



Department of Veterans Affairs Office of General Counsel

OUTLINE

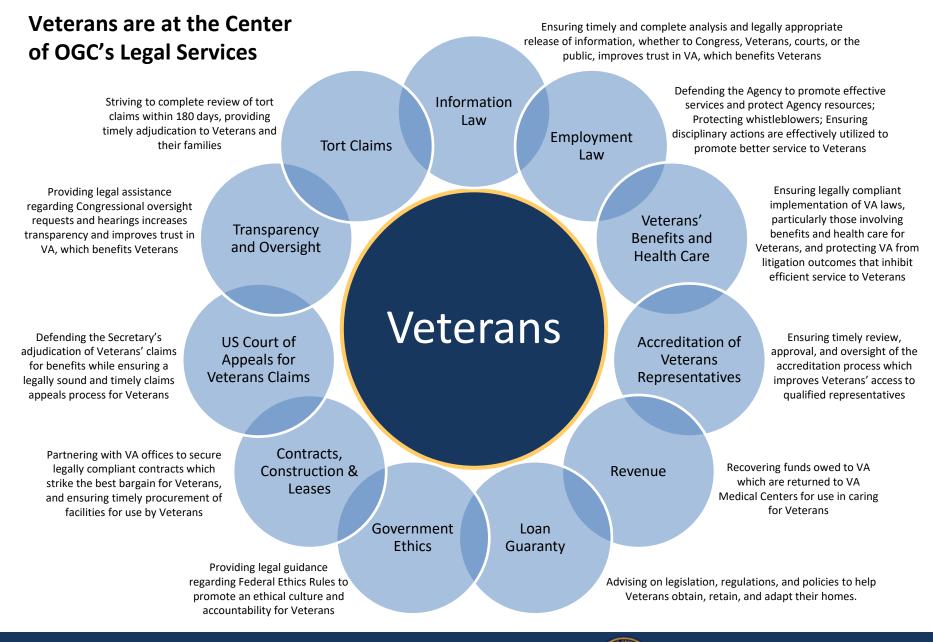
- Office of General Counsel Overview & Mission
- OGC's Structure
- Leadership
- Ethics Specialty Team
- Law Groups
- CAVC Litigation Group
- Offices of District Chief Counsel
- National Practice Group
- Management, Planning, and Analysis

OVERVIEW

The General Counsel provides legal advice and services to the Secretary (SECVA) and all organizational components of the Department. The General Counsel is, by statute, the Department's Chief Legal Officer.

OGC's Mission

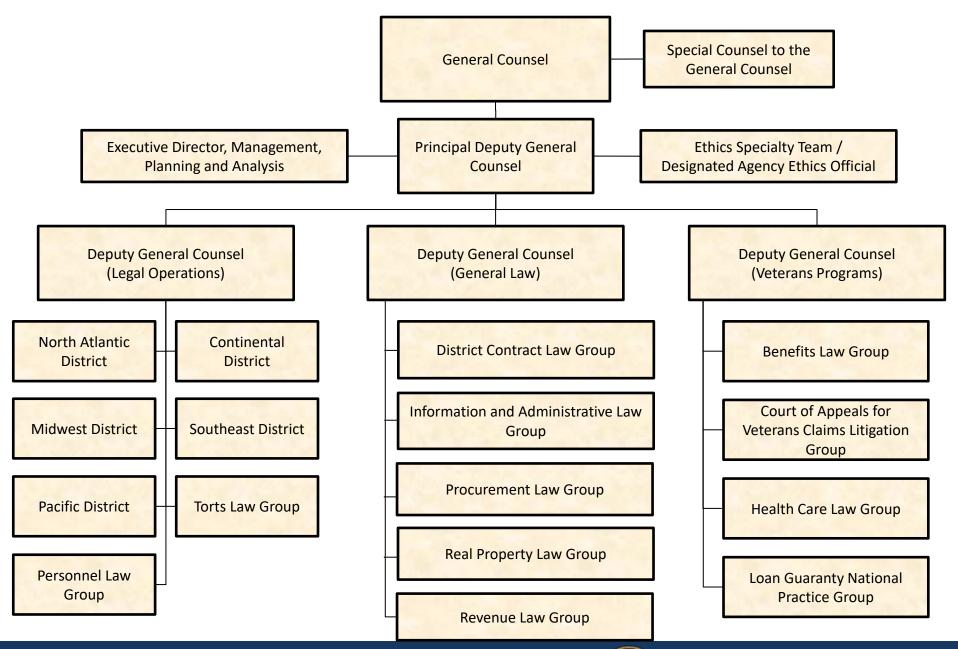
- The Office of General Counsel (OGC) serves as VA's in-house counsel and is committed to ensuring that every member of our organization has a Veteran focus and an understanding and commitment to the business priorities of our VA clients.
- OGC's attorneys act as business partners, providing sound legal expertise, and as needed, critical problem-solving skills and risk-management advice.
- OGC strives to provide real-time legal advice. Our goal is to be involved with Department decision-makers (our clients) during the initial phases of decisions and actions, rather than focusing only on defending actions after the decisions have been made. This proactive, preventive approach promotes better outcomes and reduces risk.





OGC's Structure

- The General Counsel, Principal Deputy General Counsel, Deputy General Counsel Legal Operations, Deputy General Counsel General Law, Deputy General Counsel Veterans Programs, and Senior Counsel to the General Counsel advise the SECVA, Deputy Secretary (DEPSECVA), VA Chief of Staff (COSVA), and other senior Department officials regarding all laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and judicial precedents pertaining to the Department.
- OGC provides a full range of legal and litigation services, as well as support for legislative and regulatory activities through our Ethics Specialty Team (EST), Chief Counsels who lead nine Law Groups, one National Practice Group (NPG), five Offices of District Chief Counsel, and the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims Litigation Group.
- The Management, Planning, and Analysis Team provides the administrative support for OGC operations.



LEADERSHIP





Acting Principal Deputy General Counsel, and Deputy General Counsel General Law

Michael R. Hogan







Deputy General Counsel
General Law
Michael R. Hogan

Deputy General Counsel
Legal Operations
Brent Pope

Deputy General Counsel
Veterans Programs

David Barrans

General Law Chief Counsels



Kenyatta McLeod-Poole Information and Administrative Law Group



Robert Davenport Real Property Law Group



Robert Fleck Procurement Law Group



Michael Hughes District Contract Law Group



Kathleen Oddo Revenue Law Group

Legal Operations Chief Counsels



Doris Gruntmeir Personnel Law Group



Tammy Kennedy Southeast District



Dennis McGuire Midwest District



Mike Newman Torts Law Group



Daniel Rattray North Atlantic District



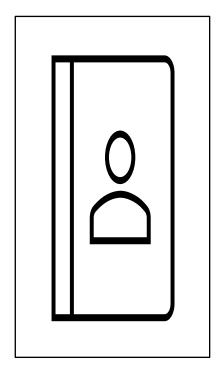
Jeffrey Stacey
Pacific District



Michael Anfang Continental District



Veterans Programs Chief Counsels



Vacant Benefits Law Group



Susan Blauert Healthcare Law Group



Mary Flynn
Court of Appeals for
Veterans Claims
Litigation Group



Melinda Frick Loan Guaranty National Practice Group



Tracianna L. Winston
Chief Counsel
Designated Agency Ethics Official

ETHICS SPECIALTY TEAM (EST)

Ethics Specialty Team

The Ethics Specialty Team (EST) is responsible for overseeing and managing the Department's Government Ethics Program. The EST Chief Counsel serves as VA's Designated Agency Ethics Official (DAEO) and is tasked with ensuring compliance with federal ethics laws and regulations.

- VA Stakeholders and federal employees from all levels of VA, contact EST for advice on ethics issues, including but not limited to, conflicts of interest, outside employment, gifts, and postemployment restrictions.
- EST manages the public and confidential financial disclosure program for the Department.

LAW GROUPS

(Veterans Programs)

Each OGC Law Group is led by a senior executive Chief Counsel. Law Group attorneys possess expertise in specific subject-matter areas and provide specific legal advice to program officials; review proposed legislation, regulations, and directives; and handle litigation involving VA programs.

- Benefits Law Group All Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)
 Benefits (except Loan Guaranty), National Cemetery Administration (NCA) Issues (except Real Property), Accreditation of Representatives, Attorney Fee Decisions, and Benefits Litigation at the US Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.
- Health Care Law Group Health Care Administration and Operations, including Eligibility for Care, Homeless Programs, Veterans Canteen Service, Patents, Medical Research, and Non-Profit Research Corporations.

(General Law)

- Information and Administrative Law Group Information
 Disclosure (Freedom of Information Act, Privacy Act, Health
 Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Title 38),
 eDiscovery, Touhy, Information Management, Information
 Security & Technology, Federal Advisory Committee Act
 (closed meeting issues), Copyright & Trademarks,
 Appropriations, Law Enforcement, and Legislative Counsel.
- Revenue Law Group Recovers funds owed to the United States by various legal-collection remedies, to include litigation in Federal and State courts.

(General Law Continued)

- Procurement Law Group Government Supply and Service Contracts, Sharing Agreements (38 USC 8153), Bid Protest Litigation, Information Technology Contracts, and Debarment and Suspension.
- District Contract Law Group Provide legal advice, reviews, and litigation representation and support on matters pertaining to VA contracts, sharing agreements, and leases arising outside of VACO.
- Real Property Law Group Real Property Acquisitions and Disposals, Leases, Construction, Energy Law, Environmental Law, and Enhanced Use Leases.

(Legal Operations)

- Personnel Law Group Human Resources (Title 5 & 38), Labor Relations, Equal Employment Opportunity, Merit Systems Protection Board, Office of Special Counsel (Whistleblower retaliation), and Immigration Law.
- Torts Law Group Torts, Personal Immunity and DOJ Representation.

U.S. COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS (CAVC) LITIGATION GROUP

U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims Litigation Group

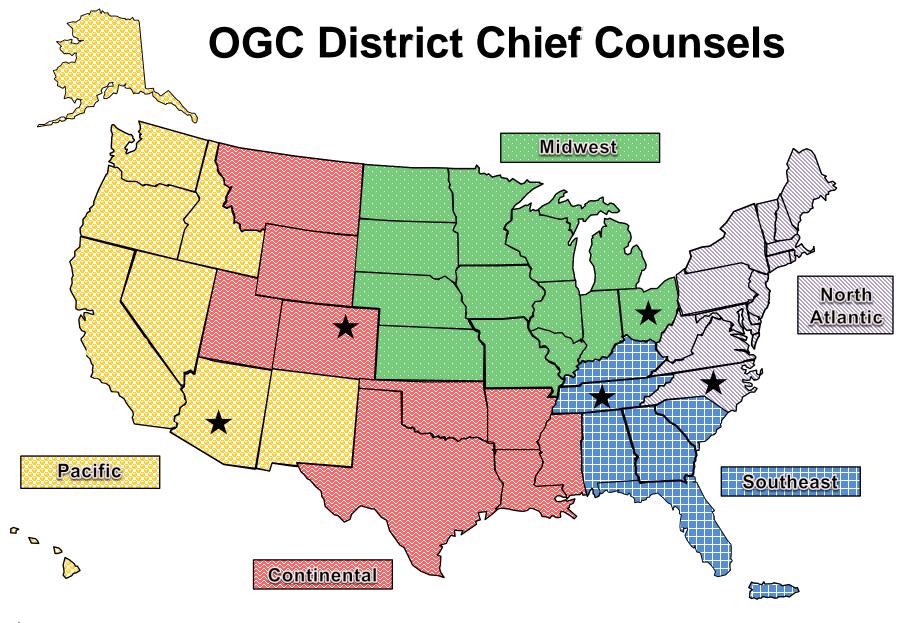
The U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims Litigation Group represents the SECVA in all litigation brought before the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC).

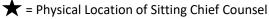
OFFICES OF DISTRICT CHIEF COUNSEL

OGC Offices of District Chief Counsel

There is one Chief Counsel office in each VA District, each office is led by a senior executive Chief Counsel. Each Chief Counsel is responsible for providing legal advice and assistance to Directors and other officials of all designated VA facilities within a District. The Chief Counsels fulfill these functions by performing the following tasks:

- Advise and represent management of VA facilities on issues relating to personnel and labor law.
- Provide other legal services and consultation as needed.





LOAN GUARANTY NATIONAL PRACTICE GROUP

Loan Guaranty National Practice Group

The Loan Guaranty National Practice Group provides consolidated legal services in connection with the activities of VBA's multibillion dollar Loan Guaranty Program.



Michael Gibbs Executive Director

MANAGEMENT, PLANNING, AND ANALYSIS

Management, Planning, and Analysis

OGC's internal administrative functions are led by the Executive Director, Management, Planning & Analysis (MPA). MPA is responsible for supporting the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and OGC organization, including its budget formulation and execution, human capital support/liaison, knowledge management, and information technology support/liaison.