).
2. **SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This handbook contains mandatory procedures on staffing. The pages in this issuance will be incorporated in VA Handbook 5005/Staffing. Revised text is contained in [brackets]. These changes will be incorporated into the electronic version of VA Handbook 5005 that is maintained on the [Office of Human Resources Management \(OHRM\) Website](#). Significant changes include:
  - a. Adds Lead MSA, GS-6 assignment.
  - b. Expands the definition of MSA work under the Coverage section.
  - c. Adds a list of definitions to describe MSA functional areas, patient systems, and defines the differences between clinic designations.
  - d. Clarifies and expands the definition of Creditable Experience.
  - e. Clarifies criteria for Advanced MSA assignments.
  - f. Updates knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) at all levels for each assignment.
3. **RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (059), Office of Human Resources Management.
4. **RELATED DIRECTIVE:** VA Directive 5005, Staffing.
5. **RESCISSION:** VA Handbook 5005/53, Appendix G45 dated June 7, 2012.

**CERTIFIED BY:**

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

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**APPENDIX G45. MEDICAL SUPPORT ASSISTANT QUALIFICATION STANDARD  
GS-0679****Veterans Health Administration**

**1. COVERAGE.** The following are requirements for appointment as a Medical Support Assistant (MSA) in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). These requirements apply to all VHA MSAs in the General Schedule (GS)-0679 series. [This series covers one-grade interval administrative support positions that supervise, lead, or perform support work relating to the care and treatment given to patients in inpatient units, outpatient clinics, patient scheduling call centers, Care in the Community Support Staff (CitC), and ancillary support services. The work includes functions such as serving as an initial point of contact for the units, clinics, patient, call centers, CitC, to include, but not limited to, scheduling patient appointments, tracking, reviewing, and responding to electronic orders, consults, and other elements in the electronic medical record and medical systems. This series includes work that requires a practical knowledge of computerized data entry, information processing systems and software related to patient care, the healthcare system's organization and services, basic rules and regulations governing visitors and patient treatment, knowledge of standard procedures, utilizing medical records, and medical terminology.]

**[2. DEFINITIONS.**

- a. **Ancillary Services.** Clinics that provide diagnostic studies and/or support services to assist in the provision of patient care. Areas of service include, but are not limited to, Blind and Vision Rehabilitation, Diagnostic Laboratory, Nutrition and Food Service, Prosthetics, Radiology (x-rays and imaging), Recreation and Creative Arts Therapists (music, art, dancing, and drama), Social Work (housing, discharge, planning, family support), and Speech/Language Pathology.
- b. **Call Center.** Centralized unit dedicated to multiple ancillary and interdisciplinary outpatient clinics that determine the need of the caller (i.e., scheduling, processing refill requests, reviewing CPRS, and routing clinical questions to appropriate clinical staff).
- c. **Care in the Community (CitC).** The local VA Community Care department is the 'clinic' that coordinates all patient services for Veterans outside the VA Healthcare System.
- d. **Consult Management.** Includes the basic review and scheduling of patient consult appointments and further review of a specific clinics consults, (i.e., care in the Community consults, primary care provider entered consults and specific clinic consult listings). This review includes identification of status issues, (i.e. scheduled but not linked; scheduled to past appointment; significant findings, etc.) and taking appropriate action to fix such issues or referring to lead/supervisor for further action.
- e. **Direct Scheduling.** Schedules routine appointments without a consult referral.

- f. **Interdisciplinary Coordinated Care Delivery Models.** Coordination of care across all elements of the broader health care system, which may include primary care, mental health, specialty care, Call Center, and community care services and support.
- g. **Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT).** Team of health care professionals that provides comprehensive primary care in partnership with the patient, and the patient's personal support person(s), and manages and coordinates health care services consistent with agreed upon goals of care.
- h. **PACT Teamlets.** A typical teamlet [ ] consists of staff designated in a PACT to each of the following roles: a Primary Care Provider, Registered Nurse Case Manager (RNCM), Clinical Associate, and Administrative Associate. These roles can be occupied by various occupations. For example, a provider can be a physician, Nurse Practitioner or a Physician Assistant. Special population PACTs may designate additional or other positions to the teamlet. Teamlet members collectively take responsibility for ongoing care of all patients assigned to a single patient panel.
- i. **Patient Systems.** Various software, hardware system products, and data portals used to transfer and capture information electronically used in the support of the daily operation of the unit. These systems include, but are not limited to: Veterans Integrated System Technology Architecture (VistA), Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS), Vetlink, VistA Scheduling Graphical User Interface (VS GUI), Insurance Capture Buffer (ICB), VHA Support Service Center (VSSC), Fee Basis Claim System (FBCS), Bed Management Systems (BMS), Compensation and Pension Record Interchange (CAPRI), Veterans Benefit Management System (VBMS), Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL), Patient Centered Management Model (PCMM), Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS), Telecare Record Manager (TRM), Automated Call Delivery (ACD), Audio Care (AC), Business Intelligence Service Line (BISL), Scheduling Audit Tool (SAT), and Veterans Affairs Portal to view external medical records. Patient systems names may vary from institutions and change over time.
- j. **Radiology/Imaging/Nuclear Medicine.** Units which provide diagnostic testing to patients as a result of a request from a clinician in a patient care setting.
- k. **Specialty Clinics.** A variety of specialized medical, surgical, and mental health outpatient clinics. Services performed in the Specialty Care Clinics include, but are not limited to: Arthritis Clinic, Cardiology Clinic, Cardio-Thoracic Clinic, Chest/Pulmonary Clinic, Colorectal Clinic, Dermatology Clinic, Diabetes Education, Ears, Nose and Throat Clinic, Eye Clinic, Gastroenterology Clinic, General Surgery Clinic, Hand and Plastics Reconstruction Clinic, Liver Clinic, Metabolic/Endocrine Clinic, Neurology and Memory Disorder Clinic, Neurosurgery Clinic, Orthopedics Clinic, Podiatry Clinic, Proctology Clinic, Renal Clinic, Traumatic Brain Injury Clinic, Urology Clinic, and Vascular Clinic. Specialty clinic names may vary from institutions and change over time.

- i. **Veterans Appointment Request (VAR).** The VAR allows a Veteran to self-schedule appointments with a primary care provider, request help in the scheduling of primary care and/or mental health appointments, and view/cancel future appointments.
- m. **VistA Scheduling Graphical User Interface (VS GUI).** An upgrade to the scheduling system. VS GUI will improve the efficiency of scheduling, enabling a more Veteran centric process, while addressing the need to schedule appointments through a user-friendly system (or interface).
- n. **Ward.** Inpatient units including, but not limited to: Community Living Center (CLC), Medical Unit, Surgical Unit, Intensive Care Unit (ICU), Domiciliary, Mental Health Units (Acute, Geriatric Psych, and Substance Abuse).]

### 3. BASIC REQUIREMENTS.

- a. **Citizenship.** Citizen of the United States. (Non-citizens may be appointed when it is not possible to recruit qualified citizens in accordance with VA Handbook 5005, Part II, Chapter 3, Section A, paragraph 3.g.).

- b. **Experience and Education.**

- (1) **Experience.** Six months experience of clerical, office, [customer service], or other [administrative] work that indicates the ability to acquire the particular knowledge and skills needed to perform the duties of the position;

OR,

- (2) **Education.** One year above high school;

OR,

- (3) **Experience/Education Combination.** Equivalent combination of experience and education are qualifying for entry level for which both education and experience are acceptable.

- c. **Certification.** None required.

- d. **Grandfathering Provision.** All MSAs employed in VHA in this occupation on the effective date of this qualification standard are considered to have met all qualification requirements for the title, series, and grade held, [which] are [a] part of the basic requirements of the occupation. For employees who do not meet all the basic requirements required in this standard, but who met the qualifications applicable to the position at the time they were appointed to it, the following provisions apply:

- (1) Such employees may be reassigned, promoted, or [changed to a lower grade] within the occupation.

## PART II

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- (2) Employees who are appointed on a temporary basis prior to the effective date of the qualification standard may not have their temporary appointment extended or be reappointed, on a temporary or permanent basis, until they fully meet the basic requirements of the standard.
  - (3) If an employee who was converted to [Title] 38 hybrid status under this provision leaves the occupation, the employee loses protected status and must meet the full VA qualification standard requirements in effect at the time of reentry to the occupation.
- e. **Foreign Education.** To be creditable, education completed outside the U.S. must have been submitted to a private organization that specializes in the interpretation of foreign educational credentials and such education must have been deemed at least equivalent to that gained in conventional U.S. programs.
  - f. **Physical Requirements.** See VA Directive and Handbook 5019.
  - g. **English Language Proficiency.** MSAs must be proficient in spoken and written English in accordance with VA Handbook 5005, Part II, Chapter 3, Section A, paragraph 3.j.

#### 4. GRADE REQUIREMENTS.

##### a. Creditable Experience

- (1) **Knowledge of [ ] MSA Practices.** To be creditable, the experience must have demonstrated the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) associated with current MSA responsibilities [or an equivalent administrative patient support role in a non-VA medical inpatient or outpatient setting]. Experience satisfying this requirement may be paid/non-paid employment as [an] MSA or [an equivalent position in a non-VA hospital or clinic setting].
- (2) **Quality of Experience.** Qualifying experience must be at a level comparable to MSA experience [or equivalent administrative clinical support role in a non-VA medical inpatient or outpatient setting] at the next lower grade level. For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, administrative independence, complexity (difficulty), and a range of [varieties] as described in this standard, at the specified grade level and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time.
- (3) **Part-Time Experience.** Part-time experience as [an MSA or equivalent administrative patient support in] a [non-VA medical inpatient or outpatient setting] is creditable according to its relationship to the full-time workweek. For example, [an] MSA employed 20 hours a week, or on a 1/2-time basis, would receive [one] full-time workweek of credit for each [two] weeks of service.

- b. **Grade Determinations.** [In addition to the basic requirements for employment listed in paragraph 3 above, the] following [education and experience] criteria must be met when determining the grade of candidates:

(1) **Medical Support Assistant, GS-3**

(a) **Experience or Education.** None beyond the basic requirements.

(b) **Assignment.** This is an entry level MSA position. It is expected that MSAs [at this level] receive guidance from more experienced staff members and require frequent and direct supervision. [At this level, MSAs apply general rules and policies relating to clinic functions, staff, and automated data processing methods in support of treatment to patients. They utilize a variety of patient data systems in scheduling patients for treatment and annotates patient records. They perform front desk duties, receives telephone call, and visitors to the MSA unit. They make and cancel appointments, review patient records for necessary information, and review patient demographics and insurance verification. They consult with clinic staff when processing physician scheduling and administrative orders.]

[(c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** [ ] Candidates must demonstrate all of] the KSAs below:

- i. Ability to meet, communicate, and interact with individuals in a courteous and helpful manner in order to give instructions and arrange appointments.
- ii. Ability to utilize computer systems to enter administrative data in patient systems.
- iii. Ability to learn and utilize basic medical terminology to record patient messages and physician requests pertaining to follow-up medical care.]

(2) **Medical Support Assistant, GS-4**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience in clerical, office, [customer service, or other administrative] work that indicates the ability to acquire the particular knowledge and skills needed to perform the duties of the position [ ];

OR,

[(b)] **Education.** Two years of education above high school.]

[(c)] **Assignment.** This is a developmental level MSA position. It is expected that MSAs [at this level] receive [minor and less frequent] guidance from higher experienced staff members for more difficult tasks [ ]. Assignments at this level include, but are not limited to: [scheduling and rescheduling patients for treatment; interviewing patients for appointments; referring patients to other medical specialty clinics; providing information to patients necessary to resolve

complaints;] interacting with both internal and external customers; [reviewing] and [documenting] medical outpatient and inpatient [electronic health records], as well as administrative records; verifying third party insurance and updating information in the Insurance Capture Buffer (ICB) system; obtaining medical information from patients; coordinating information and actions related to patient care and services; and scheduling appointments in accordance with VHA national scheduling guidelines. [ ] [MSAs at this level refer] all questions [regarding] medical attention to [the] appropriate health care team member.

[(d)] **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** Candidates must demonstrate [all of] the KSAs below:

- i. Ability to meet, communicate, and interact with individuals from varying backgrounds and other health care team members in a courteous and helpful manner in order to [facilitate medical care for patients].
- ii. Ability to use, [and navigate between], various types of office automation equipment and software [(i.e. computer systems, web based scheduling programs; insurance collection system; scanning software, multiple line phone systems; electronic faxing programs) to support patient care].
- iii. [Knowledge of basic medical terminology to assist in the provision of care to patients].
- iv. [Skill in recording patient messages and understanding physician requests pertaining to follow-up medical care in internal or external clinics.]

### (3) **Medical Support Assistant, GS-5**

(a) **Experience** [ ]. One year of experience equivalent to the [GS-4] grade level;

[OR,

(b) **Education.** Four] years of education above high school.

[(c)] **Assignment.** This is the full performance level for MSAs. At this level, the MSA independently performs a full range of duties [related to the delivery of healthcare services in an inpatient or outpatient setting. Advises clinical staff on current administrative processes.] The MSA is responsible for [answering phones, greeting patients, relaying messages to appropriate staff inside or outside of the unit], scheduling appointments, including interpreting and verifying provider orders in accordance with VHA national scheduling guidelines. Assignments at this level include, but are not limited to: scheduling, canceling, re-scheduling [patient] appointments and/or consults; entering no-show information; monitoring [appointment requests from multiple] electronic [sources; participating in huddles with other MSAs and/or clinic staff to determine the daily needs of the clinic],

monitoring both inpatient and outpatient appointments [in] areas of responsibility; [ ] verifying and updating demographics and insurance information when [patients check-in for appointments. Coordinates administrative functions relating to] emergency and non-emergency transfers to other VA facilities or private hospitals [and determines appointment type based on the patient's] eligibility [status] (i.e., TRICARE, sharing agreements, [collaterals, research patient, VA employee], etc.).

**[(d)] Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** Candidates must demonstrate [all of] the KSAs below:

- i. Ability to operate computerized programs and [systems] in order to enter, modify, and retrieve sensitive [medical and patient identifying] information [(PII)] into or from electronic [health] records, scheduling systems, and/or reports.
- ii. [Advanced knowledge of medical terminology specific to understand medical diagnosis and procedures sufficient to communicate clinical staff instructions to patients.]
- iii. Ability to [schedule medical] appointments in a clinical setting.
- iv. Ability to work independently in the accomplishment of a wide variety of duties [performing patient support work].
- v. Ability to communicate effectively and professionally [in person, electronically, and/or by telephone], with [internal and external customers].
- vi. [Skill in customer service with the ability] to identify [customer] concerns, [and refer] to the [appropriate staff], as necessary, to ensure a satisfactory resolution.

#### **(4) Medical Support Assistant (Advanced), GS-6**

- (a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the [GS-5] grade level.
- (b) **Assignment.** The Advanced MSA [provides specialized and expert administrative patient support while working] collaboratively in an interdisciplinary coordinated care delivery model [ ]. [Work involves specialized administrative judgment and the flexible use of a wide range of clinical flow processes relating to access to care across multiple clinics, specialties, and/or care in the community resources. Recommends changes to existing clinic procedures based on current administrative guidelines. Expertise in utilizing numerous advanced patient systems in support of multiple clinics involved in an interdisciplinary coordinated care delivery model. Coordinates] with the patient care team to review clinic [appointment availability] (utilization) [ ] to ensure that clinic [schedules are] closely monitored to effectively support the needs of the



clinics, and [makes adjustments as necessary]. [MSAs at this level] develop [and/or] maintain effective and efficient communication with the patient, interdisciplinary [coordinated care delivery model teams] , VA medical centers, and other agencies (e.g., assist with communications during the inpatient to outpatient discharge; communicate with non-VA medical facilities; [prepare correspondence] to notify patients of normal lab results; [ ] manage a [ ] system for follow-up care such as consults, tests, etc.).

Other assignments at this level include, but are not limited to: [processes incoming patient secure messaging through MyHealthyVet and coordinates with care team as appropriate; participates in] team huddles and team meetings to manage, plan, [problem solve, and follow-up with] patient [care by sharing information and collaborating with the interdisciplinary team]; setting priorities and deadlines, adjusting the flow and sequencing of the work to meet team and patient needs; [identifies incomplete encounters and communicates findings to providers; as needed; assists] the team to reinforce the plan of care and self-help solutions; [enters] appropriate information into the electronic record; monitors pre-appointment information and/or requirements to assure readiness for patient visit/procedure; [manages patient systems] to verify and validate accuracy and resolve issues; evaluates patient information and clinic schedule lists to determine whether [the patient requires an immediate appointment; informs team members] about shared patients ([i.e.], those who receive their care at multiple [VA centers] or those who [receive] care in the community) [ ]. For all [assignments above the full performance level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, administrative independence, complexity (difficulty), and range of variety as described in this standard at the specified grade level and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time].

(c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** Candidates must demonstrate [all of] the KSAs below:

- i. Ability to collaborate [and] communicate [with a wide range of medical clinicians across multiple disciplines (e.g. medical doctors, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, clinical pharmacists, and nursing staff) to accomplish team goal setting to ensure medical care to patients is met.]
- ii. [Ability to independently] set priorities and organize [ ] work to meet deadlines, ensuring compliance with established processes, policies, and regulations.
- iii. Ability to communicate tactfully and effectively, [electronically, by phone, in person], and in writing, [with internal and external customers]. This may include preparing reports in various formats and presenting data to various organizational levels, [as well as resolving patient concerns].

iv. Advanced knowledge of the technical health care process [(including, but not limited to, scheduling across interdisciplinary coordinated care delivery and/or care in the community models and patient health care portals)] as it relates to access to care.

[ ]

[v.] Advanced knowledge of policies and procedures associated with interdisciplinary coordinated care delivery and/or care in the community operational activities that affect patient flow, and patient support care [administrative functions] to include, but not limited to appointment cycles, outside patient referrals, follow-up care, overbooking, provider availability, etc.

[vi.] Advanced knowledge of medical terminology due to the technical nature of language utilized by clinicians.

#### **[(5) Lead Medical Support Assistant, GS-6**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the [GS-5] grade level.

(b) **Assignment.** The Lead MSA is responsible for answering questions for lower graded staff relating to healthcare services in an inpatient or outpatient setting. The Lead MSA monitors and makes work assignments, provides input on performance, resolves daily workplace issues, and maintains efficient workflow. Assignments at this level include, but are not limited to: assuring coverage of all areas of responsibility; conducting ongoing reviews to ensure quality of work; ensuring accurate and timely scheduling of appointments; providing guidance to staff members, to include changes in policies and procedures; distributing and balancing workload; creating and maintaining employee work schedules; orienting and providing on-the-job training for new and current employees; ensuring all training requirements are met; organizing the work structure of his/her assigned areas; and acting as a liaison between MSA and staff to resolve day to day conflicts. For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, administrative independence, complexity (difficulty), and range of variety as described in this standard at the specified grade level and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time.

(c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** Candidates must demonstrate all of the KSAs below:

i. Ability to organize work, set priorities, and delegate tasks/responsibilities in order to meet deadlines.

ii. Skill in communicating with individuals to obtain the desired effect, ensuring compliance with established policies and regulations.

iii. Ability to provide staff development and training.

- iv. Ability to manage staffing requirements, manage priorities, and coordinate with staff in the unit in order to complete duties in an accurate and timely manner. This includes the ability to follow-up on pending issues and demonstrate an understanding of the impact of incomplete work.
- v. Ability to review and monitor data to ensure all reports are complete and accurate.]

**(6) Lead Medical Support Assistant, GS-7**

- (a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the [GS-6] grade level.
- (b) **Assignment.** The Lead MSA [is responsible for the coordination of Advanced MSA assignments and workflow found in an interdisciplinary unit. The Lead MSA is responsible for daily workload assessments, assigning work, and assuring proper staffing coverage; evaluating training records; and determining training needs of MSAs to provide support across interdisciplinary settings. The Lead assists the unit with complex and non-standard procedures, including clinical flow processes related to access to care across multiple clinics, specialties, and/or community resources. Assignments at this level include, but are not limited to: ensuring accurate and timely scheduling of appointments; providing guidance to staff members, to include changes in policies and procedures; creating and maintaining employee work schedules; and acting as a liaison among Advanced MSA staff, patients, and other interdisciplinary staff to resolve day-to-day conflicts.] For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, administrative independence, complexity (difficulty) and range of variety as described in this standard at the specified grade level and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time.
- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** Candidates must demonstrate [all of] the KSAs below:
  - i. [Advanced knowledge of medical terminology and a wide range of clinical flow processes relating to access to care across multiple clinics, specialties, and/or community resources.
  - ii. Ability to utilize numerous advanced patient systems in support of multiple clinics in an interdisciplinary setting.]
  - iii. Ability to organize work, set priorities, and delegate tasks/responsibilities in order to meet deadlines.
  - iv. Skill in communicating with individuals to obtain the desired effect [and coordinating with a variety of interdisciplinary care team staff].
  - v. Ability to provide staff development and training.

[vi.] Ability to manage staffing requirements, manage workflow priorities, and adjust the flow of work to meet team and patient needs. This includes the ability to follow-up on pending issues and demonstrate an understanding of the impact of incomplete work across multiple clinics.

**(7) Supervisory Medical Support Assistant, GS-7**

- (a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the [GS-6] grade level [leading or supervising MSAs or equivalent administrative patient support staff in a non-VA medical inpatient, outpatient, or interdisciplinary setting].
- (b) **Assignment.** Supervisory MSAs plan and direct programs at medical centers and/or satellite outpatient clinics and have full supervisory responsibility. Assignments at this level include, but are not limited to: assigning and evaluating the work of subordinate MSA staff; resolving complex problems to ensure patient services are met; evaluating new products, equipment, and systems to make recommendations for improved clinic operations; identifying educational or training needs; making final decisions on hiring selections; evaluating performance, and taking disciplinary action when necessary. The employee has full administrative and professional responsibility for planning and directing the MSA's activities. For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, administrative independence, complexity (difficulty) and range of variety as described in this standard at the specified grade level and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time.
- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** Candidates must demonstrate [all of] the KSAs below:
- i. Ability to provide the full range of administrative and supervisory duties [in a patient support setting,] which includes assignment of work, performance evaluations, selection of staff, and recommendation of awards and/or advancements].
  - ii. Ability to collaborate, communicate, and demonstrate customer service and interpersonal skills with [internal and external customers] to ensure quality/continuity of care and ensure compliance with established policies and regulations.
  - iii. Ability to provide briefings, orientations, staff development, and [training related to administrative functions in a patient support setting].
  - iv. Ability to delegate authority, evaluate and oversee people and programs, accomplish program goals, and adapt to changing priorities.

**(8) Supervisory Medical Support Assistant, GS-8**

- (a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the [GS-7] grade level [leading or supervising MSAs or equivalent administrative patient support staff in a non-VA medical inpatient, outpatient, or interdisciplinary setting.]
- (b) **Assignment.** [Supervisory MSAs at this level plan and direct programs at medical centers and/or satellite outpatient clinics. They have full responsibility for supervising at least one subordinate MSA team leader, supervisor, or equivalent administrative patient support staff in a non-VA medical inpatient, outpatient, or interdisciplinary setting. Assignments at this level include, but are not limited to: evaluating the work of subordinate staff; resolving complex problems to ensure patient services are met; evaluating new products, equipment, and systems to make recommendations for improved operations; identifying educational or training needs; making final decisions on hiring selections; evaluating performance, and taking disciplinary action when necessary. The employee has administrative and professional responsibility for planning and directing the subordinate lead, supervisor, and MSA's activities. Responsible for extracting and analyzing data to provide reports to senior management in support of tracking measures.] For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, administrative independence, complexity (difficulty) and range of variety as described in this standard at the specified grade level and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time.
- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** Candidates must demonstrate [all of] the KSAs below:
- i. Ability to provide the full range of administrative and supervisory duties [to at least one subordinate MSA supervisor or team leader in a patient support setting which includes assignment of work, performance evaluations, selection of staff, and recommendation of awards and/or advancements.]
  - ii. Ability to collaborate, communicate, and demonstrate customer service and interpersonal skills with internal and external customers to ensure quality/continuity of care and ensure compliance with established policies and regulations.
  - iii. Ability to provide briefings, orientations, staff development, and training [in a patient support setting].
  - iv. Ability to manage fiscal matters, forecast resource and equipment needs, and identify budget needs.
  - v. Advanced knowledge of managing or leading patient support staff in a clinic. This includes independently utilizing reference sources, decision making, and

empowering the team to collaborate and resolve problems within a complex systems environment.]

## **5. DEVIATIONS.**

- a. The appointing official may, under unusual circumstances, approve reasonable deviations to the grade determination requirements for MSAs in VHA whose composite record of accomplishments, performance, and qualifications, as well as current assignments, warrant such action based on demonstrated competence to meet the requirements of the proposed grade.
- b. The placement of individuals in grade levels not described in this standard must be approved by the Under Secretary for Health, or designee, in VHA Central Office.

**Authority 38 U.S.C. 7402, 7403]**