

**Department of Veterans Affairs
Charter of the
Advisory Committee on Women Veterans**

1. Official Designation. Advisory Committee on Women Veterans (Committee)

2. Authority. The Committee is authorized by statute, 38 U.S.C. § 542, and operates under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, 5 U.S.C. App. 2.

3. Objectives and Scope of Activity. The Committee provides advice to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (SECVA) with respect to the administration of benefits by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for women Veterans; reports and studies pertaining to women Veterans; and the needs of women Veterans with respect to health care, rehabilitation benefits, compensation, outreach and other benefits and programs administered by VA.

4. Description of Duties. In carrying out its primary responsibility of providing advice to the SECVA, the Committee will provide a report to the SECVA not later than July 1 of each even-numbered year, which includes the following: (1) an assessment of the needs of women Veterans with respect to compensation, health care, rehabilitation, outreach and other benefits and programs administered by the Department; (2) a review of the programs and activities of the Department designed to meet such needs; (3) an assessment of the effects of intimate partner violence on women Veterans; and (4) such recommendations (including recommendations for administrative and legislative action) as the Committee considers appropriate.

5. Official to Whom the Committee Reports. The Committee reports to the SECVA through the Director, Center for Women Veterans.

6. Office Responsible for Providing the Support to the Committee. The Center for Women Veterans is responsible for providing support to the Committee.

7. Estimated Annual Operating Costs in Dollars and Staff Years. The estimated annual operating costs for the Committee are \$321,465 and .75 staff-years. All members will receive travel expenses and a per diem allowance, in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulation, for any travel made in connection with their duties as members of the Committee.

8. Designation Federal Officer. The Designated Federal Officer (DFO), a full time VA employee, will approve the schedule of Committee meetings. The DFO, or a designee, will be present at all meetings, and each meeting will be conducted in accordance with an agenda approved by the DFO. The DFO is authorized to adjourn any meeting when he or she determines it is in the public interest to do so.

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9. Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings. The Committee is expected to meet at least two times annually and may have additional meetings if necessary.

10. Duration. There is a continuing need for the Committee to assist the SECVA in carrying out the responsibilities under 38 U.S.C. § 542. Unless renewed by appropriate action prior to its expiration, the charter for the Committee will expire two-years from the date it is filed.

11. Termination Date. Authorized by law for an indefinite period, the Committee has no termination date.

12. Membership and Designation. By statute, the Committee shall consist of members appointed by the Secretary from the general public, including representatives of women Veterans; individuals who are recognized authorities in fields pertinent to the needs of women Veterans, including the gender specific health care needs of women; representatives of both female and male Veterans with service-connected disabilities, including at least one woman Veteran with a service-connected disability and at least one male Veteran with a service-connected disability; and women Veterans who are recently separated from service in the Armed Forces. The Committee shall include ex officio members, as specified in 38 U.S.C. § 542, representing the Secretary of Labor (or designee), the Secretary of Defense (or a designee), the Under Secretary for Health (or a designee) and the Under Secretary for Benefits (or designee). The Secretary shall determine the number and terms of service of members of the Committee—except that a term of service of any such member may not exceed 3 years—and may reappoint any such member for additional terms of service.

The Committee will be comprised of not more than 12 members. Several members may be Regular Government Employees, but the majority of the Committee's membership will be Special Government Employees.

13. Subcommittees. With the DFO's approval, the Committee is authorized to establish subcommittees to perform specific projects or assignments as necessary and consistent with its mission. The Committee Chairperson shall notify the Secretary, through the DFO and the Center for Women Veterans, of the establishment of any subcommittee including its function, membership, and estimated duration. The objectives of the subcommittees are to make recommendations to the chartered Committee with respect to matters related to the responsibilities of the chartered Committee. Such subcommittees may have workgroups but may not work independently of the chartered Committee and must report their recommendations and advice to the full Committee for full deliberation and discussion. Subcommittees have no authority to make decisions on behalf of the parent Committee nor can they report directly to VA. A DFO, or alternate DFO, must be present for all subcommittee activities and take notes.

14. Recordkeeping. Records of the Committee shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 6.2 or other approved agency records disposition

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schedules. Those records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552.

15. Filing date.

Approved.

/s/

Denis McDonough
Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Date: October 14, 2021