

**CONTENT OF VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UTILIZATION OF NURSES AT
NURSE I THROUGH NURSE III**

1. REASON FOR ISSUE: This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) directive clarifies policy relating to the content of vacancy announcements and the utilization of nurses (all assignments under 0610 occupational series, i.e., Registered Nurse, Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Educator, etc.) in grades Nurse I through Nurse III.

2. SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES: This directive adds a new paragraph describing the records management requirements related to this policy.

3. RELATED ISSUES: VHA Directive 5005, Staffing, April 17, 2013; VA Handbook 5005, Staffing, Part II, Appendix G6; and VA Handbook 5007, Pay Administration, Part II, Chapter 2.

4. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: VA Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Workforce Services is responsible for the contents of this directive. Questions may be referred to Workforce Management and Consulting Office, Center of Human Resources Expertise (10A2A1) at Linda.Dailey2@va.gov.

5. RESCISSIONS: VHA Directive 2006-012, Content of Vacancy Announcements and Utilization of Nurses at Nurse I Through Nurse III, dated February 17, 2006, is rescinded.

6. RECERTIFICATION: This VHA directive is scheduled for recertification on or before the last working day of August 31, 2024. This VHA directive will continue to serve as national VHA policy until it is recertified or rescinded.

**BY DIRECTION OF THE OFFICE OF THE
UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH:**

/s/ Steven Lieberman, MD, MBA, FACHE
Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health

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NOTE: All references herein to VA and VHA documents incorporate by reference subsequent VA and VHA documents on the same or similar subject matter.

CONTENTS

**CONTENT OF VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UTILIZATION OF NURSES AT
NURSE I THROUGH NURSE III**

1. PURPOSE	1
2. BACKGROUND	1
3. POLICY	1
4. RESPONSIBILITIES	1
5. TRAINING	2
6. RECORDS MANAGEMENT	2
7. REFERENCES	2

CONTENT OF VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UTILIZATION OF NURSES AT NURSE I THROUGH NURSE III

1. PURPOSE

This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) directive clarifies policy relating to the content of vacancy announcements and the utilization of nurses (all assignments under 0610 occupational series, i.e., Registered Nurse, Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Educator, etc.) in grades Nurse I through Nurse III. **AUTHORITY:** Title 38 United States Code (U.S.C.) 7402 and 7403.

2. BACKGROUND

a. The Title 38 personnel system is a rank-in-person system for nurses in grades Nurse I through Nurse III. The grades of these employees are based on their professional qualifications rather than the duties and responsibilities of their assignments. Therefore, advertising nurse positions (other than Nurse IV and Nurse V) at particular grade levels is inconsistent with Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy. Since many VA medical facilities are facing challenges related to nurse recruitment, it is essential that nursing staff be appropriately utilized. This involves establishing staffing patterns to minimize the requirements for nurses to perform administrative or supportive functions, and it involves providing nurses with assignments and opportunities that are consistent with their skills and expertise.

b. Performance and education requirements for placement at specific grade levels are outlined in the VA Nurse Qualification Standards (see VA Handbook 5005, Part II, Appendix G6, Staffing, dated March 17, 2009) where the goal is to place suitably qualified candidates for successful performance in positions.

3. POLICY

It is VHA policy that nurse positions at Nurse I through Nurse III are not advertised at specific grade levels when vacancy announcements are published, and that grade determination is based on each individual Nurse's qualifications and experience in relation to the VA Nurse Qualification Standards.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **Under Secretary for Health.** The Under Secretary for Health is responsible for ensuring overall compliance with this directive.

b. **Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health.** The Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health is responsible for supporting the implementation and oversight of this directive across VHA.

c. **Deputy Under Secretary of Health for Operations and Management.** The Deputy Under Secretary of Health for Operations and Management is responsible for ensuring that:

(1) Communicating the contents of this directive to each of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs).

(2) Ensuring that each VISN Director has the resources required to support the execution of this directive in all the VA medical facilities within that VISN.

(3) Confirming that each VISN has and utilizes on an ongoing basis a means for ensuring the terms of this directive are fulfilled in all the VA health facilities of the VISN.

d. **Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Workforce Services.** The Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Workforce Services is responsible for developing national policy and guidance related to vacancy announcements for VHA nurse positions.

e. **Human Resource Officer.** The Human Resource Officer is responsible for oversight of vacancy announcements for nurse positions and for ensuring that when vacancy announcements are utilized for Nurse I through III positions, all grade levels are included in the announcement.

f. **Management Officials.** Management officials are responsible for:

(1) Ensuring that nurse positions at Nurse I through Nurse III are not advertised at specific grade levels when vacancy announcements are utilized.

(2) Reviewing position management practices to ensure that Nurse III responsibilities and assignments include leadership in the application of the nursing process to patient care, organizational processes and or systems, and improving outcomes at the program or service level in accordance with the VA Nurse Qualification Standards.

(3) Adopting policies supporting effective utilization of nursing staff in accordance with the VA Nurse Qualification Standards.

5. TRAINING

There are no formal training requirements associated with this directive.

6. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

All records regardless of format (e.g., paper, electronic, electronic systems) created in this directive shall be managed per the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) approved records schedules found in VA Records Control Schedule 10-1. Questions regarding any aspect of records management should be addressed to the appropriate Records Manager or Records Liaison.

7. REFERENCES

a. 38 U.S.C. 7402 and 7403.

b. VA Handbook 5005, "Staffing," Part II, Appendix G6, Staffing, dated March 17, 2009.

c. VA Handbook 5007, "Pay Administration," Part II Chapter 2, dated August 3, 2017.