

Elevating the Arrival Experience

A reference for VA designers and facility planners



Why Arrival Zones Are Critical



PATIENT CONFIDENCE & REDUCED STRESS

The entrance is a high-anxiety moment. Clear, organized information builds trust, lowers uncertainty, and helps patients move forward with confidence.



COMPLIANCE AT THE POINT OF ENTRY

Arrival zones are where required postings and entry information must be visible, current, and consistent — reducing risk of infractions and avoiding ad-hoc fixes.



STAFF WORKLOAD & FRONT-END FLOW

When visitors can self-orient right away (hours, where to go next, what to expect), staff spend less time giving directions and correcting misunderstandings — keeping front-end flow moving.



WAYFINDING PERFORMANCE & DOWNSTREAM FLOW

Arrival zones set the starting point for navigation. When the first cues are unclear, confusion carries downstream — slower check-ins, missed turns, and late arrivals.

Before care even begins, the arrival zone either builds trust or creates friction.

What's Required

Per VA Signage Design Manual §3.3, the following must be present at primary patient entrances in sequence. Secondary public entrances only require a condensed subset of policy postings.

Before Entry – Exterior Approach

- » **No Firearms or Weapons Notice** (IN-02.11 / IN-02.12)
- » **Video Surveillance Sign** (IN-02.13)
Posted with weapons notice on a single exterior post
- » **Parking Restrictions Sign** (IN-02.06)
Posted at parking areas and vehicle approaches

At the Door

- » **Entry Hours + Notices** (IN-02.04.01 / IN-02.04.02)
Required at every public entrance to post hours of operation, regulatory icons, and video surveillance information
 - **IN-02.04.01** Preferred glass-mount option
 - **IN-02.04.02** Wall-mount alternate
 - **EN-14** Optionally installed above the glass-mount sign adding the VA logo, facility name, building / entrance identification, and after-hours access guidance (if applicable)

Inside – Main Entrance Lobby

- » **Sign Group 1**
 - **Consent to Inspection** (IN-02.01)
 - **No Weapons Notice** (IN-02.10)
 - **No Weapons Policy** (IN-02.03)
- » **Sign Group 2**
 - **Video Surveillance** (IN-02.14)
 - **Service Dogs** (IN-02.15)
 - **No Smoking, No Vaping** (IN-02.02)
- » **Posters 1 & 2** (IN-02.07.01 & IN-02.07.02)
 - **Rights & Responsibilities of VA Patients**
 - **Rights & Responsibilities of Family Members**
- » **Poster 3** (IN-02.07.03)
 - **Notice of Policies & Directives – VA Form 0088**

NOTE: Secondary public entrances only require Sign Groups 1 & 2 noted above. Found on p. 453 of VASDM.

Full policy wall layout suggestions are found on p. 498 of VASDM.

Wayfinding Considerations

Compliance is the baseline — not the finish line. Ask these questions to identify friction in your arrival experience:

- » Can a first-time visitor choose the correct campus entrance without guessing?
- » Does parking guidance direct visitors to the correct lot for their destination — clearly and early?
- » Are drop-off zones easy to find and clearly labeled from the approach?
- » From parking, is there a clear pedestrian route to the correct building entrance?
- » At the building, is the correct door obvious (building number + entrance identity)?



A Better Arrival, by Design

Creative has a deep understanding of 2023 VASDM requirements and how they translate into real-world conditions. Request an Arrival Zone Review to pinpoint gaps and prioritize solutions — and note that many of our pre-designed arrival zone solutions are scoped to meet the federal micro-purchase threshold. [Learn more at **creativesignage.com/va-arrival**](https://creativesignage.com/va-arrival)