Settlement Agreement between
Department of Veterans Affairs
&
National Veterans Affairs Council,
American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO

Re: National Grievance filed on June 6, 2017, NG-6/6/17

I. Preamble

American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO ("AFGE" or "the Union"), and the Department of Veterans Affairs ("VA" or "the Agency"), hereby agree to settle all disputes arising out of AFGE's National Grievance dated June 6, 2017 ("National Grievance"), concerning VA's alleged failure to follow its policy, specifically VA Handbook 5005, Appendix G47, regarding the conversion of GS-622 Medical Supply Technicians (Sterile Processing) ("GS-622") to hybrid Title 38 status and implementation of the corresponding qualification standard.

II. Withdrawal of Grievance and Waiver of Claims

As of the date of execution of this settlement agreement ("Agreement), AFGE hereby voluntarily withdraws the National Grievance dated June 6, 2017, and any associated request for arbitration. AFGE hereby waives any and all actions, claims, unfair labor practice charges, complaints, grievances, appeals or proceedings of any nature arising from the allegations contained in the National Grievance, with the exception of any claims that may arise by reason of breach of any term in this Agreement.

III. Terms of Agreement

By execution of this Agreement, AFGE and VA (collectively "the parties") have agreed to the following:

A. Implementation

1. VA will implement VA Handbook 5005/76, Part II, Appendix G47, Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing) Qualification Standard, GS-622, with an effective date of July 13, 2014.

2. During implementation, VA will fully comply with Appendix S of VA Handbook 5005 (Implementation of Hybrid Title 38 Qualification Standard) and Appendix T of VA Handbook 5005 (Conversion of Title 5 Occupation to Hybrid Title 38).

3. VA will complete implementation one year from the date of execution of this Agreement.

B. Retroactive promotion

1. During the implementation described in Section A, VA will retroactively promote all eligible current employees in the VA consolidated bargaining unit represented by AFGE who are GS-622-5 to GS-622-6, effective the first anniversary date of grade, as determined by the local human resources office ("HR").

a. The retroactive promotion of employees described in paragraph 1 is subject to the completion date identified in Section A(3).

2. Six months after the execution of this Agreement, VA will begin to retroactively promote all current VA employees who are no longer actively encumbering GS-622-5 position but would have been eligible for promotion to GS-622-6 had the employee still been encumbering the GS-622-5 position on or after the effective date of VA Handbook 5005, Appendix G47. Such employees would have been AFGE bargaining unit employees (BUEs) while they encumbered the GS-622-5 position. The retroactive promotion will be effective the first anniversary date of grade, as determined by the local HR office.

    a. The retroactive promotion of employees described in paragraph 2 will be completed sixteen (16) months after execution of the Agreement.

3. Pursuant to the Back Pay Act, VA will calculate the back pay, with interest, from the date of the retroactive promotion to GS-622-6 for the employees identified in paragraphs 1 and 2. VA will calculate such interest by using the Office of Personnel Management ("OPM") "back pay calculator" and submit the information to Defense Finance Accounting System ("DFAS").

4. DFAS will issue back pay and interest payments to such eligible employees.

5. The parties acknowledge that DFAS is a separate entity that will administer the above payments. The Agency exercises no control over, nor is the principal of DFAS. The Agency makes no representation concerning when DFAS will complete agreed upon payments.

C. Information to Union

1. After the execution of this Agreement, VA will provide the following information to Union counsel every ninety (90) calendar days:

    a. List of current AFGE BUEs actively encumbering GS-622-05 Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing) position who have been identified for potential retroactive promotion to GS-622-06. This list will include verification of conversion, conversion date, effective date of retroactive promotion, and date of transmission of information to DFAS.

    b. List of current VA employees no longer encumbering GS-622-05 Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing) position who have been identified as eligible for retroactive promotion to GS-622-06 had the employee still been encumbering the GS-622-5 position on or after the effective date of VA Handbook 5005, Appendix G47. Such employees would have been AFGE BUEs while encumbering the GS-622-05 position. This list will include the retroactive promotion date of such employees.

    c. List of employees identified in Section B, paragraphs 1 and 2 with whom VA has submitted payment files for interest to DFAS.

d. Following the completion of the terms identified in Section B, paragraphs 1 and 2, VA will cease to provide the information identified in paragraphs a, b, and c of this Section.

D. If VA has not completed the terms described in Sections A and B within the applicable timeframes, VA counsel and AFGE counsel will meet and confer by phone to discuss the Agency's anticipated date of completion, including the continued implementation of the Agreement.

E. Within thirty (30) calendar days of the execution of this Agreement, the Agency will pay the Union attorneys' fees in the amount of $4,500.00. The Agency will issue payment via electronic deposit/check into:

American Federation of Government Employees – Legal Representation Fund

[redacted]

IV. Stipulations

The parties further stipulate and agree that:

A. They have entered into this Agreement freely and voluntarily.

B. The Parties may mutually agree in writing to extend any time limits in this Agreement.

C. This Agreement does not constitute an admission of guilt, fault, or wrongdoing by either party.

D. The Agreement constitutes a joint effort by the parties and should not be construed against any party.

E. The terms of this Agreement, the negotiations leading up to this Agreement, the data, documents, or information exchanged between the parties in the course of negotiations of this Agreement, may not be offered, taken, construed, or introduced as evidence of liability or as an admission or statement of wrongdoing by either party in this action or in any subsequent proceeding of any nature.

F. The obligations of the parties specified above constitute consideration sufficient to render this Agreement enforceable by either party.

G. This Agreement constitutes the entire understanding between the parties regarding the resolution and settlement of the National Grievance, and there are no other terms or commitments, verbal or written, regarding the settlement of the National Grievance. No other promises or agreements shall be binding unless placed in writing and signed by the parties.

H. The Agency or the Union may submit the Agreement as evidence of withdrawal of the National Grievance and all actions, claims, complaints, grievances, appeals or proceedings of whatever nature arising from the allegations contained in the National Grievance.

I. All the time limits in this Agreement are in calendar days. If a time limit expires on a Saturday, Sunday, or a Federal Holiday, then the time limit shall expire on the next business day.

J. The "date of execution" of this Agreement is the last date upon which this Agreement has been signed by either party as noted below.

K. Either party may bring a claim in the form of a grievance arising from the breach of any term of this Agreement.

For the Union:

Mary-Jean Burke
Chairperson, Grievance & Arbitration Committee
AFGE/NVAC

5/2/18
Date

Thomas Dargon, Jr.
Staff Counsel, NVAC
AFGE, AFL-CIO

5/2/18
Date

For the Agency:

Nathan S. Maenle
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Office of Human Resources & Administration
Department of Veterans Affairs

5.8.2018
Date

Department of Veterans Affairs
Washington, DC 20420

VA HANDBOOK 5005/76
Transmittal Sheet
May 28, 2014

STAFFING

1. REASON FOR ISSUE: To establish a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) qualification standard for Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing), GS-622, appointed under 38 U.S.C. § 7401(3) and 38 U.S.C. § 7405 (a)(1)(B).

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES: This handbook contains mandatory procedures on staffing. This revision establishes the Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing) occupation under VA's Title 38 Hybrid excepted service employment system in accordance with the authority established under the "Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010" (Public Law 111-163). Authority is given to the Secretary of the VA under 38 U.S.C. § 7402 to prescribe qualifications for occupations identified in or established under 38 U.S.C. § 7401(3). This qualification standard is effective July 13, 2014. This new qualification standard will be incorporated into the electronic version of VA Handbook 5005 that is maintained on the Office of Human Resources Management Web site.

3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: The Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (059), Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management.

4. RELATED DIRECTIVE: VA Directive 5005, Staffing.

5. RESCISSIONS: None.

CERTIFIED BY:

/s/
Stephen W. Warren
Executive in Charge and Chief Information Officer
Office of Information and Technology

BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:

/s/
Gina S. Farrisee
Assistant Secretary for
Human Resources and Administration

ELECTRONIC DISTRIBUTION ONLY

CONTENTS-CONTINUED

PARAGRAPH PAGE

APPENDICES-Continued

[APPENDIX G47. MEDICAL SUPPLY TECHNICIAN (STERILE PROCESSING) QUALIFCATION STANDARD GS-622 Veterans Health Administration

1. COVERAGE. The following are requirements for appointment as a Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing) in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). These requirements apply to all VHA Medical Supply Technicians (Sterile Processing) (MSTs) in the General Schedule (GS)-0622 series. **NOTE:** *Individuals performing supply related duties that do not meet the coverage of this qualification standard should be classified in accordance with title 5 classification procedures.*

2. BASIC REQUIREMENTS

a. **Citizenship.** Citizen of the United States. (Non-citizens may be appointed when it is not possible to recruit qualified citizens in accordance with VA Handbook 5005, Part II, Chapter 3, Section A, paragraph 3g.)

b. **Experience and/or Education**

(1) **Experience.** Six months of experience that demonstrates the applicant's ability to perform the work or provides an understanding of the work; or

(2) **Education.** One year above high school that included at least 6 semester hours in health care related courses such as sterile processing, nursing assistant, hospital corpsman, and operating room and surgical technician courses or other courses related to the position; or

(3) **Experience/Education Combination.** Equivalent combination of experience and education are qualifying for entry level for which both education and experience are acceptable.

c. **Certification.** None.

d. **Grandfathering Provision.** All MSTs that are employed in VHA in this occupation on the effective date of this qualification standard are considered to have met all qualification requirements for the title, series and grade held, that are part of the basic requirements of the occupation. For employees who do not meet all the basic requirements required in this standard, but who met the qualifications applicable to the position at the time they were appointed to it, the following provisions apply:

(1) Employees grandfathered into the GS-622 occupational series as MSTs may be reassigned, promoted up to and including the full performance (journeyman) level, or changed to lower grade within the occupation.

(2) MSTs who are appointed on a temporary basis prior to the effective date of the qualification standard may not have their temporary appointment extended or be reappointed, on a temporary or permanent basis until they fully meet the basic requirements of the standard.

(3) MSTs who are converted to title 38 hybrid status under this provision and subsequently leave the occupation lose protected status and must meet the full VA qualification standard requirements in effect at the time of reentry to the occupation.

e. **Foreign Education.** To be creditable, education completed outside the U.S. must have been submitted to a private organization that specializes in the interpretation of foreign educational credentials and such education must have been deemed at least equivalent to that gained in conventional U. S. programs.

f. **Physical Requirements.** See VA Directive and Handbook 5019.

g. **English Language Proficiency.** MSTs must be proficient in spoken and written English in accordance with chapter 3, section A, paragraph 3j, this part.

3. GRADE REQUIREMENTS

a. **Creditable Experience**

(1) **Knowledge of Current MST Practices.** To be creditable, the experience must have demonstrated the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) associated with MST responsibilities. Experience satisfying this requirement may be paid/non-paid employment as a MST.

(2) **Quality of Experience.** Qualifying experience must be at a level comparable to MST experience at the next lower grade level of the position being filled. For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher level duties must consist of significant scope, administrative independence, complexity (difficulty) and range of variety as described in this standard at the specified grade level and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time.

(3) **Part-Time Experience.** Part-time experience as a MST is creditable according to its relationship to the full-time workweek. For example, a MST employed 20 hours a week, or on a 1/2-time basis, would receive 1 full-time workweek of credit for each 2 weeks of service.

b. **Grade Determinations.** The following criteria must be met when determining the grade of candidates.

(1) **GS-03 (Entry Level)**

(a) **Experience or Education.** None beyond the basic requirements.

(b) **Assignment.** This is an entry level MST position. MSTs receive guidance from more experienced staff members and require frequent and direct supervision.

(2) **GS-04 (Developmental Level)**

(a) **Experience.** Six months experience as a MST, operating room or surgical technician or other position that demonstrated knowledge of sterile processing in a clinical setting; or

(b) **Education.** Two years of education above high school that included at least 12 semester hours in courses related to the occupation. **NOTE**: *Successful completion of a course for medical technicians, hospital corpsmen, medical service specialists, or nursing assistants obtained in a training program given by the Armed Forces, the U.S. Maritime Service, or hospitals under close medical and professional supervision, may be substituted on a month-for-month basis for up to 6 months of experience.*

(c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience or education above, the candidate must demonstrate the KSAs below:

1. Knowledge of universal precautions for safety and prevention of cross contamination.

2. Basic knowledge of medical terminology in order to assemble specialty operating room/clinic instrument sets.

3. Basic knowledge of sterilization and cleaning equipment.

4. Ability to communicate both orally and in writing.

(d) **Assignment.** This is a developmental level MST position. Performs segments of work pertaining to the decontamination, sterilization and inspection of reusable medical equipment (RME). Completes segments of work pertaining to the assembly of basic sets and trays for use in the medical center. Operates equipment involved in sterilization processes. Prepares operating room case carts. MSTs receive guidance from more experienced staff members and require frequent and direct supervision.

(3) **GS-05 (Developmental Level)**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level; or

(b) **Education**. Four academic years above high school leading to a Bachelor's degree with at least 12 semester hours in courses related to the occupation or a Bachelor's degree.

(c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience or education above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

1. Basic knowledge of surgical instruments used in operating rooms and clinic settings.

2. Basic knowledge of event-related packaging in regards to sterility.

3. Knowledge of sterilization and cleaning equipment.

(d) **Assignment**: This is a developmental level MST position. Removes soil, blood, tissue fragments, body fluids, and other containments by wiping, soaking, rinsing, and scrubbing. Inspects packages for indications of proper sterilization, assembles basic sets and trays used throughout the medical center including those used in the operating room. Prepares, loads, and operates sterilizers such

as steam, Sterrad, Steris, ETO, and a high level disinfecting scope reprocessor; prepares operating room case carts daily using surgery schedule. MSTs receive guidance from more experienced staff members for more complex tasks and require direct supervision on new assignments.

(4) **GS-06 (Full Performance Level)**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

(b) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

1. Knowledge of surgical instruments used in operating rooms and clinic settings.

2. Knowledge of universal precautions for safety and prevention of cross contamination.

3. Working knowledge of medical terminology, anatomy and physiology, microbiology, medical conditions and procedures.

4. Knowledge of sterility principles in regards to instrumentation.

5. Ability to read and interpret written instructions and procedures.

(c) **Assignment.** This is the full performance level for the occupation. Receives contaminated critical and semi-critical RME in the decontamination area and may receive noncritical equipment in the decontamination area as well. Disassembles the RME and determines the correct cleaning method, such as but not limited to ultrasonic cleaners, mechanical washers, cart washers and chemical cleaning/decontamination agents, as determined by manufacturer instructions. Inspects, assembles and determines the correct method and packaging for sterilization such as but not limited to steam, Sterrad, Steris, ETO, and high level disinfecting scope reprocessors. Performs and documents daily operational checks and records for all sterilization equipment.

(5) **GS-07 (Advanced Level)**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

(b) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

1. Detailed knowledge of complex surgical instruments used in operating rooms and clinic settings.

2. Ability to assemble specialty operating room and clinic instrument sets.

3. In-depth knowledge of sterilization and cleaning equipment.

4. Ability to communicate both orally and in writing in order to convey information and thoughts to others.

(c) **Assignment.** The Advanced MST assembles highly complex instrument sets including, but not limited to, open heart, major orthopedic total joint, cardiovascular, craniotomy and complex endoscopic instrumentation. Processes all complex endoscopic instrumentation to include those medical devices used in the gastroenterology laboratory, bronchoscopy laboratory, urology and operating room. Reviews manufacturer guidelines to ensure the correct methods and parameters are followed when cleaning, decontaminating and sterilizing RME. Troubleshoots and analyzes mechanical failures and makes necessary adjustments to complex decontamination and sterilization equipment, as well as interprets alarm conditions which may occur while operating the equipment. Informs management and healthcare staff when cleaning and processing standard operating procedures (SOPs) or instruction for use have been changed or updated to assure the changes have been validated to meet all guidelines.

(6) **GS-07 Lead Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing)**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

(b) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

1. Ability to instruct staff on the correct procedures and protocols for completing assignments.

2. Skill in communicating with staff to ensure compliance with written directives, rules and regulations.

3. Skill in interpersonal relationships in dealing with employees, team leaders, and managers.

4. Knowledge of sterility principles in order to instruct staff on decontamination procedures.

5. Ability to lead individuals, manage priorities, and schedule work assignments.

(c) **Assignment.** The Lead MST works in support of the Sterile Processing Service (SPS) management team. Distributes and prioritizes workload among employees in accordance with established workflow and/or job specializations. Assures an even workflow and distribution of the workload. Revises work schedules to meet anticipated and unanticipated changes in the workload. Assigns work to staff based on experience and training needs. Monitors and reports on the status of work. Ensures SOPs and SPS mandates are followed during the performance of workflow. Reviews work in progress or spot checks work not requiring review to ensure completed work meets supervisors' instructions on such things as work sequence, procedures, methods, and deadlines. Assesses the quality and quantity of work by reviewing the cleaning, reprocessing, and distribution of technical medical equipment, material and instrumentation. Provides information to management officials concerning performance issues, assignment changes and task completion. Instructs employees on work-related activities, policies, procedures and goals.

(7) **GS-07 Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing) - Quality Assurance**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

(b) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

1. Knowledge of fact-finding and investigative techniques in order to evaluate work processes.

2. Ability to analyze data and make recommendations to correct quality control problems.

3. Knowledge of sterile processing operations, infection control procedures, and Joint Commission requirements to assess compliance during quality assurance reviews.

4. Ability to compile information, evaluate facts, document findings and prepare reports.

5. Thorough knowledge of aseptic principles and techniques to maintain quality control.

6. Ability to effectively communicate with technical and professional staff on the proper use of delicate instruments and equipment, and resolve problems that may occur.

(c) **Assignment.** The Quality Assurance (QA) Technician serves as the monitoring specialist for all activities of SPS, which includes the operating room case cart management system. Monitors the process of cleaning/decontamination, sterilization, reprocessing, and distribution of critical, semi-critical and non-critical RME. This includes following the use of bacteriological controls, principles and methods of sterilization, packaging, and assembly of simple to more complex items for therapeutic and surgical procedures. Develops procedures to evaluate the quality of work performance and outcomes as it relates to the quality assurance program. Maintains a system of internal and external reviews ensuring overall compliance of all critical, semi-critical and non-critical RME used within the medical center. Tracks and analyzes required documentation pertaining to critical, semi-critical and non-critical RME within the scope of SPS for quality control purposes. Utilizes qualitative analysis tools to prepare reports for trending, evaluate operations and facilitate improvements in workflow and quality processes. Troubleshoots computer programs related to SPS operations and trains staff on the inputting of data associated with the cleaning and sterilization of equipment, biological processing, and quality assurance programs. Collaborates with SPS management when deviations occur. Validates SPS policies on cleaning and sterilization as it relates to manufacturer information for use, standards and mandates. Updates the quality assurance program annually or when manufacturer information and guidelines are changed.

(8) **GS-07 Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing) - RME Coordinator**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

(b) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

1. Ability to interact with individuals of varying backgrounds in order to assess the needs of the department.

2. Ability to coordinate work in order to complete duties in an accurate and timely fashion.

3. Ability to interpret and apply sterile processing/infection prevention regulations and policies.

4. Ability to evaluate new products and equipment.

5. Ability to initiate and lead interdisciplinary groups in carrying out sterile processing functions.

(c) **Assignment.** The RME Coordinator provides oversight in the development, implementation, coordination, maintenance and evaluation of critical and semi-critical medical devices within the RME Program. Reviews the acquisition of new equipment and advises using services of anticipated delivery dates. Controls the release of any new equipment until verification of all SOPs have been developed and communicated to staff. This includes coordination across services and/or disciplines which can influence the organizational mission, vision, values and strategic priorities for RME. Monitors, analyzes and provides consultation on infection control issues regarding RME. Participates in clinical rounds to assist in the verification of each service's SOPs for RME. Investigates the need for any manufacturer and model-specific SOP required for new RME at the time of the acquisition request. When new SOPs are required, obtains the necessary information from the manufacturer or vendor. Develops SOPs to standardize equipment used in the medical center. Educates hospital staff, including the executive level, on all new equipment to ensure compliance is met as it relates to RME.

(9) **GS-07 Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing) - Trainer**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

(b) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

1. Knowledge of SPS and Infection Prevention regulations.

2. Knowledge of procedures and/or operations in training developed for, and operations of SPS functions for both new and existing staff.

3. Ability to manage integrated training programs as it relates to sterile processing procedures.

4. Working knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel or other software programs in order to complete reports and develop skills.

5. Ability to communicate effectively with staff and management officials in regards to sterile processing procedures.

(c) **Assignment.** The MST Trainer is responsible for developing formal and informal written plans for the SPS training program, in compliance with accreditation organizations and VHA-specific requirements as well as medical center policies and procedures for SPS and related staff. Facilitates training of SPS staff through educational programs and job specific instruction. Improves SPS processes by facilitating the application for new technology of reusable medical devices by training all new and existing staff. Develops, monitors, and revises SPS educational programs for both new and

existing staff. Documents and assesses staff's training, to identify areas of strength and need. Develops an education plan (literature review, continuing education, in-services, certification and/or formal education) to maintain and improve knowledge in specialized areas of processing reusable medical devices. Participates in tracking, trending and analyzing education data. Identifies opportunities for improvement, makes recommendations and/or prepares reports based on findings. Develops and conducts the annual review of the SPS preceptor program.

(10) **GS-07 Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing) - Coordinator**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

(b) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

1. Practical knowledge of conventional fact-finding or investigative techniques in order to evaluate internal work processes.

2. Skill to develop, analyze and evaluate facts relative to unsatisfactory conditions or trends.

3. Knowledge of and skill in applying various methods and techniques for investigating, analyzing and recommending corrective action on complex quality problems.

4. Knowledge of the SPS policies and procedural manuals, infection control procedures, and accrediting agencies and quality assurance guidelines to assure appropriateness of work during quality assurance reviews.

5. Working knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel and other software programs.

6. Thorough knowledge of aseptic principles and techniques, which include sterilized operations, sterilizer mediums, and tests to determine the effectiveness of sterilization, packaging, storage, and shelf life.

7. Ability to communicate orally and in writing to ensure staff compliance with written directives, rules and regulations.

(c) **Assignment.** The MST Coordinator monitors quality assurance in the cleaning/decontamination, sterilization, reprocessing, and distribution of surgical instruments and technical medical equipment processed in SPS, ensuring proper procedures are followed and the items are safe for use. Ensures national sterile processing standards are followed in the process of cleaning/decontamination, sterilization, reprocessing, and distribution of critical and/or semi-critical reusable medical equipment. Coordinates training that is well structured and includes appropriate materials. Ensures staff is competent for reprocessing critical and semi-critical RME by reviewing actual demonstration of tasks. Coordinates with hospital staff (e.g. operating room, emergency department and clinics) on critical and semi-critical medical equipment to ensure compliance with all national and local directives. Updates the Chief (or designee) on patient safety alerts and issues concerning reusable medical equipment.

Establishes and maintains frequent contacts with interdisciplinary staff and outside vendors and manufacturers.

(11) **GS-08 Lead Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing)**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

(b) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

1. Ability to read and interpret written procedures and select appropriate action in order to instruct staff in correct procedures and protocols for completing assignments.

2. Ability to communicate orally and in writing to ensure staff compliance with written directives, rules and regulations.

3. Skill in interpersonal relationships in dealing with employees, team leaders, and managers.

4. Knowledge of sterility principles in order to instruct staff on decontamination procedures.

5. Ability to lead individuals, manage priorities, and schedule work assignments.

(c) **Assignment.** The Lead MST at this level oversees a work team that includes at least one MST position that is above the full performance. Distributes and prioritizes workload among employees in accordance with established workflow and/or job specializations. Assures an even distribution of the workload. When necessary, revises work schedules to meet anticipated and unanticipated changes in the workload. Assigns tasks as necessary to provide new employees with the experience and training required to perform decontamination of scopes and instrumentation in the work area. Monitors and reports on the status of work. Ensures SOPs and SPS mandates are followed during the performance of workflow. Reviews or spot checks scope processing work to ensure completed work meets supervisors' instructions (e.g., work sequences, procedures, methods, and deadlines). Assesses the quality and quantity of work by reviewing the cleaning, reprocessing, and distribution of scope medical equipment, material and instrumentation. Provides information to management officials concerning performance issues, assignment changes and task completion. Instructs employees on work-related activities, policies, procedures and goals.

(12) **GS-08 Supervisory Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing)**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

(b) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

1. Ability to manage, interact and deal with individuals of varying backgrounds.

2. Ability to direct staff and manage tasks to be completed.

3. Ability to oversee and supervise all aspects of decontamination, preparation, sterilization, monitoring, and distribution of RME.

4. Ability to perform a full range of supervisory duties, including assigning, planning and evaluating work, recommending awards, approving leave, identifying training needs, and resolving staff issues.

(c) **Assignment.** The Supervisory MST functions as a first-level supervisor responsible for the oversight of a group of MSTs, with administrative responsibility for planning and directing the work. Oversees attendance and leave, including approval of sick and annual leave and vacation schedules. Informs higher level management of anticipated vacancies or increases in workload. Recommends promotions, reassignments, recognition of superior performance, retention or release of probationary employees or other changes of assigned personnel. Holds corrective interviews with employees, referring disciplinary problems to higher levels of management. Resolves informal complaints of employees and deals with union representatives on personnel matters. Provides technical supervision necessary for accomplishing the work of the organizational unit.

(13) **GS-09 Supervisory Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing) - Assistant Chief**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

(b) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

1. Ability to plan and project staffing needs and requirements.

2. Ability to manage, interact and deal with individuals of varying backgrounds.

3. Ability to manage, direct and adapt work to accomplish program goals and objectives, and meet new and changing program requirements.

4. Ability to develop and recommend new or revised policies that are consistent with organizational goals and objectives.

5. Ability to perform a full range of supervisory duties, including assigning, planning and evaluating work, recommending awards, approving leave, identifying training needs, and resolving staff issues.

6. Ability to evaluate new products and equipment, develop options, and make recommendations.

7. Ability to manage, interpret, and present fiscal data (i.e. fund controls, contracts and equipment expenditures), forecast resource and equipment needs and administer an allocated budget.

(c) **Assignment.** The Assistant Chief contributes to the oversight of all supervision, administrative management and direction of the SPS. Oversees all decontamination, sterilization and disposition of facility critical and semi-critical RME. Develops and maintains a system of internal reviews that

ensure service programs operate in compliance with regulatory and accrediting organizations. Contributes to the effective utilization of resources, budgetary allocation and fiscal management. Makes selections, assigns personnel and provides direction to subordinate staff. Manages the training, documenting and evaluating of staff. Serves as liaison between SPS and other departments.

(14) **GS-10 Supervisory Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing) - Chief**

(a) **Experience.** One year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

(b) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

1. Ability to implement and incorporate regulations, policies, and procedures to manage SPS operations.

2. Ability to evaluate new products and equipment, develop options, and make recommendations.

3. Ability to integrate SPS managerial duties, which includes strategic planning of facility organizational goals and integration of SPS vision and values within the organizational mission.

4. Ability to perform a full range of supervisory duties, including assigning, planning and evaluating work, recommending awards, approving leave, identifying training needs, and resolving staff issues.

5. Skill to initiate and lead interdisciplinary groups in order to facilitate daily SPS functions.

6. Ability to analyze and interpret fiscal data in order to forecast resource and equipment needs.

(c) **Assignment.** The Chief has the overall responsibility for the supervision, administrative management and direction of the SPS. Ensures SPS functions are in compliance with all regulatory mandates. Forecasts, plans, develops and manages the SPS program. Manages SPS personnel and serves as liaison between SPS and other departments. Maintains effective interdepartmental relationships, coordinates and resolves problems, and ensures cooperation with other programs and services. Manages the overall SPS budget including determining resource needs, allocating resources, and ensuring proper utilization in productivity, efficiency and cost effectiveness of SPS operations. Formulates objectives, develops priorities and implements plans that support organizational goals. Ensures operations are in compliance with all safety, regulatory and accrediting requirements. Oversees orientation and training of staff.

4. DEVIATIONS

a. The appointing official may, under unusual circumstances, approve reasonable deviations to the grade determination requirements for Medical Supply Technician (Sterile Processing) in VHA whose composite record of accomplishments, performance, and qualifications, as well as current assignments warrant such action based on demonstrated competence to meet the requirements of the proposed grade.

b. The placement of individuals in grade levels not described in this standard must be approved by the Under Secretary for Health, or designee in VHA Central Office.

Authority 38 U.S.C. § 7402, 7403]