



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
National Center for Ethics in Health Care

April 8, 2019

VHA Directive 1004.06, IntegratedEthics®: Frequently Asked Questions

1. What's new?

VHA Directive 1004.06, *IntegratedEthics*® (the IE Directive) was published on October 24, 2018 and replaces VHA Handbook 1004.06, dated August 29, 2013.

2. Where can I get a copy of the IE Directive?

The IE Directive and supporting materials are located on the National Center for Ethics in Health Care website:

- [Health Care Ethics Policy \(VA intranet\)](#)
- [Health Care Ethics Policy \(internet\)](#)

The directive is also available on the VHA Forms and Publications website [here](#).

3. Why was the IE Directive updated?

The IE Directive was updated from a handbook to a directive to meet the formatting requirements of VHA Directive 6330, *Controlled National Policy/Directives Management System*, dated June 24, 2016.

4. What changed in the IE Directive?

No substantive changes were made; there are minor updates to nomenclature, and outdated references were deleted. The National Center for Ethics in Health Care is continuing a strategic planning process to refresh the IE program. Following those programmatic decisions, we will revise VHA Directive 1004.06. This new IE Directive does NOT include any substantive changes to the IE program, nor does it reflect changes that will be made after the IE strategic planning process. The IE Directive continues to summarize the framework for IE, its goals, core functions, and organizational structures at the national, VISN, and local level. The IE Directive also delineates the responsibilities of the IE program officer, ethics consultation coordinator, preventive ethics coordinator, ethical leadership coordinator, and facility director.

5. Should any changes be made to local IE policy?

Unless your local IE policy is due for renewal, it is recommended that facilities NOT update their local IE policy simply to align it with the new VHA Directive 1004.06, since the update represents simply an administrative action to convert from a handbook to a directive.

February 12, 2019- Check this link for the newest version:
http://www.ethics.va.gov/docs/policy/VHA_IE_Directive_FAQ.pdf

6. Can our facility just use the national policy, VHA Directive 1004.06, as our local policy or do we need to generate a local policy consistent with VHA Directive 1004.06?

VHA is moving away from requiring a local VAMC policy for every national policy, however, when accreditation surveyors visit health care organizations to evaluate standards compliance, they may look at local policy standards. There are risks in using the national policy without tailoring it to reflect specific decisions that are needed for successful local implementation. The National Center for Ethics in Health Care provides facilities with “model MCM templates” to direct facilities to items that can and should be specified to provide clear consistent instructions within the local context such as ethics-related accreditation standards, policies, and procedures that the IE Council oversees. The model MCM template also has fields for drafters to insert facility-related information.

If your facility IE policy is due for renewal, you are encouraged to use the IE Medical Center Memorandum (MCM) template which closely aligns with the recently updated VHA Directive 1004.06. The model MCM may not conform to formatting or other specific requirements for local policy. Facilities are not required to use the model MCM, however use will ensure that local policy aligns with the national policy. As with all ethics-related policies, the IE Council is charged with reviewing and participating in the development and implementation of the local IE policy. The IE MCM template for VHA Directive 1004.06 is available on the [Health Care Ethics Policy page](#).

7. Whom can I contact about the IntegratedEthics® Directive?

Please send questions to Basil.Rowland@va.gov.