



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration  
Lexington VA Health Care System

1101 Veterans Drive  
Lexington, KY 40502-2236  
[www.lexington.va.gov](http://www.lexington.va.gov)

Date: November 28, 2023

From: Mr. Russell Armstead, Executive Director, Lexington VA Health Care System

Subj: Missing Man Table

To: Mr. Mikey Weinstein

Dear Mr. Mikey Weinstein,

Thank you for taking the time to share your concerns regarding the POW/MIA table at the Lexington VA Health Care System. As Medical Center Director, I am sorry to hear that you and twelve Veteran patients feel your religious freedoms were infringed upon. Respecting the dignity of every Veteran is very important to us. We are committed to listening to and addressing all Veteran concerns as we ensure safe, high quality care for all our Veterans.

Our commitment extends to aspects of considering the whole health of every Veteran from ensuring their rights to make their own healthcare decisions, to protecting and preserving their rights and freedoms on federal properties. It is clear to see that from your letters and petitions that even when our best efforts are employed these lines may be unintentionally blurred; thank you for bringing this matter to my attention and giving us the opportunity to respond.

I have noted the display of the Gideon International New Testament Bible on the Missing Man Table at the Troy Bowling Campus as the impetus for concerns of potential violations of federal law and VA policy regarding religious freedom. Our aim is to ensure equity for all who have served. We have a shared goal—to honor those who have sacrificed and served our Nation.

In consultation with the Office of General Counsel, Office of Resolution Management, Diversity, and Inclusion Southeast District Field Office, Chaplains Service and in accordance with VA Directive 0022-Religious Symbols in VA Facilities, Compliance Manual on Religious Discrimination, Religious Exercise in the Workplace, the New Testament Book has been removed from the table. We are standardizing the Missing Man Table displays across the Lexington Health Care System to ensure consistency and rendering of honor. All table displays within VA Lexington Health Care System will contain the following: small table, white tablecloth, single rose, vase, yellow ribbon, slice of lemon, salt, bread plate, glass, candle, empty chair, and a journal.

Should you have any questions regarding this decision, please contact me to set up a meeting.

Sincerely,

Russell W. Armstead, CGFM  
Medical Center Director