

“(14) Vocational rehabilitation services under chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code.

“(15) Survivors' and dependents' educational assistance under chapter 35 of such title.

“(16) Home loan benefits under chapter 37 of such title.

“(17) Automobiles and adaptive equipment under chapter 39 of such title.

“(b) REPORT ON FEASIBILITY.—If the Secretary of Veterans Affairs or the Secretary of Labor determines that, with respect to any services or benefits referred to in subsection (a), it is not feasible to identify an estimated dollar amount to be obligated for furnishing such services or benefits only to veterans described in that subsection for any fiscal year, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Labor shall, with respect to an appropriation request for such fiscal year relating to such services or benefits, report to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives the reasons for the infeasibility. The report shall be submitted contemporaneously with the budget submission for such fiscal year. The report shall specify (1) the information, systems, equipment, or personnel that would be required in order for it to be feasible for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs or the Secretary of Labor to identify such amount, and (2) the actions to be taken in order to ensure that it will be feasible to make such an estimate in connection with the submission of the budget request for the next fiscal year.”

#### INFORMATION AND TRAINING CONCERNING AIDS PREVENTION

Pub. L. 100-322, title I, §123, May 20, 1988, 102 Stat. 504, as amended by Pub. L. 102-83, §6(j)(2), Aug. 6, 1991, 105 Stat. 409; Pub. L. 102-531, title III, §312(c), Oct. 27, 1992, 106 Stat. 3504, provided that:

“(a) INFORMATION PROGRAM.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish and carry out an information program relating to the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (hereinafter in this section referred to as ‘AIDS’). The information program shall be for employees and consultants of the Department of Veterans Affairs, for other persons providing services in Department of Veterans Affairs facilities to beneficiaries of programs administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for such beneficiaries.

“(b) REQUIRED ELEMENTS OF INFORMATION PROGRAM.—In conducting the program under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

“(1) develop, in consultation with the Surgeon General of the United States and the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, publications and other materials containing information on AIDS, including information on the prevention of infection with the human immunodeficiency virus;

“(2) provide for periodic dissemination of publications (including the Surgeon General's Report on AIDS) and other materials containing such information;

“(3) make publications and other suitable materials containing such information readily available in Department of Veterans Affairs health-care facilities and such other Department of Veterans Affairs facilities as the Secretary considers appropriate; and

“(4) disseminate information (including the Surgeon General's Report on AIDS) on the risk of transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus, and information on preventing the transmission of such virus, to Department of Veterans Affairs substance abuse treatment personnel, to each person being furnished treatment by the Department of Veterans Affairs for drug abuse, and to each person receiving care or services from the Department of Veterans Affairs whom the Secretary believes to be at high risk for AIDS.

“(c) TRAINING IN AIDS PREVENTION.—The Secretary shall establish and carry out a program that provides for education, training, and other activities (including continuing education and infection control programs)

regarding AIDS and the human immunodeficiency virus designed to improve the effectiveness and safety of all health-care personnel and all health-care support personnel involved in the furnishing of care under programs administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.”

#### DEFINITION OF “PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY”

Pub. L. 116-136, div. B, title X, §20003, Mar. 27, 2020, 134 Stat. 585, provided that: “In this title [enacting provisions set out as notes above and under sections 1503, 1710B, 1712A, 1714, 1741, 2011, 2041, and 2044 of this title], the term ‘public health emergency’ means an emergency with respect to COVID-19 declared by a Federal, State, or local authority.”

#### Executive Documents

##### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FUNCTIONS

For assignment of certain emergency preparedness functions to Secretary of Veterans Affairs, see Parts 1, 2, and 27 of Ex. Ord. No. 12656, Nov. 18, 1988, 53 F.R. 47491, set out as a note under section 5195 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare.

#### § 304. Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs

There is in the Department a Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, who is appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Deputy Secretary shall perform such functions as the Secretary shall prescribe. Unless the President designates another officer of the Government, the Deputy Secretary shall be Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs during the absence or disability of the Secretary or in the event of a vacancy in the office of Secretary.

(Added Pub. L. 102-83, §2(a), Aug. 6, 1991, 105 Stat. 379.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 210(d) of this title and in section 3(a) of Pub. L. 100-527, known as the Department of Veterans Affairs Act, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 102-83, §§2(a), 3(3).

#### Executive Documents

##### ORDER OF SUCCESSION

For order of succession during any period when both Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs are unable to perform functions and duties of office of Secretary, see Ex. Ord. No. 13247, Dec. 18, 2001, 66 F.R. 66271, listed in a table under section 3345 of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

#### § 305. Under Secretary for Health

(a)(1) There is in the Department an Under Secretary for Health, who is appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(2) The Under Secretary for Health shall be appointed without regard to political affiliation or activity and solely—

(A) on the basis of demonstrated ability in the medical profession, in health-care administration and policy formulation, or in health-care fiscal management; and

(B) on the basis of substantial experience in connection with the programs of the Veterans

Health Administration or programs of similar content and scope.

(b) The Under Secretary for Health is the head of, and is directly responsible to the Secretary for the operation of, the Veterans Health Administration.

(c)(1) Whenever a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary for Health occurs or is anticipated, the Secretary shall establish a commission to recommend individuals to the President for appointment to the position.

(2) A commission established under this subsection shall be composed of the following members appointed by the Secretary:

(A) Three persons representing clinical care and medical research and education activities affected by the Veterans Health Administration.

(B) Two persons representing veterans served by the Veterans Health Administration.

(C) Two persons who have experience in the management of veterans health services and research programs, or programs of similar content and scope.

(D) The Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(E) The Chairman of the Special Medical Advisory Group established under section 7312 of this title.

(F) One person who has held the position of Under Secretary for Health (including service as Chief Medical Director of the Veterans' Administration), if the Secretary determines that it is desirable for such person to be a member of the commission.

(3) A commission established under this subsection shall recommend at least three individuals for appointment to the position of Under Secretary for Health. The commission shall submit all recommendations to the Secretary. The Secretary shall forward the recommendations to the President with any comments the Secretary considers appropriate. Thereafter, the President may request the commission to recommend additional individuals for appointment.

(4) The Assistant Secretary or Deputy Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs who performs personnel management and labor relations functions shall serve as the executive secretary of a commission established under this subsection.

(Added and amended Pub. L. 102-83, §§2(a), 4(a)(3), (4), Aug. 6, 1991, 105 Stat. 379, 404; Pub. L. 102-405, title III, §302(c)(1), Oct. 9, 1992, 106 Stat. 1984; Pub. L. 103-446, title XII, §1201(c)(1), (e)(2), Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4683, 4685; Pub. L. 108-422, title V, §503, Nov. 30, 2004, 118 Stat. 2396; Pub. L. 109-461, title II, §210(a), Dec. 22, 2006, 120 Stat. 3418.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 3(b) of Pub. L. 100-527, known as the Department of Veterans Affairs Act, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 102-83, §3(3).

##### AMENDMENTS

2006—Subsecs. (c), (d). Pub. L. 109-461 redesignated subsec. (d) as (c) and struck out former subsec. (c)

which read as follows: “The Under Secretary for Health shall be appointed for a period of four years, with reappointment permissible for successive like periods. If the President removes the Under Secretary for Health before the completion of the term for which the Under Secretary for Health was appointed, the President shall communicate the reasons for the removal to Congress.”

2004—Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 108-422, §503(1), struck out “shall be a doctor of medicine and” after “The Under Secretary for Health” in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (a)(2)(A). Pub. L. 108-422, §503(2), substituted “or in health-care” for “and in health-care”.

1994—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 103-446, §1201(c)(1)(A), substituted “an Under Secretary” for “a Under Secretary”.

Subsec. (d)(2)(F). Pub. L. 103-446, §1201(c)(1)(B), (e)(2), substituted “Chief Medical Director of the Veterans' Administration” for “Under Secretary for Health of the Department)” and “commission” for “Commission”.

1992—Pub. L. 102-405 substituted “Under Secretary for Health” for “Chief Medical Director” wherever appearing.

1991—Subsec. (d)(2)(F). Pub. L. 102-83, §4(a)(3), (4), substituted “Department” for “Veterans' Administration”.

#### Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

##### CHANGE OF NAME

Pub. L. 102-405, title III, §302(a), Oct. 9, 1992, 106 Stat. 1984, provided that: “The position of Chief Medical Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs is hereby redesignated as Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs.”

Pub. L. 102-405, title III, §302(e), Oct. 9, 1992, 106 Stat. 1985, provided that: “Any reference in any Federal law, Executive order, rule, regulation, or delegation of authority, or any document of or pertaining to the Department of Veterans Affairs—

“(1) to the Chief Medical Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall be deemed to refer to the Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

“(2) to the Chief Benefits Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall be deemed to refer to the Under Secretary for Benefits of the Department of Veterans Affairs.”

#### § 306. Under Secretary for Benefits

(a) There is in the Department an Under Secretary for Benefits, who is appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Under Secretary for Benefits shall be appointed without regard to political affiliation or activity and solely on the basis of demonstrated ability in—

(1) fiscal management; and

(2) the administration of programs within the Veterans Benefits Administration or programs of similar content and scope.

(b) The Under Secretary for Benefits is the head of, and is directly responsible to the Secretary for the operations of, the Veterans Benefits Administration.

(c)(1) Whenever a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary for Benefits occurs or is anticipated, the Secretary shall establish a commission to recommend individuals to the President for appointment to the position.

(2) A commission established under this subsection shall be composed of the following members appointed by the Secretary:

(A) Three persons representing education and training, real estate, mortgage finance,