Memorandum

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Date: March 5, 2015

To: Honorable Chairman Jean Monestime
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor

Subject: United States Veteran Status in Automated Arrest Forms
(Directive 141240)

The following information is provided pursuant to Resolutions 774-13 and 774-14 adopted by the Board of County Commissioners (Board) on September 3, 2014. R-774-13 requested the County Mayor or designee to include a field on any inmate intake forms to request information from inmates regarding U.S. Veteran status, and to develop literature regarding benefits and services available to incarcerated veterans. R-774-14 requested an enhancement/modification to the Automated Arrest Forms (A-Forms) prepared by Thinkstream, Inc., the automated A-Form vendor, under contract RFP No. 748 to require law enforcement professionals to report whether an arrestee served in the U.S. Armed Forces, and to report to the Board on the cost of this enhancement/modification and the timeframe for its implementation.

The Information Technology Department (ITD) contacted Thinkstream, Inc. in response to R-774-14 and requested an enhancement to the application to include a field on the electronic arrest form that would capture veteran status. As a result, question was included on the electronic A-form that asks, "Have you ever served in the Armed Forces?" with the options of "yes," "no," or "unknown." The enhancement to capture veteran status was implemented on the electronic arrest form at a final negotiated cost of $5,000.00. Although the veteran status will not print on the arrest form if the electronic arrest form is printed, the veteran status information is captured and stored in the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS). In order to capture the veteran status information for arresting agencies not utilizing the electronic arrest form, the information is manually entered in CJIS by the Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department (MDCR) during the booking process. This information, for both electronic and paper arrest forms, is then made available in the Inmate Data Warehouse for reporting.

MDCR has worked closely with the ITD to develop routine reports enumerating inmates who have identified themselves as veterans. These reports will be utilized to advise the United States Veterans Administration of inmates with possible veteran status and will greatly improve the previous manual process which included logs capturing this information. MDCR's Correctional Counselors will continue to interview inmates to discuss available services including the Peer Support Specialist from the Veterans Administration Justice Outreach Program. Veteran inmates interested in participating must complete the Veterans Justice Outreach Transmittal Form and provide other required information which is forwarded via facsimile to the Veterans Administration. The Peer Support Specialist will schedule an appointment with the MDCR to see veteran inmates.

Beyond working closing with the Veterans Administration, MDCR already provides important information and services to veteran inmates as summarized below:

- Dedicated section for veterans in Re-Entry Resource Guide;
- Participation of veteran services organization in Jail Transition Fairs;
- Information about veteran services on Re-Entry TV, which is a dedicated television channel shown throughout some jail facilities;

- Toll-free telephone access to social service organization including the National Center for Homeless Veterans through the Re-Entry Hotlines; and
- Enhanced training for re-entry staff to better identify a possible veteran inmate

Upon the full implementation of the A-forms the automation of the veteran inmate status information will greatly improve MDCR's ability to query and identify these inmates, and to provide referral services in a more efficient manner.

Per Ordinance 14-65, this memorandum will be placed on the next available Board of County Commissioners meeting agenda.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Angel Petisco, Chief Information Officer/Director of the Information Technology Department, at 305-596-8700, or Marydell Guevara, Director of the Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department, at 786-263-6010.

c: Robert A. Cuevas, Jr., County Attorney
Office of the Mayor Senior Staff
Angel Petisco, CIO/Director, Information Technology Department
Marydell Guevara, Director, Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department
Charles Anderson, Commission Auditor
Christopher Agrippa, Clerk of the Board
Eugene Love, Agenda Coordinator