

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Charter of the
Special Medical Advisory Group

1. Advisory Committee's Official Designation. Special Medical Advisory Group (SMAG).

2. Authority. The SMAG is authorized by statute 38 U.S.C. § 7312 and operates under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. Ch.10.

3. Objectives and Scope of Activities. The SMAG advises the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Under Secretary for Health on the care and treatment of enrolled Veterans and other matters pertinent to the operations of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA).

4. Description of Duties. The SMAG primarily provides advice and consultation to the Secretary and the Under Secretary for Health on various matters relating to care and treatment of disabled Veterans and other matters pertinent to VHA, including education and training of health care professionals, research, and VA's role in support of Department of Defense and Homeland Security missions. The SMAG shall provide recommendations to the Secretary, through the Under Secretary for Health.

5. Agency or Federal Officer Receiving the Advisory Committee's Advice/ Recommendations. The SMAG reports to the Secretary, through the Under Secretary for Health, and to the Under Secretary for Health directly.

6. Support. VHA provides administrative and logistical support for all Committee activities.

7. Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years. Estimated annual operating costs for the SMAG are \$135,000 and 0.8 staff years. All members will receive travel expenses and a per diem allowance in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulation for any travel made in connection with their duties as members of the SMAG.

8. Designated Federal Officer (DFO). The Secretary will designate a full-time VA employee to be the DFO for the Committee and its subcommittees. The DFO will ensure the Committee activities comply with FACA, FACA Final Rule, VA administrative procedures, and other applicable laws and regulations; approve the schedule and agendas of all Committee and subcommittee meetings; attend all meetings for their duration; fulfill the requirements under § 10(b) of FACA (codified at 5 U.S.C. 1009(b); adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines it to be in the public interest; chair any meeting when directed by the Secretary; maintain information on Committee activities and provide such information to the public, as applicable; and ensure Committee and subcommittee members receive appropriate training for efficient operation and

compliance with FACA and the FACA Final Rule. The DFO will also ensure a public facing website is maintained for the Committee according to 41 C.F.R. § 102-3.120(b).

9. Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings. The SMAG may meet two times annually and may have additional meetings if necessary.

10. Duration. There is a continuing need for the SMAG to assist the Secretary and Under Secretary for Health in carrying out the responsibilities described in section 38 U.S.C. § 7312.

11. Termination. Authorized by law for an indefinite period, the SMAG has no termination date.

12. Membership and Designation. By statute, the SMAG membership shall include a disabled Veteran; members of the medical, dental, podiatric, optometric, and allied health professions; and other individuals considered by the Under Secretary for Health to have experience pertinent to the mission of VHA. The SMAG will be composed of no more than 22 members. Several members may be Regular Government Employees, but the majority of the SMAG's membership will be Special Government Employees. A term of service for any member shall not exceed 3 years; however, the Secretary may reappoint any member for additional terms of service if needed for continuity and to ensure ongoing issues are transitioned to newer members.

13. Subcommittees. With the DFO's approval, the SMAG is authorized to establish subcommittees to perform specific projects or assignments as necessary and consistent with its mission. The SMAG Chairperson shall notify the Secretary, through the DFO and Under Secretary for Health, of the establishment of any subcommittee, including its function, membership and estimated duration. Subcommittees have no authority to make decisions on behalf of the parent Committee nor can they report directly to VA. A DFO, or alternate DFO, must be present for all subcommittee activities and take notes.

14. Recordkeeping. Records of the Committee and subcommittees shall be handled in accordance with the General Records Schedule 6.2 or other approved agency records disposition schedule. Those records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552.

15. Filing Date.

Approved. /s/ Douglas A. Collins
Secretary

July 8, 2025
Date