

SAH COVID-19 Precautions for Veteran Engagement by Stakeholders: Building Contractors and VA assigned Compliance Inspectors

1. Purpose. This Circular provides guidance regarding personal precautions during the ongoing Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.
2. Background. VA's Loan Guaranty Service (LGY) is committed to protecting the Veterans we serve and Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) construction project stakeholders, while continuing to execute our mission of delivering the SAH benefit. The potential risks associated with COVID-19 provide unique challenges in the delivery of the SAH benefit as VA stakeholders may work closely with Veterans in their homes. According to current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person. In addition, older adults and those with serious chronic medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. As many SAH eligible Veterans face serious health challenges, these individuals may need protection during meetings and other personal interactions that require close contact during the pandemic.
3. Effective date. SAH contractors, compliance inspectors, and other project stakeholders are encouraged to follow the policies outlined in this Circular from the date of issuance until further notice or the rescission of this Circular.
4. Action. LGY requests all in-person or in-house meetings by contractors, compliance inspectors, and other project stakeholders take all reasonable steps to safeguard themselves, the Veterans they are assisting, and the Veteran's household.
 - a. VA assigned Compliance Inspectors:
 - (1) LGY requests that Compliance Inspectors assigned to inspect properties on behalf of the SAH program follow all current local health and safety guidance and CDC guidelines regarding handwashing and the use of masks or cloth face coverings.
 - (2) Please reference the guidance provided on the CDC website here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>
 - (3) Building Contractors, Subcontractors, Designers and other Construction Specialists:
 - (a) LGY requests that you follow all current local health and safety guidance, CDC guidelines, and Department of Labor's OSHA control and prevention standards
 - (b) In addition to the CDC reference above, please reference the guidance provided on the OSHA website here: <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/controlprevention.html>.

(4) Veterans:

(a) SAH eligible Veterans and their representatives have the right to request that all individuals accessing their homes wear a mask or cloth face coverings. Any questions or concerns should be raised with your SAH Agent.

(b) Please reference the guidance provided on the CDC website here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

5. Questions. Questions or concerns should be directed to the assigned SAH Agent or the Regional Loan Center's SAH management staff by calling 1-877-827-3702. The VA Home Loan toll-free number operates Monday – Friday, from 8:00am to 6:00 pm EST.

6. Rescission: This Circular is rescinded July 1, 2022.

By Direction of the Under Secretary for Benefits

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Loan Guaranty Service

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