

(4) a summary of the nominee's experience and qualifications relative to the membership considerations described above; and

(5) a statement confirming that he/she is not a federally-registered lobbyist.

The Department makes every effort to ensure that the membership of VA Federal advisory committees is balanced in terms of points of view represented and the committee's function.

Appointments to this Committee shall be made without discrimination based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, or genetic information. Nominations must state that the nominee appears to have no conflict of interest that would preclude membership. An ethics review is conducted for each selected nominee.

Dated: January 22, 2021.

**LaTonya L. Small,**

*Advisory Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2021-01818 Filed 1-27-21; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### Health Services Research and Development Service Scientific Merit Review Board, Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. 2, that a meeting of the Health Services Research and Development Service Scientific Merit Review Board will be held March 11, 2021, via WebEx. The meeting will be held between noon and 1:00 p.m. EST. The meeting will be partially closed to the public from 12:15-1:00 p.m. EST for the discussion, examination and reference to the research applications and scientific review. Discussions will involve reference to staff and consultant critiques of research proposals. Discussions will deal with scientific merit of each proposal and qualifications of personnel conducting the studies, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. Additionally, premature disclosure of research information could significantly obstruct implementation of proposed agency action regarding the research proposals. As provided by Public Law 92-463 subsection 10(d), as amended by Public Law 94-409, closing the committee meeting is in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(6) and (9)(B).

The objective of the Board is to provide for the fair and equitable selection of the most meritorious

research projects for support by VA research funds and to offer advice for research program officials on program priorities and policies. The ultimate objective of the Board is to ensure the high quality and mission relevance of VA's legislatively mandated Health Services Research and Development program.

Board members advise the Director, Health Services Research and Development Service and the Chief Research and Development Officer on the scientific and technical merit, the mission relevance and the protection of human subjects of Health Services Research and Development proposals. The Board does not consider grants, contracts or other forms of extramural research.

Members of the public who wish to attend the open portion of the teleconference session from 12:00-12:15 p.m. EST may join via WebEx at: <https://veteransaffairs.webex.com/veteransaffairs/j.php?MTID=mb034716dbeb422f458d27b50411aabe7>, Meeting Number 199 716 2612; or by phone 1-404-397-1596 USA Toll Number, Access Code 199 716 2612.

Written comments from the public must be sent to Liza Catucci, Designated Federal Officer, Health Services Research and Development Service, Department of Veterans Affairs (14RDH), 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20420, or to [Liza.Catucci@va.gov](mailto:Liza.Catucci@va.gov) prior to the meeting. Those who plan to attend the open portion of the meeting must contact Ms. Catucci at least five days before the meeting. For further information, please call Ms. Catucci at 202-443-5797.

Dated: January 22, 2021.

**LaTonya L. Small,**

*Federal Advisory Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2021-01817 Filed 1-27-21; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE P**

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### Solicitation of Nomination for Appointment to the Veterans' Rural Health Advisory Committee

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Veterans Health Administration (VHA), is seeking nominations of qualified candidates to be considered for appointment as members of the Veterans' Rural Health Advisory Committee (VRHAC)

(hereinafter referred to as "the VRHAC").

**DATES:** Nominations for membership on the Committee must be received by February 19, 2021, no later than 4:00 p.m., eastern standard time. Packages received after this time will not be considered for the current membership cycle.

**ADDRESSES:** All nomination packages should be emailed to Ms. Judy Bowie, Committee Manager at [judy.bowie@va.gov](mailto:judy.bowie@va.gov) and cc: Dr. Thomas Klobucar, Designated Federal Officer at [Thomas.Klobucar@va.gov](mailto:Thomas.Klobucar@va.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In carrying out the duties set forth, the Committee responsibilities include, but are not limited to,

- Providing a letter to the Secretary and Congress outlining recommendations to improve and enhance VA's delivery of services to rural Veterans.
- Meeting with VA officials, Veteran Service Organizations, and other stakeholders to assess the Department's efforts in providing access to healthcare, outreach and education services offered to rural Veterans.
- Making annual site visits and holding town hall meetings with Veterans to address their concerns.

Management and support services for the Committee are provided by the Office of Rural Health (ORH).

**Authority:** The Committee was established pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 3121, to advise the Secretary through the Under Secretary for Health on ways to improve and enhance access to VA healthcare services for enrolled Veterans residing in rural areas by reviewing current program activities and identifying barriers to accessing care and services.

**Membership Criteria:** The VRHAC is requesting nominations for upcoming vacancies on the Committee. The committee is composed of 12 members, in addition to ex-officio members. As required by statute, the members of the Committee are appointed by the Secretary from the general public, including, but not limited to:

- Representatives of Veterans Service Organizations.
- Persons who have distinguished themselves in the public, academic affiliation, community healthcare organizations, and private sector.

To the extent possible, the Secretary seeks members who have diverse professional and personal qualifications. We ask that nominations include information of this type so that VA can ensure a balanced Committee membership. Individuals appointed to

the Committee by the Secretary shall be invited to serve a three-year term. The Secretary may reappoint a member for an additional term of service. In accordance with Federal Travel Regulation, Committee members will receive travel expenses and a per diem allowance for any travel made in association with duties as members of the Committee and within federal travel guidelines. Self-nominations are acceptable. Any letters of nomination from organizations or other individuals should accompany the package when it is submitted. Non-Veterans are also eligible for nomination.

*Requirements for Nomination submission:* Nominations should be typed (one nomination per nominator). Nomination package should include:

[https://www.ruralhealth.va.gov/docs/VRHAC-Application-Form\\_7-31-18.pdf](https://www.ruralhealth.va.gov/docs/VRHAC-Application-Form_7-31-18.pdf).

(1) A letter of nomination that clearly states the name and affiliation of the nominee, the basis for the nomination (*i.e.*, specific attributes which qualify the nominee for service in this capacity), and a statement from the nominee indicating that he/she is a U.S. citizen and is willing to serve as a member of the Committee;

(2) the nominee's contact information, including name, mailing address, telephone numbers, and email address;

(3) the nominee's curriculum vitae;

(4) letters of recommendation are accepted; and

(5) a statement confirming that he/she is not a federally-registered lobbyist.

The Department makes every effort to ensure that the membership of VA

Federal advisory committees is balanced in terms of points of view represented and the committee's function.

Appointments to this Committee shall be made without discrimination based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, or genetic information. Nominations must state that the nominee appears to have no conflict of interest that would preclude membership. An ethics review is conducted for each selected nominee.

Dated: January 22, 2021.

**LaTonya L. Small,**

*Federal Advisory Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2021-01822 Filed 1-27-21; 8:45 am]

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