

**PROGRAM TO ARM DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICE**

**1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To **establish** policy, responsibilities, and management direction for the implementation of the program to arm Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) police officers.

**2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This Directive sets forth the policies and responsibilities in establishing and maintaining a program to arm VA police officers at selected Veterans Health Administration (VHA) facilities. Major changes to the directive include deletion of the term "pilot project" from policy documents and includes authorization to expand the program beyond the original pilot facilities. Included in this Directive are policy statements regarding the management of the program at Central Office and field facilities; the training of Department police officers in the use of firearms; and responsibilities for implementing and managing the program.

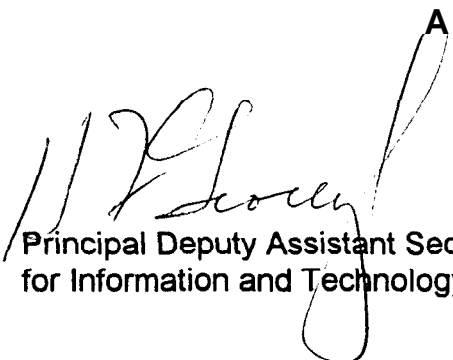
**3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Police and Security Service (07B), Office of Security and Law Enforcement, is responsible for the material contained in this Directive.


**4. RELATED HANDBOOK:** VA Handbook 0720, Procedures to Arm Department of Veterans Affairs Police.

**5. RESCISSION:** VA Directive 0720/1, Pilot Program to Arm Department of Veterans Affairs Police, dated April 14, 1998.

**CERTIFIED BY:**

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

  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Information and Technology

  
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## PROGRAM TO ARM VA POLICE

### 1. PURPOSE

a. This Directive implements provisions found at Title 38 USC, Sections 902 and 904. These sections pertain to the Secretary's authority to furnish Department police officers with such weapons as the Secretary determines to be necessary and appropriate to ensure the maintenance of law and order and the protection of persons and property on Department property. This Directive provides policies to establish a program to provide firearms to VA police officers for carry and use on duty. This program has resulted from the successful completion of the pilot program to arm VA police.

b. This Directive and the related Handbook are set forth solely for the purpose of internal Departmental guidance. They are not intended to, do not, and may not be relied upon to create any rights, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by any party in any matter, civil or criminal, and do not place any limitations on otherwise lawful activities of the Department.

**2. POLICY.** The Department of Veterans Affairs will implement a program for providing firearms to VA police officers at designated Veterans Health Administration (VHA) facilities. Police officers will be armed at a site following the approval of a facility implementation plan, the successful training and qualification of the officers, and a confirmation that the officers are physically qualified, emotionally stable and free of any significant criminal record. The program will be implemented in a methodical and controlled manner. The number and locations of facilities to be included will be determined as a corporate decision between the Chief Network Officer (CNO) in VHA and the Office of Security and Law Enforcement (OS&LE).

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **Secretary of Veterans Affairs.** The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall furnish Department police officers with such weapons and related equipment as the Secretary determines to be necessary and appropriate.

b. **Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration.** The Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration will ensure the appropriate implementation and operation of this program.

c. **Deputy Assistant Secretary for Security and Law Enforcement.** The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Security and Law Enforcement (DAS for S&LE) will direct, oversee, and monitor this program. This will include:

(1) Ensuring that each participating facility has a comprehensive plan that is consistent with Department policy and the requirements of the Attorney General.

(2) Ensuring that only appropriately trained and qualified officers will be provided a firearm.

d. **Chief Network Officer:** The CNO in VHA will work with the DAS for S&LE in the direction, implementation and monitoring of this program.

e. **Network and Facility Directors.** Network Directors and Directors of VHA facilities included in this program will ensure that all requirements and facility responsibilities are fulfilled.

#### 4. REFERENCES

a. Memorandum from the President of the United States to Federal Agencies, "Child Safety Lock Devices for Handguns," dated March 5, 1997.

b. Title 18 USC Sections 922 (d)(9) and (g)(9), as amended by Public Law 104-208, "Gun Ban For Individuals Convicted Of A Misdemeanor Crime of Domestic Violence."

c. Title 38 CFR Section 1. 8, Security and Law Enforcement on VA Facilities.

d. Title 38 USC Sections 901-904, Security and Law Enforcement on Property Under Control of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

e. Use of Deadly Force Guidelines of the U.S. Department of Justice, dated October 20, 1995.

f. VA Handbook 0720, Procedures to Arm Department of Veterans Affairs Police.

g. 5 CFR Section 339.301, Subpart C-Medical Examinations, Office of Personnel Management Regulations, "Authority to require examinations."

h. 14 CFR Section 108.11, Federal Aviation Administration Regulations, "Airplane Operator Security.. .Carriage of Weapons".