

99VA13

SYSTEM NAME: Automated Safety Incident Surveillance and Tracking System-VA

SYSTEM LOCATION:

Records are maintained at each Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care facility with back-up computer tape information being stored at off-site locations in most cases. Address locations for VA facilities are listed in VA Appendix 1 of the biennial publication of the VA system of records. In addition, records may be maintained at the Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office (VACO), 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.; VA Data Processing Centers; VA OI Field Offices; Veterans Integrated Service Network Offices; and Employee Education Systems.

CATEGORIES OF INDIVIDUALS COVERED BY THE SYSTEM:

The records include information concerning current and former employees, trainees, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers, and other individuals working collaboratively with VA.

CATEGORIES OF RECORDS IN THE SYSTEM:

The records may include:

1. Identifying information (e.g., name, date of birth, age, sex, social security number, taxpayer identification number);
2. Address information (e.g., home and/or mailing address, home telephone number, emergency contact information such as name, address, telephone number, and

relationship);

3. Information on injuries and illnesses attributed to work (e.g., cause, severity, type of injury, body part affected, risk, and contributing factors);
4. Criteria necessary to meet the injury and illness reporting requirements for the Federal Accident Reporting System and its successors under the Occupational Safety and Health Act; and
5. Abstract information (e.g., environmental and epidemiological registries).

AUTHORITY FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE SYSTEM:

5 U.S.C. Chapters 11, 31, 33, 43, 61, 63, and 83; 38 U.S.C. § 501; 38 U.S.C. Chapter 74.

PURPOSE(S):

The records and information may be used to examine or identify individual cases or file claims of work-related injuries and illnesses; to evaluate health and safety systems performance through statistical analysis; to track and evaluate services and medical care of injured or ill workers; to develop and manage the planning, distribution, and utilization of resources; and to identify clusters and outbreaks. The data may also be used by institutional members of an accident review board or an incident review board, a multidisciplinary group of health and safety professionals, as well as representatives from human resources, safety, occupational health, and infection control for the review of root causes of injuries. The data may also be used for audits, reviews, and investigations by staff of the facilities, the Regional Directors' Offices, VA Central Office,

and the VA Office of Inspector General (OIG), and for quality assurance audits, reviews, and investigations.

ROUTINE USES OF RECORDS MAINTAINED IN THE SYSTEM, INCLUDING CATEGORIES OF USERS AND THE PURPOSES OF SUCH USES:

1. VA may disclose on its own initiative any information in this system, except the names and addresses of veterans and their dependents, which is relevant to a suspected or reasonably imminent violation of law, whether civil, criminal, or regulatory in nature and whether arising by general or program statute or by regulation, rule, or order issued pursuant thereto, a Federal, State, local, or foreign agency charged with the responsibility of investigating or prosecuting such violation, or charged with enforcing or implementing the statute, regulation, rule, or order. VA may also disclose on its own initiative the names and addresses of veterans and their dependents to a Federal agency charged with the responsibility of investigating or prosecuting civil, criminal, or regulatory violations of law, or charged with enforcing or implementing the statute, regulation, rule, or order.

2. VA may disclose information to a Congressional office from the record of an individual in response to an inquiry from the Congressional office on behalf of and at the request of that individual.

3. VA may disclose information to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in records management inspections conducted under authority of Title 44 of United States Code.

4. VA may disclose information to the Department of Justice (DOJ), including United States Attorneys, or in a proceeding before a court, adjudicative body, or other

administrative body when VA, its employees, or any of its components is a party to or has an interest in the litigation or the adjudicative or administrative process, or when the litigation or process is likely to affect VA, its employees, or any of its components, and the use of these records is deemed to be relevant and necessary to the litigation or process, provided that the disclosure is compatible with the purpose for which the records were collected.

5. VA may disclose information for program review purposes and the seeking of accreditation and/or certification to survey teams of the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), College of American Pathologists, American Association of Blood Banks, and similar national accreditation agencies or boards with which VA has a contract or agreement to conduct such reviews, but only to the extent that the information is necessary and relevant to the review.

6. VA may disclose information to officials of the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) and the Office of Special Counsel when requested in connection with appeals, special studies of the civil service and other merit systems, review of rules and regulations, investigation of alleged or possible prohibited personnel practices, and such other functions promulgated in 5 U.S.C. §§ 1205 and 1206, or as may be authorized by law.

7. VA may disclose information to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) when requested in connection with investigations of alleged or possible discrimination practices, examination of Federal affirmative employment programs, compliance with the Uniform Guidelines of Employee Selection Procedures, or other functions vested in the Commission by the President's Reorganization Plan No. 1 of

1978.

8. VA may disclose information to the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA), including its General Counsel, when requested in connection with the investigation and resolution of allegations of unfair labor practices or the resolution of exceptions to arbitrator awards when a question of material fact is raised, in matters before the Federal Service Impasses Panel, and to investigate representation petitions and conduct or supervise representation elections.

9. VA may disclose information to individuals, organizations, private or public agencies, or other entities with which VA has a contract or agreement, or where there is a subcontract to perform such services as VA may deem practicable for the purposes of laws administered by VA, in order for the contractor or subcontractor to perform the services of the contract or agreement.

10. VA may disclose information to labor unions operating at the facility level as members of institutional review boards [accident review boards] to review root causes of injuries.

11. VA may disclose information to the Department of Labor for the electronic filing of workers compensation claims, as provided by 5 U.S.C. §§ 8121.

**POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR STORING, RETRIEVING, ACCESSING,
RETAINING, AND DISPOSING OF RECORDS IN THE SYSTEM:**

STORAGE:

Records are maintained electronically on magnetic tape, disk, or laser optical media with copies of back-up computer files maintained at off-site locations in most cases.

RETRIEVABILITY:

Records are retrieved by name, social security number, or other assigned identifiers of the individuals on whom they are maintained.

SAFEGUARDS:

1. Access to VA working and storage areas is restricted to VA personnel on a "need-to-know" basis; strict control measures are enforced to ensure that disclosure to these individuals is also based on this same principle. Generally, VA file areas are locked after normal duty hours, and the facilities are protected from outside access by the Federal Protective Service or other security personnel.
2. Access to computer rooms at health care facilities is generally limited by appropriate locking devices and restricted to authorized VA employees and vendor personnel. Automated Data Processing (ADP) peripheral devices are placed in secure areas, which are locked, with limited access, or are otherwise protected. Records may be accessed by authorized VA employees, and access is controlled at two levels; the systems recognize authorized users by series of individually unique passwords/codes as a part of each data message, and access is limited to only those who need the information in the performance of their official duties. Information downloaded from ASISTS and maintained on personal computers is afforded similar storage and access protections as data maintained in the original files. Access to information stored on automated storage media at other VA locations is controlled by individually unique

passwords/codes.

RETENTION AND DISPOSAL:

The Master (National Database) and local files are cut-off at the end of the calendar year and destroyed or deleted 6 years after cut-off. The Office of Public Health and Environmental Hazards in VACO files are destroyed or deleted when no longer needed for administrative and operational purposes. Back-up files are deleted when the master file has been deleted or replaced by a subsequent back-up file.

SYSTEM MANAGER(S) AND ADDRESS:

Official responsible for policies and procedures: Office of Public Health and Environmental Hazards (13), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20420. Officials maintaining the system: Director at the facility where the employee was associated.

NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE:

Individuals seeking information on the existence and content of a record pertaining to them should contact the VA facility location at which they are or were employed, or performed work. Inquiries should include the person's full name, social security number, dates of employment or work, and return address.

RECORD ACCESS PROCEDURE:

(See Notification Procedure above.)

CONTESTING RECORD PROCEDURES:

(See Notification Procedure above.)

RECORD SOURCE CATEGORIES:

Information in this system of records is provided by employees, trainees, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers, and other affected individuals; supervisors; health and safety professionals at facilities; clinical personnel; workers' compensation personnel; and human resources staff.