

CHAPTER 827. VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION - REGIONAL OFFICE -
VETERANS SERVICES DIVISION

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VETERANS SERVICES DIVISION**

1. APPROVAL OF CRITERIA

Criteria approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) on June 15, 1988.

2. DEFINITION**Veterans Services Division:**

a. The Veterans Services program operates through a wide network of veterans services field locations where personnel provide veterans, their dependents, and survivors with information, advice and assistance regarding the availability and procurement of benefits under laws administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other agencies. Benefits information and assistance are provided by personal interviews, telephone interviews and correspondence. Services include arrangements with the Armed Forces to ensure that personnel approaching separation from military service are informed about veterans benefits and how they may be obtained. Services also include extensive outreach efforts to ensure that benefits information and assistance are provided to the educationally disadvantaged, the disabled, the elderly, former prisoners of war, female veterans, the homeless, and other specially targeted groups. Program activities are conducted at 58 Veterans Administration Regional Offices, 18 Veterans Assistance Offices, 172 Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Centers, 6 Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Outpatient Clinics, and 57 itinerant locations. To assist those veterans, dependents, and survivors residing some distance from the regional offices in obtaining benefits information and assistance, toll-free telephone service is provided nationwide.

b. Veterans Services personnel are also responsible for overseeing through a system of field examinations and audits of fiduciary accounts, the payment of VA benefits to those payees who are rated incompetent or are under legal disabilities.

c. In addition, program staff are responsible for verifying and assuring the propriety of payments of educational benefits to eligible individuals under provisions of the laws administered by VA (including Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) through a system of education liaison, program approval, and compliance survey activities.

3. PROGRAM DATA REQUIRED

a. Staffing projections by category (e.g., chief, clerical, technicians, etc.) and percentages of males and females.

(1) Maximum number of Veterans Benefits Counselors on duty in the Telephone Unit.

(2) Maximum number of Veterans Benefits Counselors on duty in the Interview Unit.

(3) Maximum number of Veterans Benefits Counselors on duty in Operations Unit.

(4) If these totals exceed the authorized staffing level, justification will be required:

b. Projected number of Computer (Target) Video Display Terminals, specify number of printers and word processors.

c. Projected number of file cabinets (specify letter and specify existing legal sizes).

d. Projected number of joint use workstations (specify personal computers, word processors, microfiche/film, facsimile, etc.).

e. Projected number of daily visitors and percentages of males and females.

4. SPACE DETERMINATIONS

	<u>Conventional</u>	<u>Modular System</u>
a. Administration		
(1) Office, Division Chief (This space should be private and only accessible through the secretary, affording control of visitors.)	13.9 NSM (150 NSF)	13.9 NSM (150 NSF)
(2) Office, Assistant Division Chief (This space is a private office. The Assistant Chief will provide administrative support to the Division Chief.)	9.3 NSM (100 NSF)	9.3 NSM (100 NSF)
(3) Office, Secretary/Waiting This space is for secretarial duties which include: dictation, typing, filing, and visitors screening. No additional space will be allocated the Secretary/Waiting area for workstations.	11.2 NSM (120 NSF)	10.2 NSM (110 NSF)
(4) Office, Clerical and Administrative Employees These employees will be located in an open office design and will provide clerical and administrative support.	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)	6.7 NSM (72 NSF)
(5) Office, Workstation These ADP workstations are for joint use by employees that do not have or are not sharing (e.g., located on lazy susan) ADP equipment at their desks. Therefore, care must be taken when determining the number of these workstations.	6.0 NSM (64 NSF) (1st station only, then 3.7 NSM (40 NSF) ea.	6.0 NSM (64 NSF) (1st station only, then 3.7 NSM (40 NSF) ea.
(6) Photocopy Area	4.2 NSM (45 NSF)	4.2 NSM (45 NSF)
(7) Storage, Forms	2.3 NSM (25 NSF)	2.3 NSM (25 NSF)
b. Veterans Assistance Section This section includes Interview, Operations and Telephone Units		
(1) Office, Section Chief	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)	7.4 NSM (72 NSF)
(2) Office, Assistant Section Chief	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)	7.4 NSM (72 NSF)
(3) Office, Clerk/Receptionist	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)	7.4 NSM (72 NSF)
(4) Reception Area	4.7 NSM (50 NSF) Plus 4.7 NSM (50 NSF) per Counselor in Interview Unit, Item (5)(a) below	4.7 NSM (50 NSF) Plus 4.7 NSM (50 NSF) per Counselor in Interview Unit, Item (5)(a) below
	<u>Conventional</u>	<u>Modular System</u>

(5) **Veterans Benefits Counselors**

(a) Office, Interview Unit	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)	6.7 NSM (72 NSF)
(b) Office, Operations Unit	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)	6.7 NSM (72 NSF)

(6) **Computer (Target) Video Display Terminal(s)and
Computer (Target) Printer(s)**

.....	3.7 NSM (40 NSF) each pair	3.7 NSM (40 NSF) each pair
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(a) Video Display Terminal Only	2.2 NSM (24 NSF)	2.2 NSM (24 NSF)
(b) Printer Only	2.2 NSM (24 NSF)	2.2 NSM (24 NSF)

(7) Storage, Forms	2.3 NSM (25 NSF)	2.3 NSM 25 NSF)
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(8) **Telephone Unit**

(a) Office, Supervisor	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)
(b) Office, Veterans Benefits Counselors	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)

(c) **Telephone Equipment** - Provides space Automatic Call Distributor equipment. This equipment is to be accommodated in the mechanical (gross) space for facility. The actual amount of space required will be determined on an individual project basis with 13.9 GSM (150 GSF) considered the maximum required.

(9) Office, State DVOP Employee	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)	6.7 NSM (72 NSF)
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(10) Office, Workstation	3.7 NSM (40 NSF)	3.7 NSM (40 NSF)
These ADP workstations are for joint use by employees that do not have or are not sharing (e.g., located on lazy Susan) ADP equipment at their desks. Therefore, care must be taken when determining the number of these workstations.		

c. Field Section

(1) Office, Section Chief	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)	6.7 NSM (72 NSF)
(2) Office, Clerical and Administrative Personnel	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)	6.7 NSM (72 NSF)
(3) Office, Field Attorneys or Veterans Benefits Counselors	7.4 NSM (80 NSF)	6.7 NSM (72 NSF)

(4) **Central File Area**

(a) Letter Size File Cabinet	0.7 NSM (7 NSF) per cabinet	0.7 NSM (7 NSF) per cabinet
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(b) Legal Size File Cabinet	0.8 NSM (9 NSF) per cabinet <u>Conventional</u>	0.8 NSM (9 NSF) per cabinet <u>Modular System</u>
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- (5) **Office, Workstation** 3.7 NSM (40 NSF) 3.7 NSM (40 NSF)
 These ADP workstations are for joint use by employees that do not have or are not sharing (e.g., location on lazy susan) ADP equipment at their desks. Therefore, care must be taken when determining the number of these workstations.

5. OPERATING RATIONALE (or BASIS OF CRITERIA)

These criteria were developed in concert with the Veterans Benefits Administration. They represent an input from the field, program officials and central office personnel. They also represent a distillation of many factors: existing VBA facilities, correction of space inadequacies, technological innovations and projected program requirements.

It is recognized that VBA functions, requirements and the physical variations of buildings will cause deviations in determining the amount of space assigned and its division into private, semiprivate, open areas, or other uses.

6. DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- a. Provide private rooms for the Division Chief, Assistant Division Chief and Telephone Unit. All other areas will utilize the open office planning concept.
- b. The Telephone Unit must be soundproof.
- c. The Veterans Services Division should be located in proximity to the building's main entrance.
- d. The telephone equipment will be included in gross space.
- e. The Storage area will utilize cabinets and shelving units as part of the open office area, in lieu of a separate room.