

August 20, 2024

**RESCISSION OF VHA DIRECTIVE 1165, LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN MENTAL HEALTH**

1. By direction of the Office of the Under Secretary for Health, Veterans Health Administration (VHA), VHA Directive 1165, Leadership Positions in Mental Health, dated May 12, 2021, is rescinded.

2. Providing high quality mental health and suicide prevention services remains a top VHA priority. To support this mission, it is essential to recruit and hire the most qualified individuals, regardless of their discipline, for leadership positions in mental health programs. Recruiting across disciplines helps to ensure both a high-quality corps of mental health program leaders and a diversity of professional backgrounds. This approach is most consistent with interprofessional practice, which is the cornerstone of VA mental health programs. High functioning teams addressing behavioral and mental health needs require collaboration among diverse professions.

3. While the Office of Mental Health fully supports the principles outlined in VHA Directive 1165, enforcement of this directive is not practical as each mental health program leadership position is unique, and sites require flexibility in posting across disciplines based on their unique characteristics and existing staffing. Organizations recruiting for mental health leadership positions should use the guidance posted here: <https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VACOMentalHealth/SitePages/MHLeadership.aspx>.  
**NOTE:** *This is an internal VA website that is not available to the public.*

4. All inquiries concerning this action should be addressed to the Office of Mental Health (11MH) at [VHA11MentalHealthActions@va.gov](mailto:VHA11MentalHealthActions@va.gov).

5. This VHA notice will expire and be archived on August 31, 2025. However, the rescission information will remain in effect.

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

/s/ Erica M. Scavella, MD, FACP, FACHE  
Assistant Under Secretary for Health  
for Clinical Services/Chief Medical Officer

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