



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Center for Verification and Evaluation
Washington, DC 20420

In Reply Refer To: 00VE

Dec 2014

Center for Verification and Evaluation: I CARE

CVE: We Care!

Over the past several months, news reports have highlighted misconduct and improper actions on the part of the Department of Veterans Affairs employees, leading to the resignation of the VA Secretary, legislation to reform VA, and several Congressional hearings. Allegations have been made that the leadership climate across the VA has contributed to these events. Critics claim that this atmosphere fostered the breakdown in accountability and possible cover ups involving treatment of America's veterans.

The overwhelming majority of all VA employees are highly talented and dedicated to the mission of the Department and to the treatment of our Veterans. This is definitely the case for the team of caring professionals at the Center for Verification and Evaluation (CVE).

In light of recent challenges, the VA Secretary has reemphasized the VA Core Values of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence (I CARE) across the enterprise. He has asked all organizations across the VA to renew their commitment to the VA Core Values, which has been accomplished. We at CVE have taken this a step further. While every new federal employee is required to take an oath when joining the U.S. Government workforce, all CVE federal employees have recently "retaken" this oath and thus recommitted themselves to the VA and the CVE missions in supporting our veterans. The oath follows:

"I, [name], do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God." [5 U.S.C. §3331](#)

We emphasize the phrase: "[...] well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office," which inspires the entire CVE team as our guide star.

The mission of CVE is to "Protect the Veteran's Advantage by Verifying the Eligibility of Veteran Owned Small Businesses." Our motto is: "World Class Professionals: Enabling Veteran Business Opportunities by Protecting the Veteran Advantage – One Vet at a Time." We all truly believe in this, and universally strive to examine applications diligently to ensure that legitimate veteran owned businesses are properly verified while identifying and excluding those seeking to take improper advantage of the Vet First program and its contracting opportunities. This requires keen judgment and attention to details and documentation while striking the delicate balance between discerning between legitimate SDVOSB/VOSBs and ineligible businesses. This is not an easy task.



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Furthermore, CVE employees have a much greater and more personal stake in the organization and our mission as they accomplish their daily duties. As 94% of CVE employees are veterans; they understand veteran needs and concerns. All have signed non-disclosure agreements to protect sensitive information reviewed in the course of their duties, and all team members receive ongoing weekly training to ensure currency, competency, and uniformity in the performance of their duties. Every application passes through multiple, layered stages of review and processing to ensure a balanced and complete evaluation of each veteran's individual business and situation in complying with federal law and regulations for verification and contract eligibility.

Of course, no organization is without issues. Like any large team, we deal with many challenges on an ongoing basis; however, the key is that we accept these occurrences as learning opportunities and opening doors to improvements. We emphasize continuous improvement and lessons learned in our ongoing training sessions.

Integrity and commitment are the watchwords for the CVE team. All on the team are dedicated to the mission and to our veterans, and these watchwords drive our engagement with our veteran customers in order to accomplish our mission. Our goal is to be a better performing organization today, and an even better performing organization tomorrow. We Care!

[Handwritten signatures in blue and black ink, including names like "A. Hout", "R. Smith", "D. Slaughter", "Chad Smith", "Andrielle M.", "J. A.", "R. Smith", "S. Smith", "A. J.", "R. Smith", "J. A.", "J. A.", "J. A."]