PART 0—VALUES, STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT, AND RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES

Subpart A—Core Values and Characteristics of the Department

§ 0.600 General.
This section describes the Core Values and Characteristics that serve as internal guidelines for employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). These Core Values and Characteristics define VA employees, articulate what VA stands for, and underscore its moral obligation to veterans, their families, and other beneficiaries. They are intended to establish one overarching set of guidelines that apply to all VA Administrations and staff offices, confirming the values already instilled in many VA employees and enforcing their commitment to provide the best service possible to veterans, their families, and their care-takers.

§ 0.601 Core Values.
VA’s Core Values define VA employees. They describe the organization’s culture and character, and serve as the foundation for the way VA employees should interact with each other, as well as with people outside the organization. They also serve as a common bond between all employees regardless of their grade, specialty area, or location. These Core Values are Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence. Together, the first letters of the Core Values spell “I CARE,” and VA employees should adopt this motto and these Core Values in their day-to-day operations.

(a) Integrity. VA employees will act with high moral principle, adhere to the highest professional standards, and maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom they engage.

(b) Commitment. VA employees will work diligently to serve veterans and other beneficiaries, be driven by an earnest belief in VA’s mission, and fulfill their individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.

(c) Advocacy. VA employees will be truly veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of veterans and other beneficiaries.

(d) Respect. VA employees will treat all those they serve and with whom they work with dignity and respect, and they will show respect to earn it.

(e) Excellence. VA employees will strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement, and be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for their actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

§ 0.602 Core Characteristics.
While Core Values define VA employees, the Core Characteristics define what VA stands for and what VA strives to be as an organization. These are aspirational goals that VA wants its employees, veterans, and the American people to associate with the Department and with its workforce. These Core characteristics describe the traits all VA organizations should possess and demonstrate, and they identify the qualities needed to successfully accomplish today’s missions and
also support the ongoing transformation to a 21st Century VA. These characteristics are:

(a) Trustworthy. VA earns the trust of those it serves, every day, through the actions of its employees. They provide care, benefits, and services with compassion, dependability, effectiveness, and transparency.

(b) Accessible. VA engages and welcomes veterans and other beneficiaries, facilitating their use of the entire array of its services. Each interaction will be positive and productive.

(c) Quality. VA provides the highest standard of care and services to veterans and beneficiaries while managing the cost of its programs and being efficient stewards of all resources entrusted to it by the American people. VA is a model of unrivalled excellence due to employees who are empowered, trusted by their leaders, and respected for their competence and dedication.

(d) Innovative. VA prizes curiosity and initiative, encourages creative contributions from all employees, seeks continuous improvement, and adapts to remain at the forefront in knowledge, proficiency, and capability to deliver the highest standard of care and services to all of the people it serves.

(e) Agile. VA anticipates and adapts quickly to current challenges and new requirements by continuously assessing the environment in which it operates and devising solutions to better serve veterans, other beneficiaries, and Service members.

(f) Integrated. VA links care and services across the Department; other federal, state, and local agencies; partners; and Veterans Services Organizations to provide useful and understandable programs to veterans and other beneficiaries. VA’s relationship with the Department of Defense is unique, and VA will nurture it for the benefit of veterans and Service members.

Subpart B—General Provisions

SOURCE: Redesignated at 77 FR 41275, July 13, 2012 unless otherwise noted.

§ 0.735–1 Agency ethics officials.

(a) Designated Agency Ethics Official (DAEO). The Assistant General Counsel (023) is the designated agency ethics official (DAEO) for the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Deputy Assistant General Counsel (023C) is the alternate DAEO, who is designated to act in the DAEO’s absence. The DAEO has primary responsibility for the administration, coordination, and management of the VA ethics program, pursuant to 5 CFR 2638.201–204.

(b) Deputy ethics officials. (1) The Regional Counsel are deputy ethics officials. They have been delegated the authority to act for the DAEO within their jurisdiction, under the DAEO’s supervision, pursuant to 5 CFR 2638.204.

(2) The alternate DAEO, the DAEO’s staff, and staff in the Offices of Regional Counsel, may also act as deputy ethics officials pursuant to delegations of one or more of the DAEO’s duties from the DAEO or the Regional Counsel.

§ 0.735–11 Other conduct on the job.

Relationship with beneficiaries and claimants. Employees are expected to be helpful to beneficiaries, patients and claimants, but:

(a) An employee shall not procure intoxicants or drugs for, or attempt to sell intoxicants or drugs to, patients or members, or give or attempt to give intoxicants or drugs to them unless officially prescribed for medical use;

(b) An employee shall not abuse patients, members, or other beneficiaries, whether or not provoked.

§ 0.735–12 Standards of conduct in special areas.

(a) Safety. (1) Employees will observe safety instructions, signs, and normal safety practices and precautions, including the use of protective clothing and equipment.

(2) An employee shall report each work-connected injury, accident or disease he or she suffers.

(b) Furnishing testimony. Employees will furnish information and testify freely and honestly in cases respecting employment and disciplinary matters. Refusal to testify, concealment of material facts, or willfully inaccurate testimony in connection with an investigation or hearing may be ground for disciplinary action. An employee, however, will not be required to give testimony against himself or herself in any matter in which there is indication that he or she may be or is involved in a violation of law wherein there is a possibility of self-incrimination.

PART 1—GENERAL PROVISIONS

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICIAL SEAL AND DISTINGUISHING FLAG

Sec. 1.9 Description, use, and display of VA seal and flag.

THE UNITED STATES FLAG FOR BURIAL PURPOSES

1.10 Eligibility for and disposition of the United States flag for burial purposes.

QUARTERS FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS EMPLOYEES OVERSEAS

1.11 Quarters for Department of Veterans Affairs employees in Government-owned or –rented buildings overseas.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

1.15 Standards for program evaluation.

1.17 Evaluation of studies relating to health effects of radiation exposure.

1.18 Guidelines for establishing presumptions of service connection for former prisoners of war.

REFERRALS OF INFORMATION REGARDING CRIMINAL VIOLATIONS

1.200 Purpose.

1.201 Employee’s duty to report.

1.203 Information to be reported to VA Police.

1.204 Information to be reported to the Office of Inspector General.

1.205 Notification to the Attorney General or United States Attorney’s Office.

SECURITY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES

1.218 Security and law enforcement at VA facilities.

1.220 On-site activities by pharmaceutical company representatives at VA medical facilities.

PARKING FEES AT VA MEDICAL FACILITIES

1.300 Purpose.

1.301 Definitions.

1.302 Applicability and scope.

1.303 Policy.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION FROM DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) RECORDS RELATING TO DRUG ABUSE, ALCOHOLISM OR ALCOHOL ABUSE, INFECTION WITH THE HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV), OR SICKLE CELL ANEMIA

1.460 Definitions.

1.461 Applicability.

1.462 Confidentiality restrictions.

1.463 Criminal penalty for violations.

1.464 Minor patients.

1.465 Incompetent and deceased patients.

1.466 Security for records.

1.467 Restrictions on the use of identification cards and public signs.

1.468 Relationship to Federal statutes protecting research subjects against compulsory disclosure of their identity.

1.469 Patient access and restrictions on use.

1.470–1.474 [Reserved]

DISCLOSURES WITH PATIENT’S CONSENT

1.475 Form of written consent.

1.476 Prohibition on redisclosure.

1.477 Disclosures permitted with written consent.

1.478 Disclosures to prevent multiple enrollments in detoxification and maintenance treatment programs; not applicable to records relating to sickle cell anemia or infection with the human immunodeficiency virus.