



MAR - 2 2009

ASVET MEMORANDUM NO. 02-09

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** ALL VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING  
SERVICE STAFF

**FROM:** JOHN M. McWILLIAM *JMMcWilliam*  
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Operations and  
Management

**SUBJECT:** Agency Directives

**I. PURPOSE:** To articulate policy and procedures governing the dissemination and maintenance of official directives issued by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training (OASVET) for the staff of the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS). This ASVET Memorandum updates the agency's policies and procedures for creating, disseminating, and archiving its national directives. Standardizing directives management policy and procedures will ensure consistency, continuity, and accessibility of administrative, management, and program guidance to agency staff and to partner agencies that deliver employment and reemployment services to veterans, transitioning service members, Reservists, National Guard members, and other eligible persons. Standardization will also facilitate and make more efficient staff members' searches for currently-in-effect directives and other guidance materials.

**II. BACKGROUND:** FY 2007 Risk assessments conducted as part of the Internal Control Program activities revealed that the agency lacks an up-to-date, organized, easily accessible library of administrative and program policy and procedure directives and operations guides.

The VETS Council of Deputies (COD) and the VETS Strategic Assessment Team (VETSAT) recommended a comprehensive plan for addressing the aforementioned risk factor. One recommendation was to create of a VETS Manual Series, a multi-volume set of reference materials that will be maintained to provide up-to-date guidance on all programmatic and routine administrative and programmatic operations. They also recommended a related initiative, the creation of a "directives library," a web-based library of current directives that is easily accessible by VETS staff and, as appropriate,

the agency's affiliated service providers. The Directives Library became a reality early in March 2008, when all currently-in-effect Veterans Program Letters, ASVET Memoranda, and Director's Memoranda were posted on distinct pages (aka URLs) on the DOL-VETS web site. At the same time that it recommended the Directives Library, the VETSAT called for promulgation of an up-to-date policy directive and standard operating procedure for the issuance and maintenance of agency directives.

**III. POLICY, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EFFECTIVE DATE:** Prior to issuance, all directives and other guidance documents described in this Memorandum and its attachments will be reviewed in draft form and commented upon by Regional Administrators (RAVETs) and (National) Office Directors in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) attached to this Memorandum.

Directives referred to in this Memorandum and the attachments are broadly defined to include the official written guidance documents issued by the OASVET and VETS National Office leadership to transmit guidance, instructions, and/or information to VETS staff and affiliated service providers. There are three types of authorized directives--ASVET Memoranda, Veterans' Program Letters, and Director's Memoranda--used to transmit guidance directly in the texts of those documents or in the form of attached documents such as operations manuals, technical assistance guides. Attachment D provides the SOP for clearance and finalization applies to those three types of directives and any attachments.

Internal staff memoranda, correspondence, instructions or other communications to a selected group of recipients that are related to specific situations, events, circumstances, or inquiries are not considered "directives" under this ASVET Memorandum. Weekly Activity Reports or other periodic reports distributed to VETS staff also are not considered "directives," and are neither subject to the clearance procedures set forth in this Memorandum and its attachments nor appropriate vehicles for the dissemination of policies and procedures to VETS staff and/or affiliated service providers.

**A. ASVET Memoranda (AMs)** are publicly-available documents used to transmit major policy statements, interpretations, clarifications, strategic goals and plans, standards and procedures, operations manuals, technical assistance guides, departmental or agency-wide program guidelines and workload/reporting assignments and requirements for programs in which VETS staff themselves are the direct service providers, e.g., USERRA, and/or for internal administrative programs or operations, e.g., the Internal Control Program. They are disseminated to all VETS staff.

AMs are signed by the Assistant Secretary, or, if authorized by the ASVET, by the Deputy Assistant Secretary. AMs remain in effect until rescinded or superseded unless an expiration date is stated in the Memorandum.

An AM template is provided as Attachment A. Each AM should contain only those sections that apply to the subject matter. No template is provided for attachments to AMs, due to the variety of documents that may be transmitted as attachments.

The VETS Office of Administration and Budget (OAMB) is responsible for: (1) maintaining the library of AMs, both current and historical, (2) numbering new AMs using a sequential numbering system for all memoranda issued in any given Fiscal Year, (3) ensuring all AMs are disseminated in accordance with agency policies, (4) attaching a program identifier (e.g., HVRP, JVA, Vets Pref, USERRA, ATP/AWP, Budget) to each listed AM to facilitate searches by users, and (5) for archiving and disposing of expired, superseded, and rescinded AMs in accordance with National Archive Records System guidelines.

**B. Veterans' Program Letters (VPLs)** are publicly-available documents used to transmit program policy, interpretations, guidance, procedures, technical assistance guides, program operations manuals, and other information to program service providers for programs in which VETS staff are not the direct service providers, e.g., grant programs. VPLs are transmitted to VETS staff, agency grantees, sub-grantees and other affiliated entities that provide services to veterans, transitioning service members, and other persons eligible for VETS programs. VETS managers will ensure that their respective staff members have access to, review, and understand each VPL.

VPLs are signed by the Assistant Secretary, or if authorized by the ASVET, by the Deputy Assistant Secretary. They remain in effect as stated in the VPL, either until superseded or rescinded or when expired. A VPL template is provided as Attachment B. Each VPL should contain only those sections that apply to the subject matter. No template is provided for attachments to VPLs, due to the variety of documents that may be transmitted as attachments.

The VETS Office of Operations and Programs (OOP) is responsible for: (1) maintaining the library of VPLs, both current and historical, (2) numbering new VPLs using a sequential numbering system for all program letters issued in any given Fiscal Year, (3) ensuring all VPLs and enclosures are disseminated in accordance with agency policies, (4) attaching a program identifier (e.g., HVRP, JVA, VWIP) to each listed DM to facilitate searches by users, and (5) for archiving and disposing of expired, superseded, and rescinded VPLs in accordance with National Archive Records System guidelines.

**C. Director's Memoranda (DMs)** are VETS-internal documents used to transmit internal technical information or guidance regarding the planning or implementation of administrative or program operations to VETS staff only. Each Director's Memorandum will address a single subject and may be used to impose requirements only upon VETS staff, not upon staff of external entities. DMs may not be used to disseminate policy statements or to impose workloads upon VETS'

service delivery partners. DMs are not intended to be distributed outside of VETS. DMs remain in effect until rescinded or superseded unless an expiration date is stated in the Memorandum.

DMs are initiated and signed by the appropriate Office Director, according to the subject matter. DMs remain in effect until rescinded or superseded unless an expiration date is stated in the Memorandum. A DM template is provided as Attachment C. Each DM should contain only those sections that apply to the subject matter. No template is provided for attachments to DMs, due to the variety of documents that may be transmitted as attachments.

The VETS OAMB is responsible for: (1) maintaining the library of DMs, both current and historical, (2) numbering new DMs using a sequential numbering system for all memorandums issued in any given FY, (3) ensuring all DMs are disseminated in accordance with agency policy, (4) attaching a program identifier (e.g., HVRP, JVA, Vets Pref, USERRA, ATP/AWP, ICP) to each listed DM to facilitate searches by users, and (5) for archiving and disposing of expired, superseded, and rescinded memorandums in accordance with National Archive Records System guidelines.

Annually the Office Directors will review all current DMs issued under their respective signatures or that are related to the functions they manage to determine if they should be rescinded or superseded.

The VETS OAMB also is responsible for technical maintenance of the web site(s) on which are stored the directives and documents that comprise the Directives Library and VETS Manual Series. The OAMB is responsible for ensuring a reasonable level of prevention of public access to documents not intended to be made available to the public.

The policy and procedures set forth in this directive and its attachments are effective immediately.

**IV. INQUIRIES:** Inquiries regarding this Memorandum or the attachments should be directed to OAMB Director F. Paul Briggs.

**V. EXPIRATION DATE:** This directive remains in effect until superseded or rescinded.

**VI. ATTACHMENT(S):**

- A - ASVET Memo Template
- B - Veterans' Program Letter Template
- C - Director's Memorandum Template
- D - Agency Directives standard operating procedure (SOP)
- E - Sample Directives Routing Form