**VA Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs YouTube Video/Request Guide**

**Effective October 15, 2019. This document will be updated regularly to reflect VA’s Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs current requirements.**

*VA Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs maintains VA’s YouTube channel and is responsible for the* ***review*** *and* ***final approval*** *of all videos submitted for posting to VA’s YouTube.*

*The VA Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs has limited the creation of YouTube accounts to VA, VBA and VHA. Program Offices, VISN's and Medical Centers, Employee Education System, etc. are NOT AUTHORIZED to have a YouTube channel in any form – private, unlisted or otherwise.*

*All VA video content outside of VBA’s and/or VHA’s domian will reside on VA’s YouTube channel, individual playlists, upon approval, are allowed to categorize your content. The VA Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs reserves the right to edit, reformat and modify all video content and to crosspost on all of VA-operated platforms and DIVIDS, etc.*

**YouTube Quick Reference Guide:**

*What you need to know FIRST, before creating your videos and submitting them to VA Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs for review/approval for YouTube.*

* **Messaging:** Videos must be Veteran-centric specific messaging *(Internal communications, training, messaging to employees will not be posted on YouTube.*
* **VA Seal slide:** Your video must have a VA logo appear in each video for a minimum of five seconds *(below).*



* **Closed captioning:** All videos must be captioned (open or closed). If closed captioned, you must include an SRT caption file. Even if there are no spoken words, 508 requirements state, there must be closed captioning for the video to be 508 compliant. If it's just music or a melody, indicate it in the open or closed captioning throughout the video “♫ (Melody) ♫." For more info on [508 and closed captioning](https://digital.gov/2014/06/30/508-accessible-videos-how-to-caption-videos/) please visit: <https://digital.gov/2014/06/30/508-accessible-videos-how-to-caption-videos/>
* **Thumbnail:** Please include a thumbnail with your video. Thumbnail sizes should be 16:9 ratio, 1280x720 pixels, 2MB max limit.
* **Processing:** For videos with a runtime of less than 60 minutes,We typically ask that we are given a minimum of **5 business days**, once we have received all your files before we post the content on YouTube – if your video is not approved you will be notified as to why as soon as possible. Videos with a total run time of longer than 60 minutes will be processed within 5 business days -- per hour of content.
* **File transfer:** After you have submitted the video, you will need to share the files with us electronically. DoD’s “Safe Access File Exchange” is an option now available <https://safe.apps.mil/> files can only be sent between .GOV and .MIL addresses, only DoD CAC card user's can access using a CAC card, all others must access as guest users).

**Extended Video Requirements**

**Video Standards – Content**

* **Messaging:** Only Veteran-centric messages will be published on YouTube
* **Originator:** Your organization must be the originator of the video. If your organization did not produce the video, you must provide proof of authorization to publicly release the video.
* **Content**: The content must be suitable for video (No PowerPoint presentations or slideshows converted to video).
* **Title/Description/Keywords**: You must provide a thoughtful and descriptive video caption (title) and video description for each video; you also must provide keywords relevant to each video. VA’s Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs reserves the right to edit the title/description/keywords.
* **Text:** Avoid excessive text in your videos (Tell your story through imagery and spoken word).
* **Blog:** In certain circumstances, VA’s Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs may request a written blog for inclusion in VAntage Point to accompany a video. The blog should be written by a subject matter expert using AP style.
* **VA Seal/VA Logo/VA Branding:** The integrity of the VA seal/ VA logo/VA branding is paramount. Elements containing the VA seal/VA logo/VA branding must maintain their visual integrity. The VA seal/VA branding must maintain by their original graphical proportions.
* **Evergreen:** Content must be current and/or “evergreen” (always relevant). Video that has aged out of relevance will be pulled from public view.
* **VA leadership:** Content featuring VA leaders that are no longer serving in VA positions will not be approved. The VA Secretary should not be identified by a lower-third.
* **Commercial products:** Content may not imply VA endorsement of products/commercial items. Product identification should be avoided. Videos containing external links or URLs will be approved on a case-by-case basis. Our objective is to drive traffic to VA benefits, news and resources.
* **Copyright:** Videos must comply with United States Copyright Laws covering the use of music, graphics, and reuse of video from non-government sources. Video originators will maintain and produce when requested, any licenses or proof of ownership for non-VA-originated content.
* **HIPAA/Privacy:** Videos will adhere to VA patient privacy standards, with appropriate releases maintained by the submitting facility or office and produce release forms when requested. This pertains to all content, regardless of the producing entity (VA or otherwise).
* **VA employees:** VA staff other than the VA Secretary should be identified by name and title. They should represent their position professionally. The VA Secretary should not be identified by a lower-third.

**Video Standards — Technical**

* **Style Guide:** Videos will follow [VA Tier 1 Graphic Standards](https://vaww.va.gov/6102/graphics_resource_center.asp).
* **Formatting:** Video files will be accepted in the following formats: .mov, .mpeg4, .mp4. (For guidance on encoding, visit [YouTube's help page on video encoding](https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/1722171?hl=en))
* **Aspect ratio:** Acceptable aspect rations include **16 x 9**; **4 x 5**; **1 x 1** and **9 x 16**.
* **Video resolution:**

1. **16:9** video files must have a minimum resolution of **1920 x 1080** aspect ratio.
2. **4:5** videos files must have a minimum resolution of **1080 x 566** aspect ratio.
3. **9:16** videos files must have a minimum resolution of **1080 x 1920** aspect ratio.
4. **1:1** videos files must have a minimum resolution of **640 x 640** aspect ratio.

* **Attributions:** Individual credits are not permitted. Collaborative government offices may be listed on a case-by-case basis.
* **Closed captioning:** Open captions are permitted. All other videos must be submitted with an SRT caption file.
* **Text:** A Microsoft Word or plain text document of the as-read video script should be produced if requested.

**Producing Your Video in Collaboration with a Contractor/Vendor**

* Videos produced by, or with contractors will be produced with close supervision by the contracting office to ensure final product meets all the standards defined above.
* Videos will be produced with a final review and approval by VA subject matter experts.
* Initial communication requesting publication of videos will be sent to the VA Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs Digital Media Engagement video team lead via email at [ben.pekkanen@va.gov](mailto:ben.pekkanen@va.gov). Contractors may provide technical expertise, but VA office ownership must be maintained throughout the transaction.

**Submitting Your Video for Review and Publication**

* Ensure your video meets all the guidelines and requirements outlined above.
* The uploaded video will be reviewed by VA’S Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs for compliance against the standards presented on this page.
* Approved videos will be published typically within 5 business days. The requestor will be notified if a video is not approved for publishing, and further instructions will be provided.
* Upon request, the requestor will be supplied with the direct URL of published videos for embedding in a web-page or hyperlinking.
* Once published, VA’s Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs will not maintain or archive source files. That is the responsibility of the requestor or requesting office. All submitted master files will be deleted.

**File Transfers**

* After you have submitted your request to the VA Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs Digital Media Engagement video team lead, you will then need to transfer your video, closed caption files and thumbnail for processing.
* To transfer video files for upload to VA’s YouTube channel you need to share the files with us Once we have all your files, we will contact you to notify you that we have received your request. Once we have finished review, VA’s Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs will either upload the materials and make them available on VA’s YouTube (video will be made private, unlisted or public at the discretion of VA’s Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs) or we will inform you why your video was denied.

**Maintenance and Archiving**

* It is **your responsibility to maintain backups of your original video files**. We do not keep a copy of your original, uncompressed video. Likewise, if you later request a video be removed from YouTube, we do not maintain copies of the video.
* YouTube is a social media platform, VA does NOT allow comments from viewers on any of VA's YouTube videos. This feature is disabled. However, if you share your video on an authorized Facebook, and or Twitter account you will need to monitor comments there, and reply appropriately. Likewise, if we share your video on other VA social media platforms, we will respond to comments as necessary and may reach out to you to coordinate responses.

Please inform VA Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs to remove your videos from YouTube when they become outdated, and no longer relevant.