



# Message from the Inspector General:

I encourage you to thoroughly read this booklet and take the time to learn more about our organization, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Inspector General (OIG). We have significant opportunities to offer individuals interested in pursuing a career with the Federal government. One of my goals is that VA OIG be viewed as a very desirable place to work, a place where employees have a real sense of purpose and value—the organization of choice. The success and quality of our work depends upon our ability to attract outstanding people and to provide them with the training and experience necessary to become successful Government professionals. By joining our team, you will join an independent oversight body working in the second largest Federal department and sharing a mission second to none: to provide the best care available to America’s deserving heroes, our Veterans.



If you have any questions about VA OIG, please see our web site located at: <http://www.va.gov/oig/>. I appreciate your interest in our organization, and I wish you success in whatever career path you may choose.

*George J. Opfer*  
George J. Opfer

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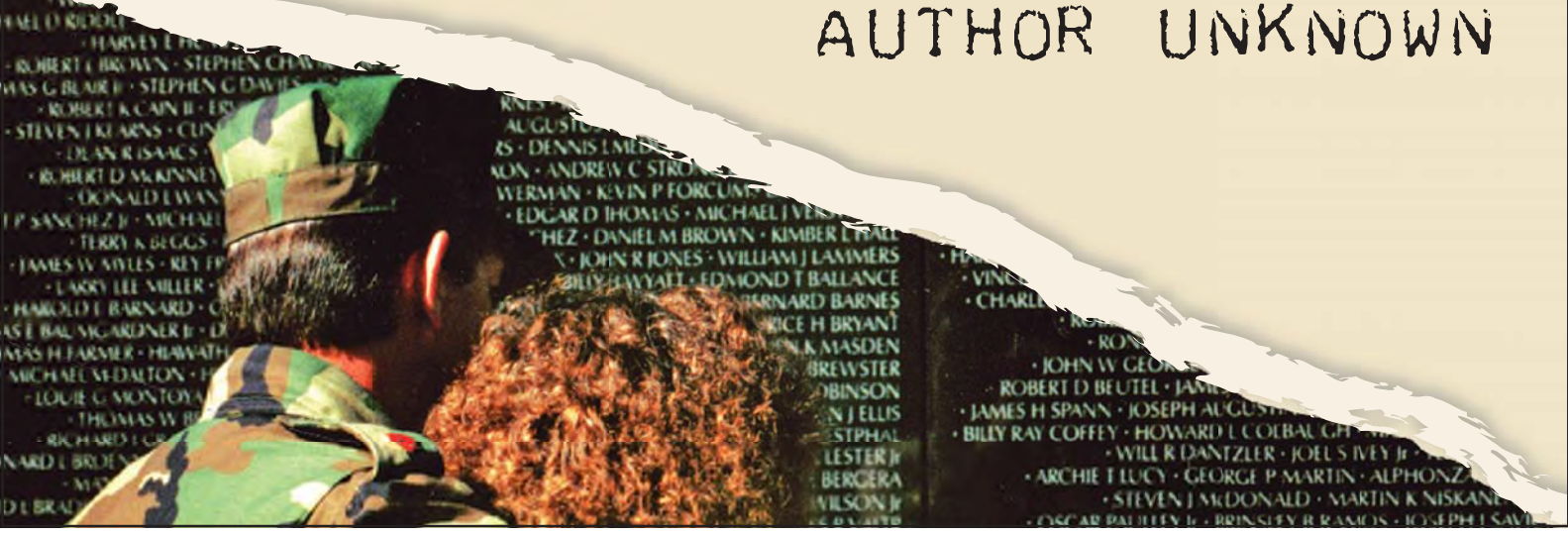
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# A VETERAN

WHETHER ACTIVE DUTY, RETIRED,  
NATIONAL GUARD OR RESERVE -  
IS SOMEONE WHO, AT ONE POINT  
IN THEIR LIFE, WROTE A BLANK  
CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO 'THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,'  
FOR AN AMOUNT OF "UP TO AND  
INCLUDING MY LIFE."

AUTHOR UNKNOWN





## WHO ARE WE?

The *Inspector General Act of 1978* created Offices of Inspectors General (OIG) in the Executive Branch of the Government. It states that VA OIG is responsible for: (1) conducting and supervising audits and investigations; (2) recommending policies designed to promote economy and efficiency in the administration of, and to prevent and detect criminal activity, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in VA programs and operations; and (3) keeping the Secretary and Congress fully informed about problems and deficiencies in VA programs and operations and the need for corrective action.

The Inspector General (IG) has authority to inquire into all VA programs and activities as well as the related activities of persons or parties performing under grants, contracts, or other agreements. These inquiries may be in the form of audits, evaluations, investigations, inspections, or other appropriate actions. OIG personnel are headquartered in Washington, DC, and are also dispersed in about 30 other cities throughout the United States.

## WHAT CAN WE OFFER YOU?

*A career with the Office of Inspector General will provide:*

Responsible and meaningful work assignments, aligned with your career goals.

A chance to have a real impact in the delivery of services to Veterans.

Opportunities for professional growth in a work environment that provides interaction with a wide range of other professionals from the public and private sectors.

On-the-job and formal training to assist you in developing your knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet occupational challenges.

Career advancement opportunities and monetary recognition of your valuable contributions to the organization.

A good starting salary with regular increases and a great benefits program.

Interesting travel assignments and the opportunity to live in any one of a number of our nation's finest cities.





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## VA's BACKGROUND

*Attending to the needs of Veterans has been an American tradition since the Revolutionary War.*

The Department's mission is to serve America's Veterans and their families with dignity and compassion and to be their principal advocate in ensuring that they receive the care, support, and recognition earned in service to the Nation. The VA motto, quoted below, comes from Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address, given March 4, 1865.

During the early part of our Nation's history, various branches or bureaus in the Federal government provided Veterans' pension and health needs. VA was established as an independent agency by Executive Order 5398 on July 21, 1930. This authorized the President to consolidate and coordinate Federal agencies created especially for, or concerned with, the administration of laws providing benefits to Veterans to one agency, the Veterans Administration. The Agency's mission was to administer a Veterans' pension system

and to operate a system to provide health care for America's World War I Veterans. On March 15, 1989, VA was elevated to a cabinet-level department.

Today, VA has three administrations that serve Veterans: the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) provides health care, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) provides income and readjustment benefits, and the National Cemetery

Administration provides interment and memorial benefits. While most Americans recognize VA as a Government department, few realize that it is the

second largest Federal employer with over 278,000 employees. There are an estimated 25 million living Veterans, nearly three-quarters of whom served during a war or an official period of conflict. About a quarter of the Nation's population is potentially eligible for VA benefits and services because they are Veterans, family members, or survivors of Veterans. VA also operates one of the largest and most comprehensive health care systems in the United States.

To serve the Nation's Veterans, VA maintains facilities in every state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Republic of the Philippines. There are more than 1,200

medical centers, outpatient clinics, regional offices, and national cemeteries throughout the United States in addition to VA's Central Office located in Washington, DC. The diversity of skills and services available within VA provides employees with tremendous opportunities for professional growth and career development.



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*"...to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan."*

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# VA's BUSINESS LINES

*VA provides a wide array of benefits and services:*

## Burial

Honors Veterans with a final resting place and lasting memorials to commemorate their service to the Nation.

## Housing

Helps Veterans and active duty personnel purchase and retain homes.

## Compensation

Provides monthly payments to Veterans or surviving family members for disability, disease, or injuries incurred while the Veteran was on active military duty or his/her death as the result of a service-connected disability.

## Medical Care

Provides primary and specialized care and related medical and social support services.

The 21st century vision of VA is to provide Veterans the world-class benefits and services they have earned—and to do so by adhering to the highest standards of compassion, commitment, excellence, professionalism, integrity, accountability, and stewardship. VA continuously strives to meet the needs of the Nation's Veterans and their families by benchmarking the quality and delivery of its service, fostering partnerships with Veterans and other stakeholders, and cultivating a dedicated VA work force of highly skilled employees.

## Education

Assists Veterans and eligible dependents in achieving educational or vocational goals.

## Pension

Provides monthly payments to needy wartime Veterans who are permanently and totally disabled or to surviving family members of wartime Veterans.

## Insurance

Provides life insurance benefits to Veterans and service members that are not available from the commercial insurance industry.

## Medical Research

Contributes to the knowledge about disease and disability.

## Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment

Assists disabled Veterans to achieve functional independence and to become employable.



## CAREERS

*There are investigative, auditing, health care inspection, and support careers within OIG today in which an individual can make meaningful contributions. OIG places a high priority on a person's abilities and efforts to make Government more responsive to the interests and concerns of the public.*

### Office of Investigations

The Office of Investigations has jurisdiction and primary responsibility for criminal and administrative investigations relating to programs and operations administered by VA. Criminal Investigators conduct program-related investigations nationwide in response to complaints or allegations regarding violations of Federal law. Criminal Investigators also maintain active liaison on investigative matters with other Federal, state, and local government agencies, including the FBI, state prosecutors, and the U.S. Attorney's Office. Administrative Investigators independently review allegations and conduct administrative investigations generally concerning high-ranking senior officials and other high profile matters of interest to Congress and the Department.

### Office of Audits and Evaluations

The Office of Audits and Evaluations provides independent nationwide reviews and evaluations of VA programs and operations. Dedicated teams of Auditors, Analysts, and other professionals conduct site visits, identify trends in data, and develop recommendations to help resolve deficiencies. Audit reports on performance and accountability are in demand by Department senior managers, as well as by staff and Members of Congress and the Administration. The vision of the Office of Audits and Evaluations is to offer recommendations for improvement that will enable VA to effectively manage programs and operations while continually effecting improvements in the care and support of our Veterans and their families.





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## CAREERS

### Office of Management and Administration

The Office of Management and Administration provides comprehensive support services to VA OIG. This office promotes VA OIG organizational effectiveness and efficiency by providing reliable and timely management and administrative support, and by providing products and services that promote the overall mission and goals of the VA OIG. The Office of Management and Administration strives to ensure that all allegations communicated to its VA OIG Hotline are effectively monitored and resolved in a timely, efficient, and impartial manner. Professional positions within this office include Hotline Specialists, Budget Analysts, Information Technology (IT) Specialists, Management Analysts, and procurement staff that support the nationwide VA OIG organization.

### Office of Healthcare Inspections

The Office of Healthcare Inspections evaluates quality assurance programs and patient care issues in the VA health care delivery system. This office offers unique employment opportunities for proven, skilled health care professionals who are interested in helping to make VA health care safe and effective. These dedicated physicians, nurses, social workers, and other health professionals work in a collegial team environment to evaluate patient care and quality improvement activities, and recommend actions to correct patient care problems in the VA network of Medical Centers, Outpatient Clinics, Nursing Homes and Residential Care Programs. Working in the Office of Healthcare Inspections offers unique opportunities to become knowledgeable in every aspect of the largest Government-operated medical treatment system. Healthcare Inspections staff performs a broad spectrum of evaluation activities that foster improved nationwide health care programs and have significant impact on national health care policy.

### Office of Contract Review

The Office of Contract Review conducts independent reviews of proposals submitted by pharmaceutical companies, medical supply companies, and health care service providers for the purpose of assisting contracting officers in negotiating a fair and reasonable price for the Government. The Office of Contract Review also conducts compliance reviews of contracts awarded by the VA National Acquisition Center and makes recommendations for the collection of overcharges. Employees in the Office of Contract Review have the opportunity to work on multi-million dollar contracts and achieve significant cost savings to VA through recommendations. Employees also have the opportunity to work with major pharmaceutical and medical supply companies and brief the Secretary and Members of Congress on high priority projects.

*There are many opportunities available for desirable, interesting travel throughout the United States.*

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# How To Apply

To view VA OIG job vacancy announcements on the Internet, visit:

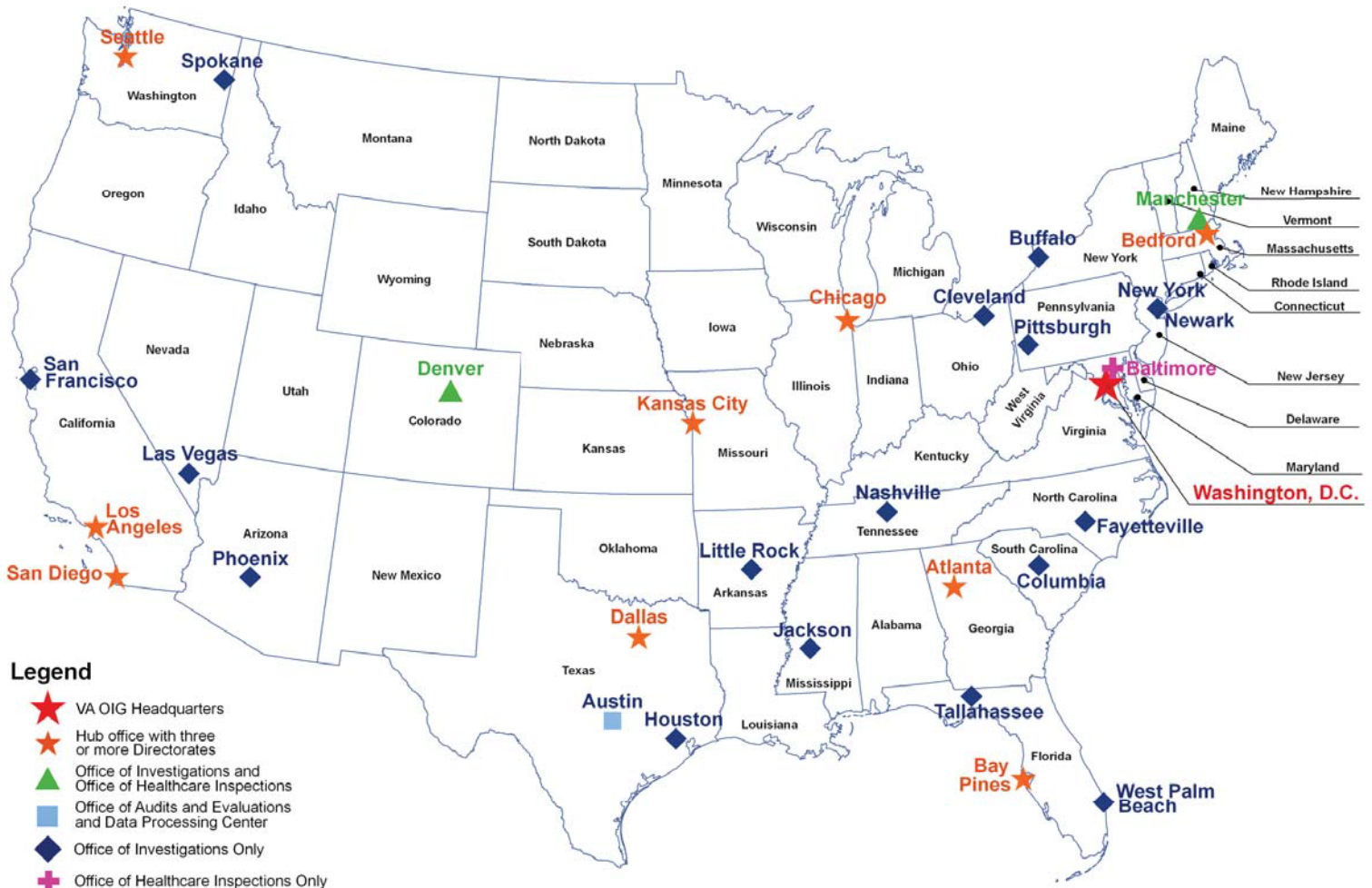
[www.va.gov/oig/careers](http://www.va.gov/oig/careers)

VA OIG job vacancy announcements are also available on the USAJOBS web site at:

[www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov)

## VA OIG OFFICE LOCATIONS

OIG employs more than 600 people with the majority of employees working in our field offices. The OIG headquarters is in Washington, DC. OIG field offices are located in the following cities:







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## WORKING IN INVESTIGATIONS

OIG Investigative Field Offices and Resident Agencies conduct investigations of criminal and administrative activities affecting the programs and operations of VA in an independent and objective manner, and assist VA in detecting and preventing fraud and other criminal violations.

### OIG employees working in Field Offices or Resident Agencies:

- function as Criminal Investigators with full law enforcement authority;
- interview complainants, witnesses and subjects of investigations;
- serve IG and grand jury subpoenas;
- review records and collect documentary evidence;
- write reports of investigations;
- present findings to Federal, state and local prosecutors for criminal and/or civil prosecution;
- make appearances before grand juries and in courts;
- serve search warrants, conduct searches, seize evidence, and make arrests;
- conduct surveillances; and
- demonstrate proficiency and qualify with a semi-automatic pistol on a quarterly basis and authorized shotgun on a semi-annual basis.

### Examples of recent assignments include investigations of:

- monetary and medical benefits fraud;
- drug diversion and drug distribution;
- procurement fraud and bribery;
- conflict of interest and false claims;
- threats against VA facilities and employees;
- embezzlement and theft by VA employees;
- theft of VA data;
- mortgage fraud;
- suspicious patient deaths;
- workers' compensation fraud committed by VA employees;
- fiduciary fraud; and
- assaults of patients and VA employees.

Recent investigative assignments have provided opportunities to work with a wide variety of law enforcement professionals, including FBI, Secret Service, Drug Enforcement Administration, Social Security Administration, state and local police, VA Police, assistant United States Attorneys, and state and local prosecutors. Newly hired Criminal Investigators attend a basic Criminal Investigator Training Program for approximately 12 weeks at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. Additional training is received during the first year at an advanced 3 week Inspector General Investigator Training Program.

*To view recent Office of Investigations press releases, visit:*  
[www.va.gov/oig/publications](http://www.va.gov/oig/publications)



## WORKING IN AUDITS AND EVALUATIONS

The Office of Audits and Evaluations methodically evaluates and reviews VA programs and operations for effectiveness of health care and benefits delivery to Veterans, their dependents, and their survivors. Audits, evaluations, reviews, attestations, and inspections allow OIG to provide comprehensive recommendations identifying opportunities for VA program managers to enhance operations. The Office of Audits and Evaluations provides VA with constructive recommendations to improve the care and support of America's Veterans.

### OIG employees working in Field Offices:

- observe procedures and test and evaluate data from medical facilities and benefits offices to identify trends and anomalies that reflect changes in performance or management;
- validate internal controls on programs to prevent fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement of budgeted funds;
- determine compliance with applicable procedures, policies, laws and regulations;
- identify and analyze relevant risks impacting the delivery of services to Veterans;
- conduct cyclic reviews of VBA Regional Offices to assess quality assurance of benefit claims processing;
- provide recommendations aimed at reducing backlogs and increasing productivity, timeliness, and accuracy of benefits delivery to Veterans;
- brief top VA management and Members of Congress on report findings; and
- develop reports that receive high levels of scrutiny by VA senior leaders, Congress, the media, and the public.

### Recent assignments include:

- reviewing the transparency and accountability of the President's economic stimulus funds;
- reviewing the activities surrounding the largest data breach in Federal government history;
- overseeing Department Financial Statement and Information Security audits;
- assessing the merits of Hotline complaints such as the manipulation of data for personal gains or contract improprieties;
- auditing VA controls preventing the loss and diversion of medications within VA pharmacies;
- assessing the effectiveness of claims processing activities needed to provide benefits to Veterans; and
- auditing the costs and viability of health care by affiliated providers and universities.

*To view recent Office of Audits and Evaluations reports, visit:*  
[www.va.gov/oig/publications](http://www.va.gov/oig/publications)



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# WORKING IN MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

The Office of Management & Administration provides comprehensive support services that promote organizational effectiveness and efficiency through reliable and timely management and administrative support, and through products and services that promote the overall mission and goals of VA OIG.

**The Operations Division** conducts follow-up reporting and tracking of VA OIG report recommendations; provides strategic, operational, and performance planning; coordinates and reviews proposed legislation and regulation; develops VA OIG policies and procedures; and electronically distributes all official VA OIG reports. The Operations Division also promotes organizational effectiveness and efficiency by managing all VA OIG contracting and providing reliable, timely human resources management, and related support services.

**The Information Technology Division** promotes organizational effectiveness and efficiency by ensuring the accessibility, usability, and security of information assets; developing, maintaining, and enhancing the enterprise database application; facilitating reliable, secure, responsive, and cost-effective access to VA databases and electronic mail by all authorized employees; providing internet document management and control; and providing support to all VA OIG components.

**The Administrative and Financial Operations Division** promotes VA OIG organizational effectiveness and efficiency by providing reliable and timely management and administrative support services such as employee travel, credit card purchases, space management, and property accountability.

**The Hotline Division** is the focal point for contacts made to VA OIG, operating a toll-free telephone service 5 days a week, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM Eastern Time. Phone calls, letters, and e-mails are received from employees, Veterans, the general public, Congress, the Government Accountability Office, and other Federal agencies reporting issues of criminal activity, waste, abuse, and mismanagement. *To report suspected criminal activity, waste, or abuse in VA programs or operations, visit: [www.va.gov/oig/hotline](http://www.va.gov/oig/hotline).*

**The Budget Division** promotes organizational effectiveness by providing a full complement of budgetary formulation and execution services to management and organizational components, including formulation of submissions and operating plans; monitoring allocations, expenditures, and reserves; conducting financial analyses; and developing internal budget policies.

**The Data Analysis Division** provides automated data processing technical support to OIG and other Federal and Governmental agencies requiring information from VA files. Data Analysis Division products facilitate the identification of fraud-related activities and support OIG comprehensive initiatives that result in solutions beneficial to VA.



# WORKING IN HEALTHCARE INSPECTIONS

The Office of Healthcare Inspections conducts inspections of patient care and quality improvement issues, and conducts VHA health care program reviews. In addition, Office of Healthcare Inspections staff provide consultative evaluations of individual VA Medical Care facility inpatient and outpatient care operations, participate in Combined Assessment Program reviews, evaluate quality of care at community based outpatient clinics; and ensure that quality health care for Veterans is VHA's top priority.

## OIG employees working in Field Offices:

- interview complainants and knowledgeable clinicians about health care-related issues;
- review patients' medical records to assess appropriateness and quality of care;
- collect and analyze medical data such as waiting times or lengths-of-stay to evaluate medical centers' responsiveness to patients' needs;
- interview medical center executive and middle managers to assess medical facility operations;
- review quality improvement documents to assess hospital-wide programs;
- present post-inspection briefings to VHA top managers and Members of Congress; and
- develop written reports that discuss findings, conclusions, and recommendations for improvement.

## Examples of recent assignments include:

- evaluation of VHA use and reprocessing of endoscopes and the extent of related problems;
- evaluation of Veterans' access to mental health care;
- oversight review of selected aspects of VHA traumatic brain injury program;
- oversight review of VHA contract community nursing home program;
- oversight review of selected aspects of VHA research as it relates to human subjects protection violations;
- evaluation of the extent to which VHA clinicians implemented evidence-based recommendations to prevent venous thromboembolism in hospitalized patients;
- evaluation of VHA out-of-operating room airway management;
- inspection of individual complaints of substandard or dangerous patient care, including alleged patient abuse and clinical competencies; and
- evaluation of VHA Quality Management programs and credentialing and privileging activities at medical facilities during OIG Combined Assessment Program reviews.

*To view recent Office of Healthcare Inspections reports, visit:*  
[www.va.gov/oig/publications](http://www.va.gov/oig/publications)



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## WORKING IN CONTRACT REVIEW

The Office of Contract Review conducts preaward, postaward, and compliance reviews of contracts awarded by VA. VA purchases over \$10 billion per year in goods and services from contractors. Preaward reviews examine proposals from vendors to provide pharmaceuticals, medical supplies and equipment, and health care services to VA and other Government agencies. These reviews provide the information and assistance contracting officers rely on to negotiate fair and reasonable prices, and to protect the interest of the Veteran and the taxpayer. Postaward reviews assess compliance with contract terms and conditions and recover identified overcharges. The Office of Contract Review has and continues to have a tremendous impact on VA procurement and provides a significant financial benefit to VA. Employees also have the opportunity to brief VA executives to strengthen and improve VA procurement processes.

### OIG employees working in the Office of Contract Review:

- obtain and analyze financial records provided by vendors to determine whether prices offered to VA are fair and reasonable;
- interview VA and contractor personnel to obtain information needed to support conclusions and recommendations;
- assist contracting officers in contract and/or settlement negotiations;
- brief OIG and VA officials on findings and recommendations; and
- develop reports that discuss findings, recommendations, and conclusions.

### Recent assignments identified:

- significant problems with the award and administration of contracts for health care services;
- significant lack of controls in the administration of an inter-agency agreement;
- deficiencies in the award and administration of Federal Supply Schedule contracts to resellers that resulted in policy changes within VA; and
- overcharges in excess of \$15 million that VA was able to collect and retain.

*To view recent Office of Contract Review reports, visit:*  
[www.va.gov/oig/publications](http://www.va.gov/oig/publications)



# ENTRY-LEVEL HIRING PROGRAMS & ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

## Student Educational Employment Program

The Student Educational Employment Program has two components, the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) and the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP). Job opportunities under STEP offer temporary employment that can range from summer jobs to positions that last for the duration of an individual's time as a student. These employment opportunities need not necessarily be related to the student's academic field of study. In contrast, SCEP offers valuable work experience directly related to the student's academic field of study. Interns who successfully complete their education and work requirements may be eligible for permanent employment upon graduation. *(For more information, see: <http://www.opm.gov/employ/students/intro.asp>)*

## Superior Academic Achievement

The Superior Academic Achievement provision is used to determine eligibility for applicable GS-7 level positions of persons who have completed (or expect to complete within 9 months) all the requirements for a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.

*(For more information, see: <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/policy/ApplicationOfStds-04.asp>)*

OIG hires entry-level professionals whose educational backgrounds typically include undergraduate or graduate degrees in public and business administration, economics, accounting, criminal justice, and health care administration. There are five basic career tracks: Criminal Investigator, Auditor, Health Systems Specialist, Management Analyst, and IT Specialist. For more information on these positions, please see the links below.

Criminal Investigator (GS-1811) <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/standards/indexes/1800-ndx.asp>

Auditor (GS-0511) <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/standards/indexes/0500-ndx.asp>

Health Systems Specialist (GS-0671) <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/standards/indexes/0600-ndx.asp>

Management Analyst (GS-0343) <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/standards/indexes/0300-ndx.asp>

IT Specialist (GS-2210) <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/standards/indexes/2200-ndx.asp>



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# SALARY AND BENEFITS

## Salary

Entry-level positions with OIG are at GS levels 7 and 9. Positions may be available above the GS-9 level for individuals with more extensive applicable work experience. Criminal Investigators are eligible to receive Law Enforcement Availability Pay, which is an additional 25 percent of base salary. Most Federal employees receive locality pay in addition to base salary. *(For more information, see: <http://www.opm.gov/oca/index.asp>)*

## Leave

Annual leave is based on length of Government service, including most military service, and is extremely generous. For the first 3 years, employees earn 104 hours of annual leave each year. During years 4 through 15, employees earn 160 hours; after 15 years, employees earn 208 hours. A maximum of 30 days (240 hours) of annual leave can be carried over each year. Employees earn 104 hours of sick leave per year, regardless of the length of service. There is no limit on the amount of sick leave that may be accumulated and carried over each year. VA OIG also observes 10 scheduled Federal holidays per year.

## Compressed Work Schedules

The basic work requirement for full-time employees is 80 hours in a biweekly pay period, which is typically completed in 10 days. However, OIG employees may elect to work a compressed work schedule in order to fulfill the basic work requirement in less than 10 days. Essentially, this allows employees to have one day "off" each pay period while still completing 80 hours of work. Due to the dynamic nature of investigative work, Criminal Investigators operate under a nonstandard work schedule that, at times, falls outside the window of normal business hours and necessitates their exemption from compressed work schedules.

## Alternative Workplace Program

In accordance with the Telework Enhancement Act of 2010, OIG maintains a Telework Program that is designed to promote productivity and performance while also helping to reduce traffic congestion and environmental pollution. The Telework Program allows eligible employees to work from home on an approved scheduled basis.

## Transit Benefit Program

OIG encourages employees to commute by means other than single occupancy motor vehicles in order to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and conserve energy. OIG offers a tax-free subsidy to employees who use public transportation to commute to work.

## Child Care Subsidy Program

Federal law permits VA to subsidize up to 35 percent of child care costs for employees earning a salary below the established threshold and who use a child care provider that is licensed and/or regulated by state and/or local regulating authorities.

## Health and Life Insurance

Federal employees are eligible to enroll in low-cost health, dental, vision, and long term care insurance. Federal employees also have the opportunity to select low-cost life insurance coverage. This coverage is based on annual salary and there are various options available. Employees also have the option to set up Flexible Spending Accounts with pre-tax dollars to be reimbursed for eligible medical and/or dependent care expenses. *(For more information, see: <http://www.opm.gov/insure/>)*

## Retirement Plan

The Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) is the Government three-tiered retirement plan consisting of Social Security, a Basic Benefit Plan, and a Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) that functions similar to 401(K) plans in the private sector. FERS offers excellent benefits that are financed through biweekly payroll deductions and employer contributions to all three components. For employees who elect to participate in TSP, OIG will match the first 5 percent of the employee's contribution each pay period (dollar-for-dollar on the first 3 percent and \$.50 on the dollar for the next 2 percent).

*(For more information, see: <http://www.opm.gov/forms/pdfimage/RI90-1.pdf>)*