

Date: February 5, 2026

From: Deputy Secretary (001)

Subj: Reasonable Accommodation Guidance for Supervisors – Deadline Extended
(VIEWS 14171499)

To: Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials

1. In accordance with the Presidential Memorandum, Return to In-Person Work, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) issued, Reasonable Accommodation Guidance for Supervisors, on June 5, 2025, to initiate a review of all Reasonable Accommodation (RA) approvals of certain remote work or regular and recurring telework. This memorandum extends the deadlines outlined in the June 2025 memorandum and reiterates that Decision-Making Officials (DMO) must maximize the use of accommodations to enable in-person work. The Department is not required to provide an employee with their preferred or first-choice accommodation and may provide alternative accommodation(s) if they are effective. RAs are intended to enable employees to perform the essential functions of their positions.

2. The June 5, 2025, guidance communicated two actions related to RA requests to ensure consistency throughout VA in processing employee RA requests.

- a) All approved RAs of more than eight weeks for regular and recurring telework or remote work, approved since January 1, 2025, must be reviewed in accordance with the guidance below. The deadline for this review was 90 days from June 5, 2025.
 - i. All RA requests of more than eight weeks for regular and recurring telework or remote work, must obtain approval from the first-level Senior Executive Service (SES) supervisor or SES-equivalent to whom the DMO reports (referred to in this memorandum as the "Managing Executive").
 - ii. If the Managing Executive determines in writing that it is not practicable to personally handle the approval, the Managing Executive may delegate in writing another senior management official in the requesting employee's chain of command to serve as the approving official. Organizations may elevate appointments of the DMO to a higher-level management official.
- b) All approved RAs without an end date must be reviewed at a minimum, on an annual basis, to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of the accommodation. The deadline for this initial review was December 31, 2025.

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- c) For all actions in paragraphs 2a-2b, the Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator (RAC) will document the completion and outcomes of these reviews in the RA Management System.

3. The deadlines in paragraph 2 are extended as follows:

- a) Managing Executive review of all final telework and remote work requests approved since January 1, 2025, must be completed by March 31, 2026.
- b) DMO initial, annual review of all final RA without an end date must be completed by June 30, 2026.

4. When reviewing requests for more than eight weeks for regular and recurring telework or remote work, DMOs, RACs, and the Managing Executive shall apply rigorous and consistent criteria.

- a) DMOs must maximize use of accommodation to enable in-person work, where possible.
- b) RACs must carefully review requests and supporting documentation. RACs must have information that describes the nature, severity, and duration of the medical condition, functional limitations, and why the requested accommodation is needed.
- c) DMOs must communicate with the employees on the accommodation request and engage the RAC for additional information to make decisions on requests in compliance with VA Handbook 5975.1.
- d) DMOs and Managing Executives must conduct an individual assessment and consider the essential functions of the position when deciding to approve or deny the request. Citing the Presidential Memorandum, Return to In-Person Work, dated January 20, 2025, and/or VA policy as the sole reason recurring telework or remote work cannot be granted is an insufficient justification for disapproval. Additional, individualized justification is required.
- e) The Office of General Counsel shall be consulted for legal advice prior to determining that an employee cannot be provided any RA.

5. RACs shall prioritize new requests for RA over the reviews listed in paragraph 2 based on the strict timeframes in regulation and policy.

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6. Each organization must submit a plan of action to the Office of Human Resources and Administration (HRA) at VAReasonableAccommodation@va.gov by February 20, 2026, outlining how they will complete the prioritization of telework and remote work requests and approvals described in paragraph 2. The plan shall include workload data by category, reflect the percentage of work completed and pending, and provide projected completion dates for all pending work. Beginning on March 1, 2026, each organization will be responsible for submitting a monthly update to HRA demonstrating progress of inventory processing and/or reviews.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul R. Lawrence". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Paul R. Lawrence, Ph.D.