



(May 3, 2016)

In order to further improve the lines of communication and to respond to the concerns between the National VA Council and you our members, I have established a National VA Council Briefing. This NVAC Briefing will bring you the latest news and developments within DVA and provide you with the current status of issues this Council is currently addressing. I believe that this NVAC Briefing will greatly enhance the way in which we communicate and the way in which we share new information, keeping you better informed.

Alma L. Lee
National VA Council, President

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**In This Briefing:** [Exclusive on VA , "Here it is "](#)  
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VA names new deputy chief of staff

Two senior officials who oversee issues of personnel and accountability at the Veterans Affairs Department are taking on new jobs within the VA.

Gina Farrisee, assistant secretary for human resources and administration at the VA, will become the department's new deputy chief of staff. Meghan Flanz, deputy general counsel for legal operations and accountability at the VA, will take Farrisee's place as the assistant HR secretary, a VA spokesperson confirmed.

The deputy chief of staff position had previously been vacant, the spokesperson said.

"As the secretary and deputy secretary continue to lead the department through the unprecedented MyVA transformation, we are also preparing for the presidential transition and whatever changes in VA's senior political leader corps that transition may bring," VA Chief of Staff Robert Snyder wrote in an email to employees.

Both changes are effective May 9.

Farrisee's new position will allow her to return back to her original career status as a Senior Executive Service member, Snyder said.

Farrisee has been the department's assistant HR secretary [since September 2013](#), where she oversees the VA's human capital planning, diversity and inclusion and labor-management relations, among other areas. Before 2013, she was the VA's deputy assistant secretary for human resources management.

Flanz previously served as the director of the department's Office of Accountability Review. VA Secretary Bob McDonald established the Office of Accountability Review after several high-profile cases of wait time manipulation at VA medical centers came to light. The office handles the department's internal employee investigations, misconduct allegations and whistleblower cases.

"I am confident that [the Office of Human Resources and Administration] will continue to support the department's transformation under Meghan's leadership and that of Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Pam Mitchell," Snyder wrote.

These personnel changes come as Congress debates a variety of measures that could alter how the VA disciplines its employees, particularly senior executives.

The Senate Veterans Affairs Committee [introduced April 28](#) omnibus legislation that would create an Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection, which would work with the U.S. Office of Special Counsel and the VA Inspector General on whistleblower cases. A presidentially-appointed director would lead this new office, the legislation said.