

STAFFING

1. **REASON FOR ISSUE:** To revise the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) qualification standard for Medical Records Administrator (MRA), General Schedule (GS)-0669, appointed under the authority of 38 U.S.C. § 7401(3) and 38 U.S.C. § 7405(a)(1)(B) in VA.
2. **SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This handbook contains mandatory procedures on staffing. This policy revises qualification standards for the MRA occupation. This revised standard will be effective on the date of publication. The pages in this appendix replace the existing MRA Qualification Standard in VA Handbook 5005, Appendix G33, in its entirety. These changes will be incorporated into the electronic version of VA Handbook 5005, Staffing, that is maintained on the [Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer Website](#). Significant changes include:
 - a. Establishes the requirement of a certification under basic requirements.
 - b. Establishes a specific assignment for an Assistant Chief at the GS-11 level.
 - c. Clarifies designation of assignments above the full performance level.
 - d. Clarifies proper titling for the GS-5, GS-7, GS-9, and GS-11 (non-supervisory) assignment levels as Medical Records Administration Specialist.
3. **RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (059), Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer.
4. **RELATED DIRECTIVE:** VA Directive 5005.
5. **RESCISSIONS:** VA Handbook 5005, Appendix G33, dated March 17, 2006.

CERTIFIED BY:

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

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**[APPENDIX G33. MEDICAL RECORD[S] ADMINISTRATOR/MEDICAL RECORDS
ADMINISTRATION SPECIALIST
QUALIFICATION STANDARD
GS- [0]669
Veterans Health Administration**

1. COVERAGE. The following are the requirements for appointment as a [Medical Records Administration Specialist (MRAS) and] Medical Records Administrator (MRA) (collectively referred to as “MRA” or “the occupation”) in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). These requirements apply to all VHA MRAs in the General Schedule (GS)- [0669] series. [] MRAs in VHA perform or supervise work concerned with the management of a [health] record program or the provision of services related to medical record administration/health information services. [MRAs] manage, preserve, analyze, and supervise the use of diagnostic and therapeutic [health] records/health information management. They develop policies and procedures and provide advice on the use of [health] records and health information management. [] [Excluded from the GS-0669 qualification standard] are positions [such] as [privacy,] compliance, [records manager, medical records technician ((MRT) (Release of Information)), MRT (Health Information Technician), MRT (Coder), clinical documentation improvement specialist, MRT (Cancer Registrar),] or [other occupations which have their own qualification standard.] In the health care community, MRAs are generally referred to as “health information managers [(HIM) or health information management specialists] [(HIMS),”] and [these terms are] considered to be synonymous where stated in this qualification standard.

[2. DEFINITIONS.

- a. **Coding Certification.** Mastery certification obtained through the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) or the American Association of Professional Coders (AAPC). To be acceptable for qualification, the specific certification must represent a comprehensive competency in the occupation. Stand-alone specialty certifications do not meet the definition of mastery level coding certification and are not acceptable for qualifications. Certification titles may change and certifications that meet the definition of mastery level coding certification may be added/removed by the above certifying bodies; however, current mastery level coding certifications include: Certified Coding Specialist (CCS), Certified Coding Specialist (CCS) – Physician-based (CCS-P), Certified Professional Coder (CPC), Certified Outpatient Coder (COC), and Certified Inpatient Coder (CIC).
- b. **Creditable Experience.** Experience is only creditable if it is in health information management and is directly related to the position to be filled. To be creditable, the candidate’s experience must have demonstrated the use of knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with current practice. Experience satisfying this requirement must be active practice, which is paid/non-paid employment as an MRT/MRA or related field such as medical coding, qualitative and quantitative health record analysis, Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act privacy and release of information, or preparation, maintenance, and management of health records.

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- c. **Health Data Analyst Certification.** This is limited to certification obtained through AHIMA. To be acceptable for qualifications, the specific certification must certify mastery in health data analysis. Certification titles may change and certifications that meet the definition of health data analyst certification may be added/removed by the above certifying body; however, current health data analyst certification includes Certified Health Data Analyst (CHDA).
- d. **Health Information Management (HIM) Certification.** Higher-level health information management certification is limited to certification obtained through AHIMA. To be acceptable for qualifications, the specific certification must represent a comprehensive competency in the occupation. Certification titles may change and certifications that meet the definition of HIM certification may be added/removed by the above certifying body; however, current HIM certifications include Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) and Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA).
- e. **Journey Level.** The full performance level for this qualification standard is non-supervisory GS-11 grade level.
- f. **Part-Time Experience.** Part-time experience as a professional MRA is creditable according to its relationship to the full-time workweek. For example, an MRA would receive one week of full-time credit for each two weeks of half-time work.
- g. **Quality of Experience.** To be creditable, experience must be documented on the application or resume and verified in an employment reference, or through other independent means.]

[3.] BASIC REQUIREMENTS.

- a. **Citizenship.** [Candidates must be a citizen] of the United States. Non-citizens may be appointed when it is not possible to recruit qualified candidates in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 7407(a).
 - b. **Education or Experience:**
 - (1) **Experience.** Three years of [creditable] experience in the field of medical records that included the preparation, maintenance, and management of [health] records and health information systems [demonstrating a knowledge of medical terminology,] medical records [procedures, medical coding, or medical, administrative, and legal requirements of health care delivery] systems.
- OR,
- (2) **Education.** [Successful completion of a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited college or university [recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, with a major field of study in health information management, or a related degree

with a minimum of 24 semester hours in health information management or health information technology.]

OR,

(3) **Experience/Education Combination.** Equivalent combinations of [creditable] experience and education that equals 100 percent may be used to meet basic requirements. [For example, two years above high school from an accredited college or university, with 12 semester hours in health information technology/health information management, plus one year and six months of creditable experience that included the preparation, maintenance, and management of health records and health information systems meets an equivalent combination.

c. **Certification.** Persons hired or reassigned to MRA positions in the GS-0669 series in VHA must meet one of the following:

(1) Coding Certification through AHIMA or AAPC.

NOTE. See paragraph 2a above for a detailed definition of Coding Certification.

OR,

(2) HIM Certification through AHIMA.

NOTE. See paragraph 2d above for a detailed definition of HIM Certification.

OR,

(3) Health Data Analyst Certification through AHIMA.

NOTE. See paragraph 2c above for a detailed definition of Health Data Analyst Certification.

NOTE. HIMs Certification is required for all positions above the full performance level.

d. **Loss of Credential.** Following initial certification, credentials must be maintained through rigorous continuing education, ensuring the highest level of competency for employers and patients. An employee in this occupation who fails to maintain the required certification must be removed from the occupation which may result in termination of employment. At the discretion of the appointing official, an employee may be reassigned to another occupation for which he/she qualifies, if a placement opportunity exists.

e. **Grandfathering Provision.] []** All persons employed in VHA [as an MRA] are considered to have met all qualification requirements for the title, series, and grade held, including positive education, and [registration and/or] certification [] that are part

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of the basic requirements of the occupation. For employees who do not meet all the basic requirements [] in this standard, but who met the qualifications applicable to the position at the time they were appointed [], the following provisions apply:

- [(1)] Such employees [] may be reassigned, promoted up to, and including, the full performance ([journeyman]) level, or [changed to lower grade] within the occupation, but may not be promoted beyond the [journeyman] level or placed in supervisory or managerial positions.
- [(2)] Employees who [were] 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)] Employees initially grandfathered into this occupation who subsequently obtain additional education and/or licensure/[registration]/certification[, and] meet all the basic requirements of this qualification standard, must maintain the required credentials as a condition of employment in the occupation.
- [(4)] MRAs who are converted to title] 38 [hybrid status] under this provision [and subsequently leave the] occupation [lose] protected status and must meet the full VA qualification standard requirements in effect at the time of reentry [, as a medical records administrator].

[f]. **Physical Requirements.** See VA Directive and Handbook 5019.

[g]. **English Language Proficiency.** MRAs must be proficient in spoken and written English. See 38 U.S.C. § 7403(f).

[4.] GRADE REQUIREMENTS.

- a. **Grade Determinations.** In addition to the basic requirements for employment, the following criteria must be met when determining the grade of candidates.

[NOTE.] For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, complexity, range of variety, and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time.

- (1) **Medical Records Administration Specialist,] GS-5.** None beyond basic requirements.

[(a) **Assignment.**] Employees at this grade level serve in an MRA career development position under close supervision. [MRAs are responsible for generating multiple HIM reports. They participate in various health record review activities to ensure the integrity of the health record according to established policies.

(2) Medical Records Administration Specialist,] GS-7

(a) **Experience.** In addition to the basic requirements, [one] year of [creditable] experience equivalent to the next lower grade level. []

OR,

[(b) **Education. (Advanced Entry-Level Placement).** Applicants who meet the GS-5 grade level may be appointed at the GS-7 grade level, if they possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in a major field of study in health information management, with an exemplary academic record as demonstrated by:

- i. A 3.0 or higher-grade point average (GPA) out of a possible 4.0 GPA ("B" or better), as recorded on their official transcript or as computed based on four years of education, or as computed based on courses completed during the final two years of the curriculum; or
- ii. A 3.5 GPA or higher out of a possible 4.0 GPA ("B+" or better) based on the average of the required courses completed in the major field of study, or the required courses completed in the major field of study during the final two years of the curriculum.

AND]

(c) Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.

- i. [Knowledge of current] classification systems [, such as International Classification of Diseases, Current Procedural Terminology,] and [the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS).
- ii. Ability to effectively communicate (written and verbal) with medical center staff, patients, and external entities.]
- iii. Ability to use data collection and analytical techniques for purposes of review, quality control, studies and analysis [of health information.
- iv. Ability to utilize computer applications with varied functions to produce a wide range of reports, to abstract records, collect and analyze data and present results in various formats.
- v. Ability to work independently, adapt to shifting priorities, and meet deadlines.]

(d) **Assignment.** Employees at this level [] serve in [an] MRA career development position [with] guidance [from the supervisor or designee] in day-to-day

assignments. [MRAs are responsible for generating, analyzing, and presenting multiple HIM reports. They monitor health record data integrity per established policies, procedures, and industry standards. They prepare workload and production reports and monitor trends to identify efficiencies and deviations. Additionally, they participate in various health record review activities. The MRA typically participates in various facility and regional committees requiring health information management subject matter expertise.

(3) Medical Records Administration Specialist,] GS-9

- (a) **Experience.** [One] year of [creditable] experience equivalent to the next lower grade level that demonstrates the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics described at that level.

OR,

- (b) **Education.** Education equivalent to [two] full years of progressively higher level graduate education or a master's [degree] or equivalent graduate degree from an accredited college or university in a field directly related to health information management.

[AND]

(c) Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

i. Knowledge of medical and legal requirements related to health information management and health records.]

ii. Ability to provide technical advice and [guidance] on health information [management practices.

iii. Skill in extracting data from various sources and analyzing health information to create reports.

iv. Skill in researching,] interpreting, and [applying] health information management guidelines.

v. Knowledge of performance and process improvement techniques to develop new or improved solutions in health information management.

- (d) **Assignments.** Employees at this level serve in an MRA career development position with limited guidance, from the supervisor or designee, in day-to-day assignments. MRAs are responsible for generating and analyzing multiple HIM reports and identifying best practices or opportunities for improvement. They perform workflow analyses, recommend process improvements, and implement changes to improve the productivity and quality controls of the HIM department.

They monitor reports, trends, and health record data integrity according to established policies, procedures, and industry standards. MRAs participate in various health record review activities. They also participate in various facility and regional committees requiring health information management subject matter expertise.

(4) Medical Records Administration Specialist,] GS-11

(a) **Experience.** [One] year of [creditable] experience equivalent to the next lower grade level that demonstrates all of the KSAs described at that level. []

OR,

(b) **Education.** Education equivalent to three full years of progressively higher-level graduate education or a Ph.D., or equivalent doctoral degree from an accredited university or college in the field of health information management.

[AND]

(c) Demonstrated Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities

- i. Skill in [performance] and process improvement [techniques to develop and implement new or improved solutions in health information management.
- ii. Ability to advise management and staff, at various levels, regarding health record documentation requirements and health information management practices based on current industry standards, policies, statues, laws, and regulations.
- iii. Ability to plan, justify, develop, evaluate, assess, monitor, and advise on current health information management processes and recommend changes in policies or procedures.
- iv. Ability to determine and evaluate compliance with legal, ethical, and regulatory guidelines and accrediting bodies, as they apply to health information management.
- v. Ability to acquire, manage, analyze, interpret, and transform data into accurate, consistent, and meaningful information.

(d) **Assignments.** This is considered the full performance level for MRA positions (MRA/HIM Specialist). MRAs work independently in day-to-day assignments. They perform data mining; complex data analysis; and interpret and transform data into accurate, consistent, and timely information in support of the business and operational needs of the HIM department and the organization. They present findings and recommendations to the Chief of HIM (CHIM) and facility leadership.

MRAs perform workflow analyses, recommend process improvements, identify and implement best practices, and implement changes as needed to improve the productivity and quality controls of the HIM department. They prepare workload and production reports, monitor trends to identify efficiencies and outliers, and recommend appropriate actions which may involve collaborating with staff at all levels for resolution. The MRA designs and performs quality improvement projects related to health information management to identify and recommend ways of eliminating, combining, simplifying or improving procedures and processes. They compile diagnostic, procedural, and statistical data, and present reports locally, regionally, or nationally. MRAs lead various health record review activities. They participate in various facility, regional, and/or national committees requiring health information management subject matter expertise. The MRA exhibits broad organizational knowledge, communicates and provides training and education to individuals and groups, at multiple levels, both internal and external to the facility.

(5) Medical Records Administrator, (Assistant Chief (ACHIM)), GS-11

- (a) **Experience.** One year of creditable experience equivalent to the next lower grade level that demonstrates all the KSAs described at that level.

OR,

- (b) **Education.** Education equivalent to three full years of progressively higher-level graduate education or a Ph.D., or equivalent doctoral degree, from an accredited university or college in the field of health information.

AND

- (c) **Certification.** Employees at this level must have a HIM Certification.

NOTE. See paragraph 2d of this appendix for detailed definitions of HIM Certification.

AND

(d) Demonstrated Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities

- i. Skill in performance and process improvement techniques to develop and implement new or improved solutions in health information management.
- ii. Ability to advise management and staff at various levels regarding health record documentation requirements and health information management practices based on current industry standards, policies, statutes, laws, and regulations.

- iii. Ability to plan, justify, develop, evaluate, assess, monitor, and advise on current health information management processes and recommend changes in policies or procedures.
 - iv. Ability to determine and evaluate compliance with legal, ethical, and regulatory guidelines and accrediting bodies as they apply to health information management.
 - v. Ability to plan, justify, develop, evaluate, assess, monitor and/or advise on current HIM processes and recommend changes in policies or procedures.
 - vi. Ability to successfully apply principles and techniques of sound resource management (i.e., staffing, space, contracts, equipment).
 - vii. Ability to provide the full range of supervisory duties, to include assignment of work, completing performance evaluations, selection of staff, and recommendation for awards, advancements, and disciplinary actions, when appropriate.
- (e) **Assignments.** This assignment is considered above the full performance level. This assignment serves as the Assistant Chief of Health Information Management (ACHIM) in VA Medical Centers designated as complexity level 2 or 3 as designated in the VHA, "2014 Facility Complex Model". The ACHIM assists the Chief HIM (CHIM) in establishing policies, responsibilities, and requirements for HIM related matters, such as health record documentation, coding and clinical documentation improvement, records management, release of information, file room/scanning, transcription and medical speech recognition, as well as the overall management of health information and Veterans health records. The ACHIM assists the CHIM in identifying and setting short-range and long-range goals, program objectives, and tasks to meet the mission and vision of the medical center. They monitor and manage HIM workflow to ensure program objectives are met. They also assist with planning, developing, directing, and evaluating health information and other functions. They oversee implementation and adherence to HIM industry standards, policies, procedures, laws, regulations, and accrediting bodies. The ACHIM ensures the facility is in compliance with applicable standards by completing HIM audits, healthcare data reports, and statistical information, for timely and accurate reporting. They establish, implement, and monitor HIM performance through metrics, productivity measures, benchmarking, and other applicable tools. This MRA position ensures quality and efficiency for all areas and processes of the HIM department.

(6) Medical Records Administrator (Assistant Chief (ACHIM)), GS-12

- (a) **Experience.** One year of creditable experience equivalent to the next lower grade level that demonstrates all the KSAs described at that level.

AND

(b) **Certification.** Employees at this level must have a HIM Certification.

NOTE. See paragraph 2d of this appendix for detailed definitions of HIM Certification.

AND

(c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities**

- i. Skill in managing various projects and processes], which includes the ability to develop new or improved solutions to complex technical problems in health information management.
- ii. Ability to advise management and staff [on a wide range of] health information [management practices] based on current [industry] standards, [policies, statutes, laws, and regulations].
- iii. Ability to plan, justify, [develop, evaluate,] assess, [monitor,] and/or advise on [] current health information management processes, and recommend changes in policies or procedures.
- iv. Ability to [determine] and [evaluate compliance with legal, ethical, and regulatory guidelines, and accrediting bodies as they] apply [to] health information [management.]
- v.] Ability to [] successfully apply principles and techniques of sound [resource] management [(i.e., staffing, space, contracts, equipment).]
- vi. Ability to provide the full range of supervisory duties to include assignment of work, completing performance evaluations, selection of staff, and recommendation of awards, advancements, and disciplinary actions.

(d) **Assignments.** This assignment serves as the Assistant Chief in VA Medical Centers for all categories (1a, 1b, and 1c) within the complexity level 1 as designated in the VHA, "2014 Facility Complexity Level Model". The ACHIM assists the CHIM in establishing policies, responsibilities, and requirements for HIM related matters, such as health record documentation, coding and clinical documentation improvement, records management, release of information, file room/scanning, transcription and medical speech recognition, as well as the overall management of health information and Veterans' health records. They assist the CHIM in identifying and setting short-range and long-range goals, program objectives, and tasks to meet the mission and vision of the medical center. The ACHIM monitors and manages HIM workflow to ensure the program objectives are met. The ACHIM assists with planning, developing, directing, and

evaluating health information and other functions. They oversee implementation and adherence to HIM industry standards, policies, procedures, laws, regulations, and accrediting bodies. They ensure the facility is in compliance with applicable standards by completing HIM audits, developing healthcare data reports, and statistical information, for timely and accurate reporting. They establish, implement, and monitor HIM performance through metrics, productivity measures, benchmarking, and other applicable tools. The ACHIM ensures quality and efficiency for all areas and processes of the HIM department.

(7) Medical Records Administrator (Chief (CHIM)),] GS-12

- (a) **Experience.** One] year of [creditable] experience equivalent to the next lower grade level that demonstrates the KSAs described at that level.

[AND

- (b) **Certification.** Employees at this level] must [have a HIM Certification.

NOTE. See paragraph 2d of this appendix for detailed definitions of HIM Certification.

AND]

(c) Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- i. Ability to [determine] and [evaluate compliance] with [legal, ethical, and regulatory guidelines] and [accrediting bodies, as they apply to health information] management.
- ii. Skill in [evaluating,] developing [and implementing] new policies [,] procedures, [and] programs.
- iii. Ability] to [provide] program [oversight, including advisory and technical expertise on a range of health information management practices and guidelines to staff at various levels.
- iv. Ability to develop and conduct training on health information management programs, policies, procedures, and performance improvement activities.
- v. Ability to effectively procure and manage HIM resources (i.e. space, staffing, education, budget, etc.).
- vi. Ability] to provide the full range of supervisory duties [to] include assignment of work; completing performance evaluations; selection of staff; and recommendation of awards, advancements, and [] disciplinary actions.

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vii. Customer service skills necessary to effectively communicate (written and verbal) and interact with all levels of hospital personnel, physicians, patients, and outside agencies.

viii. Ability to deal effectively with sensitive and/or complex situations.

- (d) **Assignments.** This assignment serves as the CHIM, which] is the highest-level professional position at the facility, with responsibility for the management and direction of the health information management program. [This assignment is only for facilities designated as complexity level 2 or 3 as designated in the VHA, “2014 Facility Complexity Level Model”, with full program management and supervisory responsibility to direct professional MRAs, technical MRTs, and other support staff in health information management.

CHIMs provide technical advice, planning, and evaluation regarding health information management issues that impact the overall program on a regular and recurring basis. Multi-division, integrated health care systems under the leadership of a single director are considered to be a single facility, with one CHIM. A position with program responsibility over less than the single health care system does not have full program responsibility for the health information management program.

The CHIM establishes policies, procedures, responsibilities, and requirements for HIM-related matters, such as health record documentation, coding and clinical documentation improvement, release of information, file room/scanning, records management, transcription and medical speech recognition, as well as the overall management of health information and Veterans health records. They oversee implementation and adherence to HIM industry standards, policies, procedures, laws, regulations, and accrediting bodies. They ensure that the facility is in compliance with applicable standards by completing HIM audits, developing healthcare data reports, and statistical information, for timely and accurate reporting. They monitor HIM performance through dashboards, productivity standards, and benchmarking. The CHIM participates in establishing and implementing strategic facility and HIM Department goals, controlling program activity costs, budgeting, procurement, and property management to achieve goals and improve processes. They monitor and manage HIM workflow to ensure program objectives are met. They effectively communicate and negotiate with staff at all levels of the organization. The CHIM communicates with medical center staff and external organizations to promote compliance with regulations, guidelines, policies, and procedures to meet the goal of excellent patient care. They ensure quality and efficiency for all areas and processes of the HIM department. They develop and implement HIM departmental short-term and long-term budgets, to include contracts, equipment, space, training, and staffing plans.

(8) Medical Records Administrator (Chief (CHIM)),] GS-13

- (a) **Experience.** [One] year of [creditable] experience equivalent to the next lower grade level that demonstrates the KSAs described at that level.

[AND

- (b) **Certification.** Employees at this level must have a HIM Certification.

NOTE. See paragraph 2d of this appendix for detailed definitions of HIM Certification.

AND

(c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities**

- i. Ability to determine and evaluate compliance with] legal, ethical [and regulatory guidelines and accrediting bodies,] as they apply to health information management.
- ii. Ability to provide sound, technical guidance to [] staff [at various levels] about major program, legal, or procedural changes related to health information management.
- iii. Skill in revising facility policies and] procedures to improve health information management services and to evaluate, modify, and/or adapt new methods to meet regulatory requirements.
- iv. Skill in [] analyzing [complex] data[, interpreting and trending results for effective management of the HIM program.]
- v. [Skill] in management/administration, which includes program planning, coordination, interpretation, supervision, consultation, negotiation, problem solving, and monitoring [of HIM processes.
- vi. Ability to delegate authority, evaluate and oversee people and programs, accomplish program goals, and adapt to changing priorities.
- (d) **Assignments.** This assignment is the Chief Health Information Management (CHIM), which] is the highest-level professional position at the facility with responsibility for the management and direction of the health information management program. [This assignment is only for the CHIM in VA Medical Centers for all categories (1a, 1b, and 1c) within the complexity level 1 as designated in the VHA, "2014 Facility Complexity Level Model", with full program management and supervisory responsibility to direct professional MRAs, technical MRTs, and other support staff in health information management.

PART II

APPENDIX G33

CHIMs] in this assignment provide technical advice, planning, and evaluation about health information management issues impacting the overall program on a regular and recurring basis. [Multi-division, integrated health care systems under the leadership of a single director are considered to be a single facility with one CHIM. A position with program responsibility over less than a single health care system does not have full program] responsibility for the [] health information management program.

[The CHIM establishes policies, procedures, responsibilities, and requirements for HIM-related matters, such as health record documentation, coding and clinical documentation improvement, release of information, file room/scanning, records management, transcription and medical speech recognition, as well as the overall management of health information and Veterans health records. They oversee development, implementation and adherence to HIM industry standards, policies, procedures, laws, regulations, and accrediting bodies. They ensure the facility is in compliance with applicable standards, by completing HIM audits, developing healthcare data reports, and statistical information, for timely and accurate reporting. The CHIM monitors HIM performance through dashboards, productivity standards, and benchmarking. They participate in establishing and implementing strategic facility and HIM Department goals and controlling program activities and cost, budgeting, procurement, and property management, to achieve goals and improve processes. The CHIM monitors and manages HIM workflow to ensure program objectives are met.

(9) Medical Records Administrator, GS-13]

- (a) **Experience.** [One] year of [creditable] experience equivalent to the next lower grade level that demonstrates the KSAs described at that level.

[AND

- (b) **Certification.** Employees at this level must have a HIM Certification.

NOTE. See paragraph 2d of this appendix for detailed definitions of HIM Certification.

AND

- (c) The] candidate must demonstrate the following professional KSAs [as well as the supervisory KSA (*) if applicable:

(d) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities**

- i. Ability to maintain effectiveness and adapt proficiently to changes in the environment, work structure, processes, tasks, or requirements..

- ii. Skill in developing new policies and procedures for administering health information management programs to improve program effectiveness and/or apply newly developed programs or theories to problems that require new approaches.
 - iii. Knowledge of the legal, ethical, and professional standards, as they apply to health information management.
 - iv. Ability to provide sound, technical guidance to the professional staff and executive leadership regarding major programs, legal, or procedural changes related to health information management.
 - v. Skill in conducting studies, analyzing data, and presenting results.
 - vi. Skill in management/administration, which includes program planning, coordination, interpretation, consultation, negotiation, problem solving, and monitoring.
 - *vii. Ability to provide the full range of supervisory duties to include assignment of work; completing performance evaluations; selection of staff; and recommendation for awards, advancements, and disciplinary actions, when appropriate.
- (e) **Assignments.** This assignment serves as the MRA Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN) HIM with responsibility for the management and direction of the health information management program. VISN medical record administrators serve at the Network level and have health information management oversight responsibilities for the Network. This position may be supervisory or non-supervisory. The MRA VISN HIM is responsible for the programmatic oversight of HIM programs and assures that the VISN has a state-of-the-art HIM program that meets all accreditation, regulatory, and VA requirements, in addition to meeting the needs of executive management. The MRA VISN HIM coordinates overall strategy for HIM services across the multi-facility integrated healthcare system. They implement and support all VISN HIM initiatives and activities and provide operational support to HIM departments at the facility level. The MRA VISN HIM develops, implements, and provides oversight to facility HIM leadership in the management of accuracy and timeliness of work, work processes, and overall workload responsibilities. This position is responsible for all aspects of the HIM program, which includes developing and/or acquiring shared resources, such as contracts, staff, and education and training opportunities.

(10) Medical Records Administrator, GS-14

- (a) **Experience.** One year of creditable experience equivalent to the next lower grade level that demonstrates the KSAs described at that level. In addition, the candidate must] demonstrate the [following professional KSAs:

AND

(b) **Certification.** Employees at this level must have a HIM Certification.

NOTE. See paragraph 2d of this appendix for detailed definitions of HIM Certification.

AND

(c) **Demonstrated Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities**

[i. Ability to develop, maintain, and evaluate health information management policy and program needs at the national level, and serve as a national technical expert in the medical record administration/health information management program area;

[ii. Ability to provide formal clinical, research, and/or educational consultation on a wide range of health information management issues [] for use by the field MRAs and VHA Central Office program officials[; and]

[iii. Ability to determine methodologies for achieving compliance with new and changing [] health information [programs and processes] at the national level to improve program effectiveness, implement new legislation, and/or resolve persistent [] problem areas.

[(d) **Assignments.** [These positions are for MRAs assigned to VHA Central Office and] are limited to positions which have national level program assignments as a primary responsibility [. They] function as a national technical expert in the field of medical record administration/health information management, provide leadership and guidance at the national level, and have final and independent technical authority.

[They initiate, develop, oversee, and direct assigned national HIM program areas, assess their impact on VHA HIM programs system-wide, and produce work products, such as written policies and procedures, guidelines, references, and training. They represent the VHA HIM program office on issues in areas such as the electronic health record, the personal health record, health information exchange, privacy, clinical coding, data capture, documentation principles, health record standards, health record maintenance, release of information, records management, and other areas that are either impacted by or impact HIM. The HIM specialist represents HIM on a wide variety of groups, committees, and task forces, which requires a thorough understanding of HIM policies, requirements, and business needs, and ensures those needs are adequately articulated and included in policy or process development. They participate as a subject matter expert on investigative teams, upon request of the Office of Medical Inspector,

Office of General Counsel, Office of Inspector General, and Congressional Affairs and work with HIM staff at facilities to collect relevant information. They act as the HIM subject matter expert and advisor to various customers, agencies, programs, and offices within and external to VHA. The HIM specialist serves as VHA's HIM subject matter expert on federal and/or national organizations. They collaborate with facilities and networks to identify HIM program strengths and weaknesses to determine corrective actions for remediation, when applicable. The HIM specialist identifies potential best practices for implementation at facilities. The HIM specialist monitors HIM metrics, identifies trends, and provides training to the field regarding data patterns and trends. They develop sustainable methodologies, at the national level, for achieving compliance with new and changing regulations pertaining to all assigned program areas related to HIM, to improve program effectiveness.

5]. DEVIATIONS.

- a. The appointing official may, under unusual circumstances, approve reasonable deviations to the grade determination requirements for [MRAs] 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. Under no circumstances will the certification requirements be waived.
- c.] The placement of individuals in grade levels [or assignments] 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. § 7401(3), 7402, 7403 and 7405.]