



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ACQUISITION AND MATERIEL MANAGEMENT  
WASHINGTON, DC 20420

IL 049-02-12  
July 30, 2002

**OFFICE OF ACQUISITION AND MATERIEL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION LETTER**

**TO:** Under Secretaries for Health, Benefits, and Memorial Affairs; Chief Facilities Management Officer, Office of Facilities Management; Veterans Integrated Service Network Directors; Directors, VA Medical Center Activities, Domiciliary, Outpatient Clinics, Medical and Regional Office Centers, and Regional Offices; Directors, Denver Distribution Center, Austin Automation Center, Records Management Center, VBA Benefits Delivery Centers, and the VA Health Administration Center; the Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer, VA National Acquisition Center; and VHA Chief Learning Officer, Employee Education System

**ATTN:** Head of the Contracting Activity  
All VA Contracting Officers, Including All Purchase Card Holders  
All VA Employees Involved With Planning or Organizing Conferences

**SUBJECT:** Legal and Technical Review of Proposed Contracts for Conferences

1. By direction of the Secretary, effective immediately, all proposed contracts for conferences, where the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) commitment, expenditure, and liability (combined) exceed \$25,000, require legal and technical review prior to signature by a VA contracting officer. This dollar figure is based on the combination of all direct costs to VA (e.g., conference rooms, audio-visual charges, refreshments, catering, etc.) and all potential liability (e.g., room guarantee liability, cancellation costs). Even if there is no direct cost to VA, if the proposed contract includes a guarantee on room usage or a cancellation fee that exceeds \$25,000, the proposed contract requires legal and technical review. Any agreement with a hotel, resort, or conference facility that includes potential Government liability is a contract.

2. All pending contracts for conferences that have not been signed and all future proposed contracts meeting the above requirements must be forwarded to the respective Acquisition Assistance Division (049A5D) or Acquisition Program Management Division (049A5B) office covering your facility (see Enclosure) for technical review. Upon completion of the technical review, Acquisition Assistance Division or Acquisition Program Management Division staff will forward the proposed contract to the appropriate Office of the General Counsel for legal review.

2.  
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3. Only duly appointed contracting officers or purchase cardholders, within their delegated authority, may sign contracts with hotels and other entities for conferences. A commercial form provided by a hotel or conference facility is a proposed contract. A purchase cardholder with authority only to buy goods or services within the \$2,500 micro-purchase limit may not sign a contract if the potential liability to VA (e.g., a minimum guarantee on the number of rooms) exceeds \$2,500, even if direct costs do not exceed the cardholder's limit.

4. Any VA official contemplating setting up a conference must include the appropriate contracting officer in the early planning stages and discussions. Conferences may not be conducted, nor may VA funds be used to sponsor a conference, at a hotel that does not meet the fire and safety requirements of the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act (see [http://www.usfa.fema.gov/applications/hotel/hotmot\\_act.cfm](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/applications/hotel/hotmot_act.cfm) and OA&MM Information Letter 90-01-9, Contracting for Conference and Training Space, dated September 5, 2001, at <http://vaww.va.gov/oa&mm/info/il01-9.htm>). Additional guidance on planning conferences can be found at 41 Code of Federal Regulations Part 301.74, [http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx\\_01/41cfr301-74\\_01.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_01/41cfr301-74_01.html).

5. Please direct any questions regarding the above requirements to Don Kaliher, Acquisition Policy Division (049A5A), at (202) 273-8819.

/s/David S. Derr  
Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Acquisitions

Enclosure

Distribution: RPC 7029  
Two (2) copies to (102)

Enclosure

**Submit Proposed Conference Contracts for  
Legal and Technical Review to the Following Offices**

For all field facilities located in Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5:

Acquisition Assistance Division (049A5D)  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
849 International Drive, Suite 275  
Linthicum, MD 21090  
Telephone 410-691-7771 Fax 410-684-3169

For all field facilities located in VISNs 6, 7, 8, 9, 16 and 17:

Acquisition Assistance Division (049A5D)  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
Building 22, Room 419  
10000 Bay Pines Blvd.  
Bay Pines, FL 33744  
Telephone 727-398-6661 x4442 Fax 727-398-9536

For all field facilities located in VISNs 10, 11, 12, 23 (13/14) and 15:

Acquisition Assistance Division (049A5D)  
Great Lakes Contract Service Center  
5000 W. National Ave., Bldg. 5  
Milwaukee, WI 53295-5000  
Telephone 414-902-5405 Fax 414-902-5420

For all field facilities located in VISNs 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22:

Acquisition Assistance Division (049A5D)  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
4150 Clement Street  
San Francisco, CA 94121  
Telephone 415-750-2283 Fax 415-750-2170

For all offices located in or directly assigned to the Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office or Headquarters:

Acquisition Program Management Division (049A5B)  
VA Central Office, 810 Vermont Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20420  
Telephone 202-273-8825 Fax 202-273-6175

For all offices located at the National Acquisition Center (NAC):

Acquisition Assistance Division (049A5D)  
National Acquisition Center, P.O. Box 76  
Hines, IL 60141  
Telephone 708-786-5163 or 5166 Fax 708-786-5165

Veterans Benefits Administration and National Cemetery Administration field facilities should send proposed conference contracts that are not being handled by their supporting medical center acquisition office to the review offices noted above based on the VBA or NCA facilities' location on the VISN map.