

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
ACQUISITION ACADEMY
Frederick, Maryland**

April 20, 2015

MEMORANDUM: 003A5-15-01

VAAA COURSE ATTENDANCE AND CANCELLATION POLICY

1. **PURPOSE:** This Policy describes the expectations for course attendance and the deadlines and implications for course registration cancellations at the Veterans Affairs Acquisition Academy (VAAA).

2. **SCOPE:** This policy applies to all students (VA employees, contractors, and other government agency employees) of the following VAAA Schools: Contracting Professional, Facilities Management, Program Management, and Supply Chain Management. All VAAA students and their supervisors shall use the Federal Acquisition Institute Training Application System (FAITAS) to register for, review, and approve all VAAA training courses.

3. **COURSE ATTENDANCE:** Every student is expected to participate fully in VAAA courses. However, emergencies do arise. In such an event, and if a student receives prior approval from the instructor, a few hours may be missed depending on the course. However, if more than 5% of the total hours of the course are missed, the student may not receive credit. For all authorized absences, the student will be expected to make up all assignments and time per the agreement with the instructor. Note that a student's organization may be responsible for costs (registration and travel) incurred for the retake of a course due to missed hours.

Students will be held accountable for ensuring that travel arrangements are secured to allow attendance at the course in its entirety. No travel arrangements should conflict with the stated classroom hours of the individual course.

4. **COURSE CANCELLATION:** VAAA works diligently to meet the training needs of the acquisition workforce through diverse course offerings and high-quality learning experiences. It is understood that unforeseen circumstances arise and may result in an unintended absence, but VAAA asks that all students be mindful of limited course seats and training costs and submit their enrollment cancellation notice as soon as possible so that VAAA may accommodate other interested students.

Cancellation requests processed in FAITAS **more than 25 calendar days** prior to the course start date (including face-to-face and distance learning offerings) will have no penalty imposed, regardless of the reason.

Cancellation requests processed in FAITAS **between 24 and 0 calendar days** prior to the course start date (including face-to-face and distance learning offerings) may

result in suspension of enrollment privileges and the student may be prevented from reapplying to all VAAA courses for a period of 6 months. If the student wishes to appeal this suspension on the grounds of personal extenuating circumstances or mission-critical work-related emergencies, he/she should follow the below procedures:

- a. **Personal Extenuating Circumstances:** Personal circumstances that are unforeseen, involuntary, and unavoidable as verified by a supervisor using the **VAAA Student Appeal Form**, which must be completed and returned to vaaaoor@va.gov within 48 hours of cancellation. Once the form has been received, it will be processed within 5 business days and an email communication will be sent as soon as a decision has been reached. All decisions are final.
 - b. **Mission-Critical Work-Related Emergencies:** Extenuating circumstances related to mission-critical work as verified by a supervisor **and** a Deputy Director or GS-15 by using the **VAAA Student Appeal Form**, which must be completed and returned to vaaaoor@va.gov no later than 12 PM EST on the Friday preceding the start date of the class. Once the form has been received, it will be processed within 5 business days and an email communication will be sent as soon as a decision has been reached. All decisions are final.
5. **NO SHOWS:** A “No Show” is when an enrolled student fails to report to course on the first day at the course start time and no cancellation was processed prior to the course start date. No shows and delayed arrivals beyond 3 hours without notification to VAAA may result in notification to the supervisor and suspension of enrollment/attendance privileges for a period of six months, during which the affected student will not be permitted to attend any VAAA course offerings.

To appeal this suspension on the grounds of any personal extenuating circumstances (circumstances that are unforeseen, involuntary, and unavoidable as verified by a supervisor), students must complete the **VAAA Student Appeal Form**, which must be returned to vaaaoor@va.gov within 48 hours of receipt. Once the form has been received, it will be processed within 5 business days and an email communication will be sent as soon as a decision has been reached. All decisions are final.

6. **REFERENCES:** None.
7. **RESCISSION:** None. Initial VAAA policy.

/s/
Melissa Starinsky
Chancellor