

**OPTOMETRY SERVICE  
CONFERENCE CALL  
MINUTES  
December 18, 2020  
3 p.m. Eastern Time**

VA Optometry ***Intranet***: <https://vaww.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/index.asp>  
VA Optometry ***Internet***: <https://www.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/index.asp>

1. Open VA Optometry Staff Positions
  - a. <https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Open-Optometry-Positions.xlsx>
  - b. [http://vaww.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/Open\\_VA\\_Optometrists\\_Positions.asp](http://vaww.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/Open_VA_Optometrists_Positions.asp) or <https://www.usajobs.gov/> or <https://www.vacareers.va.gov/>
2. **Employee Resources** ([https://vaww.va.gov/landing\\_employee.htm](https://vaww.va.gov/landing_employee.htm)):
  - a. VA Core Values and Characteristics (ICARE)  
<http://www.va.gov/ICARE/index.asp>
  - b. Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI)  
<http://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/pwd.aspx> and ODI Training Opportunities <https://www.diversity.va.gov/training/default.aspx>
  - c. Office of Resolution Management (ORM) – <http://vaww.va.gov/orm/> (three related links: EEO Complaint Processing <http://vaww.va.gov/ORM/EEOcomplaint.asp> ; Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) <http://www.va.gov/adr/> + VA Directive 5978; and Resolution Support Center <http://www.va.gov/orm/RSC.asp> )
  - d. Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act  
<https://vaww.va.gov/OHRM/EmployeeRelations/accountability/>; [EEO, Diversity and Inclusion, No FEAR, and Whistleblower Rights and Protection Policy Statement \(PDF\)](#); and <https://osc.gov/>
  - e. VHA Code of Integrity  
<https://www.va.gov/HEALTHCAREEXCELLENCE/docs/VHA-Code-of-Integrity-March-2019-FINAL.pdf>
  - f. Office of General Counsel (OGC) Government Ethics Website  
<https://vaww.ogc.vaco.portal.va.gov/law/ethics/SitePages/Home.aspx>
  - g. VA Employee Engagement  
<https://vaww.va.gov/ODI/EmployeeEngagement/> and <https://vaww.vashare.vha.va.gov/sites/NCOD/EmployeeEngagementCouncil/SitePages/Employee-Engagement-Toolkit.aspx>
  - h. All Employee Survey (AES) Dashboard  
<https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/AESDashboard/SitePages/Dashboard-Data-Selection.aspx>
  - i. VA Talent Management System (TMS) Resources  
<https://www.va.gov/HREC/TMS/> and TMS Training Opportunities  
<https://www.tms.va.gov/SecureAuth35/>
3. **New Policies and Other Important Announcements:**
  - a. OCHCO Bulletin excusing employees from duty on December 24, 2020
    - i. <https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/OCHCO-Bulletin-Excusing-Employees-from-Duty-for-the-Scheduled-Workday-on-Thursday-December-24-2020.pdf>
  - b. Equal Employment Opportunity, Diversity and inclusion, No FEAR and Whistleblower Rights and Protection Policy Statement – Message from the Secretary with attachment
    - i. <https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Message-from-the-Secretary.pdf>

- ii. <https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/The-Equal-Employment-Opportunity-Diversity-and-inclusion-No-FEAR-and-Whistleblower-Rights-and-Protection-Policy-Statement.pdf>
  - c. VHA News Release regarding initial plans for COVID-19 Vaccine distribution
    - i. <https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/News-Release-VA-announces-initial-plans-for-COVID-19-vaccine-distribution-12-10-20.pdf>
  - d. COVID-19 Vaccine Awareness FAQ document
    - i. [https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/faq\\_vaccine\\_awareness-COVID-19.pdf](https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/faq_vaccine_awareness-COVID-19.pdf)
  - e. [COVID-19 Vaccine Training: General Overview of Immunization Best Practices for Health Care Providers](#)
    - i.
  - f. Operational Memo 2021-12-01, [Request for Applications \(RFA\) for Expanding and Enhancing Connected Care/Telehealth Workforce \(VIEWS 3960933\)](#)
    - i. <https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Op-Memo-2021-12-01-RFA-Expanding-Enhancing-Connected-Care-Telehealth-Workforce-12-3-20.pdf>
  - g. Operational Memo 2021-11-10, [VHA Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Program for VHA Health Care Personnel November 30 2020 Deadline](#)
    - i. <https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Op-Memo-2021-11-10-Seasonal-Flu-Vaccine-Program-for-VHA-HCP-11-24-20.pdf>
  - h. VHA Notice 2020-36, [Maintaining VHA's Policy-Establishing Documents](#)
    - i. This notice maintains standards for operation memoranda issued by the Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Operations. The requirements established by this notice are critical to the VHAs issuance of VHA Notice 2019-19.
    - ii. <https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/VHA-Notice-2020-36-Maintaining-VHAs-Policy-Establishing-Documents.pdf>
  - i. VHA Notice 2020-38, [Rescission of VHA Directive 1200, Research and Development Program](#)
    - i. The Office of Research and Development has covered the policy related to medical and prosthetic research in VHA Directives 1200.01, 1200.02,1200.05, 1200.08 and VHA Handbook 1200.07; therefore, VHA Directove 1200 is no longer required.
    - ii. <https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/VHA-Notice-2020-38-Recession-of-VHA-Directive-1200-Research-and-Development-Prog-12-15-20.pdf>
- 4.
- a. VHA Directive 0320.12, [National Incident Management System Compliance](#)
    - i. This VHA directive establishes policy and responsibilities for compliance with NIMS training requirements and the application the incident command system for the management and coordination of incidents and designated special events at VHA.
    - ii. <https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/VHA-Directive-0320.12-National-Incident-Mgmt-System-Compliance-12-8-20.pdf>
  - b. Operational Memo 2021-12-03, [Standards of Practice Published on Medical Staff Affairs Intranet Site](#)
    - i. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide notification that the Medical Staff Affairs Program Office intranet site has been

- updated with a new Standard Operating Procedure, medical Staff Leadership structure. This procedure will be codified in VHA Directive 110.20.
- ii. <https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Op-Memo-2021-12-03-SOP-Published-on-Med-Staff-affairs-intranet-site-12-8-20.pdf>
  - c. VHA Notice 2020-37, [Waivers to VHA National Policy](#)
    - i. This Veteran Health Administration notice establishes an interim process for VA medical facilities and Veterans Integrated Service Networks to request waivers from compliance with VHA national policy.
    - ii. <https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/VHA-Notice-2020-37-Waivers-to-VHA-National-Policy-12-7-20.pdf>
5. Optometry Service Field Advisory Committee - Dr. Joy – unavailable for comment.
  6. Optometric Education Programs – Dr. Slagle
    - a. Dr. Slagle comment. The Office of Academic Affiliations has released its upcoming allocations for residency sites.
    - b. Trainees and residents are eligible through the VA to get their COVID vaccination.
  7. COPE Approved EES Coursework – Dr. Jensen
    - a. Dr. Jensen comment. The next webinar is set for January 8, 2020 and the topic will be on thyroid eye disease.
    - b. They have added 2 more lectures to the enduring lecture series in TMS and are COPE approved.
  8. Electronic Medical Records/Information Technology Issues - Dr. Ballinger
    - a. Dr. Ballinger comment. The CERNER project is ongoing and will have more updates soon. There are a few issues being addressed at the test site but everyone seems to be embracing the change.
  9. Infection Control/Reusable Medical Equipment Reprocessing - Drs. Horn/Trout/White – unavailable for comment.
    - a. **One Source Document Site:**  
<http://onesourcedocs.com/member/index.html>
  10. Eye Telehealth Screening Program – Drs. Elczyn/Morris
    - a. Dr. Elczyn comment. The goal is that 95% of their outpatient clinics have TeleEye Care services be available to Veterans. This is to be implemented nationwide through 2023.
    - b. Funding is being provided for equipment and staff for new sites as well as established sites that are expanding from diabetic teleretinal to TeleEye Care screenings.
  11. DoD/VA Vision Center of Excellence & Eye Injury Registry - Dr. Barker
    - a. Dr. Townsend comment. There was a clinical recommendation for the eye care provider that was recently released on December 17 on ocular motor dysfunction following traumatic brain injury. This is located on the Va Vision Center of Excellence website.
  12. TBI Vision Rehabilitation - Drs. Rice/Mandese
    - a. Dr. Rice comment. They will have their next conference call on March 15th and they will be going over some coding tips for TBI exams.
  13. Low Vision Rehabilitation - Drs. Chan-O'Connell/Whitman
    - a. Dr. Whitman comment. They will be discussing coding and billing of low vision telehealth exams.

14. Optometry Quality Improvement - Drs. White/Horn – unavailable for comment.
15. Direct Scheduling/Access/VA Systems Redesign - Drs. Cantrell/Varanelli – unavailable for comment.
16. VA Optometric Research & Development – Dr. Joy – unavailable for comment.  
**VA HSR&D Centers of Innovation (COINs) and Resource Centers:**  
<http://www.hsr.d.research.va.gov/centers/>
17. VHA Optometry Service Websites – Dr. G. Singh
  - a. Dr. Singh comment. There are no updates to report at this time.
18. VA Optometry Service Directory - Drs. Egusa/Lim/D. Wong – no updates at this time.
19. VA Residency Trained Optometrist Directory – Drs. Wang/Gilbertson – unavailable for comment.
20. AFOS Report - Dr. Elkins – unavailable for comment.
21. NAVAQ Report - Drs. Mercado/McGinty-Tauren
  - a. Dr. Mercado comment. The newsletter will be released soon. There will also be reminders coming about renewal for membership for 2021. Please check out the website at [www.NAVAQ.org](http://www.NAVAQ.org) for more information.