PUBLIC RECORD INSPECTION GUIDELINES

(California Government Code, section 6253)

Records of the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) are open to public inspection at all times during normal working hours. Every person has the right to inspect any record except those that are exempted from public disclosure by statute or other authority.

The Office of the Chief Counsel of the CDVA is the overall Departmental coordinator of this program. The public may contact this Office with a written request and be referred to the appropriate office where actual records may be located. The Office of the Chief Counsel is located at 1227 O Street, Suite 306, Sacramento, CA 95814. The telephone number is (916) 653-2539 and the fax number is (916) 653-2454.

Requests for records should be specific, focused and not interfere with the ordinary business operations of the CDVA. Where a request is not specific and focused, CDVA staff will assist the requestor to identify the requested information, describe the technology or physical location of the record, and provide suggestions on how to overcome practical barriers to disclosure. The operational functions of the CDVA will not be suspended to permit inspection of records during periods in which CDVA personnel in the performance of their duties reasonably require such records. If the request requires review of numerous records, a mutually agreeable time should be established for the inspection of the records.

The CDVA Office concerned will provide copies of records to any person. The fee for this service may not exceed the direct cost of duplication. This includes the cost of operating the copy machine and the cost of the machine operator. Any reasonable portions of a record shall be provided to any person requesting such record after deletion of the portions which are exempt by law.

Each office within the CDVA will be assigned a Public Records Review Officer and will establish reasonable rules for inspection of their records by the public. As far as possible, a counter, office, desk or other area should be made available for public use.

Records will not be removed from custody of the state officer or employee having responsibility for them. Records may not be disassembled in any way. If the requestor requires copies of public records that are being reviewed, the requestor is to mark each page to be copied with a colored post-it note and return the file or files intact to the appropriate CDVA officer or employee. The CDVA reserves the right to be physically present during the inspection of any records.

Persons found guilty of stealing, willfully destroying, mutilating, defacing, altering or falsifying, removing or secreting the whole or any part of such a record, map, book, paper or proceeding, or who permits any other person to do so, are punishable by imprisonment in state prison, or in a county jail not exceeding one year, or by a fine not exceeding $1,000, or by both fine and imprisonment (California Government Code, sections 6200-6201).

A copy of these guidelines will be posted in the reception or public area of every office of the CDVA. Also, each office will post the name and location of its Public Records Review Officer as shown below.

OFFICE NAME	PUBLIC RECORDS REVIEW OFFICER	
LOCATION (Street Address, Room Number, City, Zip Code)		
TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include Area Code)	NORMAL WORKING HOURS	COPY PRICE PER PAGE 15 cents per page

Upon request, a copy of these guidelines will be furnished free of charge.

(REV. February 18, 2009)