



# Boston VA Research Institute, Inc.

**Date:** 01/12/2010

Finance and Accounting Management

**POLICY NO. 10-16**

## **TITLE OF POLICY:**

COMPUTER POLICY

### **1.0 PURPOSE**

To provide procurement, management, and disposition standards for computers, as well as systems guidance.

### **2.0 SCOPE**

For all computer equipment purchased through BVARI. Computers being used on the VA system must meet all VA computer and security standards.

### **3.0 POLICY**

#### **Procurement**

BVARI will not purchase computers or IT equipment which are prohibited by the VA or that can be obtained through VA IRM for VA personnel, such as a desktop workstation for general use at the VA. BVARI may purchase computers or IT equipment when they are identified in an approved project budget or when the purchase has an approved justification for why it cannot be acquired through the VA. Justifications will be approved by designated BVARI employees with concurrence from VA IRM or ISO when appropriate. Computers purchased must be necessary for operations and specifications should be appropriately matched to the purpose for which the computer was purchased. All accounting policies will apply to the purchases of computers. Thus, computer purchases should allow for the maximum possible open competition as well as be kept below \$5,000. Computers and data storage devices, e.g. external hard drives, flash drives, etc., purchased through BVARI must comply with all VA security regulations, such as encryption of devices containing sensitive data. Costs associated with security compliance may need to be paid by the purchaser. A waiver of security compliance may be granted with an approved justification. Upon purchase, computers will be added to the physical inventory. Title to computers will vest in Boston VA Research Institute Inc. ("BVARI") or may be transferred to the VA.

#### **Acceptable/ personal use**

The electronic systems (hardware, software and networks) provided to BVARI employees to use at work, or in conjunction with their work, are the property of BVARI and/or the Department of

Veterans Affairs. Any use that will have a potential negative impact on the network, or interfere with the work of others is prohibited. VA sensitive data is not to be stored on BVARI computers.

Systems are to be used for work-related matters however, modest personal use is permitted. There is to be no display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages or cartoons, or any transmission of electronic mail communications that contain ethnic slurs, racial epithets or anything that may be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or religious or political beliefs. BVARI has a legitimate business interest in all materials generated by, transmitted through, or stored in these systems, in ensuring the use of these systems is within the requirements of this policy and in monitoring adherence to this policy. BVARI reserves the right to audit these systems and their contents at any time, without specific prior notice. However, employees and supervisors should not attempt to gain access to another employee's computer or electronic mail messages without express permission. Upon hiring each employee must sign the "Computers, Electronic Mail and Voice Mail Usage Acknowledgment Form" relating to this policy.

### **IT Training**

All employees must undergo mandatory IT Training. VA Privacy and online security training are required annually.

### **Data Security**

All computers and computer equipment using VA data or networks will be subject to VA regulations regarding data security per VA Handbook 6500 or any subsequent Security Directives that rescind it. All sensitive data and programs will be removed prior to disposal from BVARI.

## **4.0 DEFINITIONS**

## **5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

5.1 BVARI Board of Directors: The BVARI Board of Directors is responsible for the overall policy, planning, and coordination of all BVARI activities within the VA Boston Healthcare System.

5.2 CEO: The BVARI CEO is responsible for developing, administering, and coordinating a business process that provides optimal internal controls for BVARI.

5.3 DIRECTOR OF FINANCE: BVARI's Department Director is responsible for ensuring that the BVARI employees follow the policies defined in the policy.

5.4 Director of Operations: is responsible for tracking the equipment per BVARI's Equipment Policy and coordinating disposition with the VA.

## **6.0 PROCEDURES**

### **Tech Support**

Technical support is a necessary component of proper computer maintenance. BVARI requires that adequate support be set-up for all computer systems, either through an outside vendor or internally. Computers connected to the VA network will be serviced by VA information services. BVARI will maintain separate technical support.

**Enterprise Architecture**

BVARI currently relies on both paper and electronic formats to conduct business. A website has been established to provide access to forms, policies, and general company information. Both of these aspects can be changed to help improve business. One goal is to move towards a paperless format. Another is to improve the website as well as perform regular maintenance. A fully functioning website will reduce the amount of required paper-work as well as increase the efficiency in processing times.

**Disposition**

Computer and electronics waste is a major concern. When a computer reaches the end of its useful lifecycle, all sensitive data and programs will be purged. BVARI will try to donate computers as well as peripheral equipment such as monitors, keyboards and mice. Equipment that cannot be donated will be properly recycled. BVARI will keep a log of all disposed computers which records that sensitive data and programs were removed and by whom.

**7.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

- A) Equipment Policy
- B) VA Handbook 6500

**8.0 REVISION HISTORY**

<b>Revision Letter</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Revision Date</b>	<b>Description of Changes</b>
A	Nancy Watterson-Diorio	8/18/2009	Original document
B	Ross Farley	1/12/2010	Changed Procurement to address portable storage devices, VA workstations, and justifications for purchases.

**REASON FOR ISSUE:**

**SUMMARY OF CHANGES:**

Revision: 1/12/2010

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**RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:**

Director of Finance

**RECISSION:**

**RECERTIFICATION: This policy is scheduled for recertification on or before the last working day of August, 2011.**

**Nancy Watterson-Diorio**

**Chief Executive Officer**

DISTRIBUTION

Board of Directors, Date:

FLD: SharePoint Server \_\_\_\_\_ E-mailed \_\_\_\_\_ to:

BVARI Staff, Stakeholders