

**AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES  
NATIONAL VETERANS AFFAIRS COUNCIL #53  
Affiliated with the AFL - CIO  
Mid-Term Bargaining Committee**

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February 6, 2002

**Ronald E. Cowles, Associate Deputy**  
Office of Labor-Management Relations (LMR)  
Department of Veterans Affairs, Suite 215  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420

**Subject: Demand to Bargain – VHA Directive 2001-045 dated August 6, 2001 “Mandated Implementation of VISTA Imaging Core Infrastructure and Document Imaging”**

**Dear Mr. Cowles:**

In accordance with Article 44, Section 2 C, of the Master Agreement, the National VA Council is formally demanding to bargain over the cited subject above in the Department. Please provide the above named bargaining committee with any information and/or data concerning the cited subject above. The negotiations of this matter should normally begin no later than ten (10) workdays after the management chief negotiator in this matter receives our demand to bargain.

Please cease and desist any implementation until the bargaining obligation has been met. The named bargaining committee may request a briefing over the cited subject above, before sending any proposals. If you have any questions please contact me at (217) 554-4866.

Sincerely,



**Oscar L. Williams Jr.**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Executive Vice President  
Chairperson, Mid-Term Bargaining Committee  
National VA Council #53

**cc: Alma L. Lee, President National VA Council #53**  
Mid-Term Bargaining Committee, NVAC  
**Norman E. Jacobs, VA LMR**  
**Bonnie M. Kerber, VHA HRM Group**

**AFGE: The Future Is Ours  
Creating A Shared Vision For The 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

August 6, 2001

**MANDATED IMPLEMENTATION OF VISTA IMAGING CORE  
INFRASTRUCTURE AND DOCUMENT IMAGING**

**1. PURPOSE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes a mandate for the implementation of the Veterans Health Information and Technology Architecture (Vista) Imaging Core Infrastructure and document imaging at VA medical centers over the next three years. *NOTE: The Vista Imaging implementation is supported by the VHA Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC) to ensure that all sites store patient information that can be captured at the point of encounter so it will be available electronically online and retrievable across VA.*

**2. BACKGROUND:** Core Imaging Infrastructure consists of the functional components that support the acquisition, storage, and display of all types of images from all specialties and their linkage to the Computer-based Patient Record System (CPRS) graphical user interface (GUI) at the clinician's desktop. This includes the attachment of pictures or other multimedia objects to text documents such as progress notes and reports. Core Imaging allows the basic sharing of images among medical centers. Document imaging allows scanned paper documents to be stored electronically and viewed on workstations as part of the online patient record. The principal document imaging need of VHA facilities today is to collect and manage patient chart information that cannot be handled by CPRS, such as signed Advance Directives and consent forms, handwritten flow sheets, copies of outside medical records documents, diagrams, etc. The full Vista Imaging package, to include Ancillary Imaging Systems, Filmless Radiology and Teleradiology, may not be cost effective for all sites to implement; the decision on whether or not to implement these parts of the software are left to local discretion. Imaging Core Infrastructure enables sites to view images from these portions of the Vista package as consult quality images. Implementation of the Vista Imaging Core Infrastructure and document imaging capability will allow sites to store all patient information electronically and will allow the patient image to be available to appropriate users on any workstation in the medical facility.

**3. POLICY:** It is VHA policy that Vista Imaging Core Infrastructure and a document imaging system are to be implemented in all VA medical centers by September 30, 2004.

**4. ACTION:** Facility Directors are responsible for ensuring all sites have installed, at a minimum, the core Vista Imaging Infrastructure and the Vista system, or a commercial document imaging system, by September 30, 2004. *NOTE: Sites can choose to install a larger system to provide additional capabilities.*

a. The mandated systems must handle, at a minimum, scanned documents and clinical procedures reports.

b. Sites that already have a commercial document imaging system need to interface their system to Vista Imaging to allow the scanned documents to be linked to the rest of the online medical records.

**THIS VHA DIRECTIVE EXPIRES AUGUST 31, 2006**

**VHA DIRECTIVE 2001-045**  
**August 6, 2001**

- 5. REFERENCE:** VHA Executive Decision Memo dated March 7, 2001.
- 6. RESPONSIBILITY:** The CIO (19) is responsible for the contents of this Directive. Questions may be referred to 202-273-8668.
- 7. RESCISSION:** This VHA Directive expires August 31, 2006.

S/ Frances Murphy, M.D. for  
Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.  
Under Secretary for Health

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