

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To issue Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy regarding employee recognition and awards.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** The page in this transmittal replaces the corresponding page number in VA Directive 5017, dated April 15, 2002. It incorporates a change that revises coverage based on the addition of Chiropractors as a new Title 38 occupation. This change will be incorporated into the electronic version of the VA Directive 5017 that is maintained on the [Office of Human Resources Management Web site](#).
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Employee Relations and Performance Management Service (051), Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources.
- 4. RELATED HANDBOOK:** VA Handbook 5017, Employee Recognition and Awards.
- 5. RESCISSIONS:** Refer to the Transmittal Sheet for VA Directive 5001, General Introduction and Administration.

CERTIFIED BY:

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:**

/s/Robert N. McFarland
Assistant Secretary for
Information and Technology

/s/William H. Campbell
Assistant Secretary for Management
Office of Human Resources and Administration

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EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

1. PURPOSE. This directive establishes VA's policy on employee recognition and awards. It also establishes policy for special advancements for achievement and performance for title 38 employees as well as cash awards for registered nurses and nurse anesthetists. Procedures for implementing the policies in this directive are found in VA Handbook 5017, Employee Recognition and Awards.

2. POLICY

a. It is the policy of the Department to recognize individual employees who make contributions in support of the mission, organizational goals and objectives, and VA's Strategic Plan.

b. The Department shall also provide advancement opportunities for physicians, dentists, podiatrists, optometrists, [chiropractors,] registered nurses, nurse anesthetists, physician assistants and expanded-function dental auxiliaries appointed under authority of 38 U.S.C. 7401(1) or 7405(a)(1)(A); pharmacists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, certified respiratory therapists, registered respiratory therapists, and licensed practical or vocational nurses appointed under authority of 38 U.S.C. 7401(3) or 7405(a)(1)(B). Such advancement opportunities shall be predicated on the recognition of quality service rendered, additional experience and professional attainment as determined by an examination of the employee's individual record. Advancement opportunities shall include Special Advancements for Achievement and Performance. In addition, advancement opportunities shall include cash awards for full time, part time, and intermittent registered nurses and nurse anesthetists appointed under 38 U.S.C. 7306, 7401(1) and 7405.

c. VA's recognition and awards programs will be administered using the following principles and practices:

(1) Recognition has its greatest impact when it is provided as soon as possible following the contribution or achievement.

(2) The views of employees and employee representatives are critical to the program's effectiveness in motivating employees.

(3) The form of recognition used should be appropriate to the contribution that was made.

(4) When a desired outcome results from a group or team effort, all contributing members of the team should be recognized. The amount of recognition per team member may vary depending on the level of contribution.

(5) Appropriate presentation and adequate publicity are important to the program.

(6) Employee representatives should be involved in the development, implementation, and review of specific recognition programs