



DIRECTOR'S MEMORANDUM: 01-09

FOR: ALL REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS AND DIRECTORS FOR
VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

FROM: F. PAUL BRIGGS 
Director, Office of Agency Management and Budget

SUBJECT: FY 2009 Budget Preparation Guidelines

Similar to last Fiscal Year, your budget request is due to this office by October 10, 2008. The Department will operate under a Continuing Resolution until March 6, 2008 and possibly longer. Our goal is to work collaboratively and expeditiously with the Regions to determine their FY 2009 resource for the entire fiscal year. Regional and National Office budget formulation and execution in FY 2009 will continue to reflect, to the degree possible, the Agency's policy and guidance direction as stated in ASVET Memorandums. We anticipate the new administration will issue a new planning guidance as a first order of business upon assuming office during 2009.

We recognize that the one area where you have discretion in adjusting your budget from year to year is official travel. Travel priorities are: 1.) USERRA/VP complaint actions, delivery of 2.) mobilization/de-mobilization briefings 3.) REALifelines technical assistance and support and 4.) stewardship of the grant programs (monitoring and technical assistance visits).

For employment programs, travel priorities derive from three overarching goals :

- Improving the quality and effectiveness of employment services to veterans in the One Stop Career Center system.
- Improving transition assistance services for Active, Reserve and National Guard service members who are moving from the military to civilian life, especially ensuring all service members and veterans understand their employment and reemployment rights.
- Focusing on intensive employment services and personal, face-to-face assistance of those recently separated service members and veterans who have been seriously wounded or injured, and who have significant barriers to employment, including homelessness.

To support these goals, there are four Agency priorities:

- Improve entered employment outcomes, retention and earnings for veterans.
- Improve transition services for active duty, reserve and National Guard.
- Improve relationships with State Workforce Agencies.
- Improve leadership training for VETS' staff.

The following guidance is provided to assist in preparing operating budgets:

Target strength is 234 FTE for FY 2009. Several factors may affect staffing decisions:

- 1) During the anticipated CR, the Department may impose a hiring freeze.
- 2) The actual appropriation may necessitate a FTE target (above or below) the 234 level.
- 3) Retirements may differ from projections, along with payouts for annual leave, and other items affecting amounts available in object classes 1100 or 1200.

If hiring limitations are necessary, the priority goes to DVET vacancies. Justification to the DASVET, and his approval, are necessary for exceptions to this priority.

Regional Administrators and Office Directors should strive to fill vacancies at the entry-level grade for positions with established career ladders. Regional Administrators and Office Directors have the authority to make exceptions if doing so is in the best interest of the agency.

A. Object Class 2100-Travel: Regional Administrators must continue to plan to accomplish all necessary travel as cost effectively as possible (i.e., planning for multiple tasks to be accomplished in a single trip, planning travel to "resort areas" during the off-season, etc). The guiding principles for determining travel requirements are ASVET Memorandum 01-06 and the Agency's Strategic and Performance Plan. Travel priorities for FY 2008 are: USERRA/VP complaint actions, delivery of mobilization/demobilization briefings, REALifelines technical assistance and support, and stewardship of the grant programs (monitoring and technical assistance visits).

For planning purposes, travel expenses attributed to the National Office (NO) should not be budgeted at the regional level. A consolidated format will be proposed and provided to the Regions by National Office (NO) which is intended to capture both resources invested and outputs.

B. Object Class 2300-Communications: Calculate anticipated expenditures in this OC based on past experience and expenditures including any known increases/decreases.

Although you do not have a significant impact on expenditures in this object class, you can influence the use of telephones and possibly reduce rent costs by collocating, when feasible. Space rent and telephone costs are the major expenditures in OC 2300.

C. Object Class 2400-Printing and Reproduction: Calculate anticipated expenditures in this OC.

All printing and reproduction must be routed through the Government Printing Office (GPO) and should be kept to just what is needed for the year.

D. Object Class 2500-Other Services: Identify costs of service contracts for equipment, postal scales, etc. Additionally, include training funds needed for staff development. Regional Administrators should submit a training plan (attached) for FY, which includes the individual, type of course, cost of training, and any travel cost.

PLEASE NOTE THAT STAFF TRAINING IS AN AGENCY PRIORITY. You are strongly encouraged to work with staff on the development and implementation of Individual Development Plans (IDPs), and to request necessary funds.

E. Object Class 2600-Supplies and Materials: Calculate anticipated expenditures in this OC.

F. Object Class 3100-Equipment: Calculate anticipated needs in this OC, assuming that life cycle IT requirements (to include desktop computers and notebooks) will be purchased nationally.

Please include the following attachments:

- “Roll-up Annual Budget” spreadsheet, which includes both a quarterly and cumulative breakdown by OC;
- OCs 1100-1200 proposed breakdown for pay benefits. This information will be used as a baseline for projecting agency salaries and benefits. FTE salaries and expenses will be managed by National Office in partnership with Regions. However, final Regional allocations will not include a breakdown of OCs 1100 and 1200.
- Completed 2500 (Training, contract and other services as needed) cost breakdown;
- Completed 3100 (Equipment) cost breakdown; *Please see note above.
- USERRA: National Office directed USERRA activities will be included in the National Office budget plans. For planning purposes, Regions should provide a separate breakdown of anticipated resource requirements (to be included in their overall allocation requests) for day-to-day USERRA investigations, outreach activities, etc.

As in the past, Regional Administrators will be held accountable for spending with (+/-) 1% of the overall regional annual allocations.

RAs should submit (electronically) their initial budget request to the Director, Office of Agency Management and Budget, Paul Briggs; and provide a copy to Angela Freeman by COB October 10, 2008.

Questions concerning the guidance in this directive should be directed to Paul Briggs on (202) 693-4713.

Expiration: when superseded