



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

North Florida / South Georgia Veterans Health System

NF/SGVHS Research Service

Standard Operating Procedure: Equipment Inventory/Management

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How does the Medical Center manage inventory?

Every substantial piece of equipment in the VA has an Equipment Entry (EE) serial number. Every EE number (every piece of equipment) is assigned to an Equipment Inventory List (EIL). Every EIL is assigned to a designee who is responsible for managing the equipment. In Research Service, this is usually an investigator (can be VA-paid or WOC) who oversees inventory for her/his laboratory.* The ACOS has ultimate responsibility for all equipment in Research Service.

When VA-purchased equipment is received by the Medical Center warehouse, a Biomedical Engineering check is done, and a Biomedical Engineering sticker is placed on the equipment. At that time, Supply Chain Management (SCM) applies an inventory barcode sticker to the equipment. The barcode sticker includes the "EE" serial number. The sticker may include a short descriptive name of the item, although the assigned name is often a very poor description of what the equipment actual is.

All equipment is inventoried using a scanning process. In addition to the aforementioned stickers on each piece of equipment, each room also has a barcode sticker at the entranceway (usually within the door frame). When SCM is conducting an inventory, the entranceway barcode is scanned first, followed by scanning of each piece of VA equipment within that room. Scanners are returned to SCM for download into their Automated Engineering Management System/Medical Equipment Reporting System (AEMS/MERS) to track all VA equipment. On a required annual basis, VA Supply Chain Management (SCM) conducts a full inventory of all research equipment.

*Note: Computers and peripherals purchased with VA IT funding will be on an EIL assigned to Information Resource Management (not Research Service).

How does Research Service manage inventory?

It is important for every investigator/lab to have procedures in place for tracking their equipment inventory. **Research Service leaderships asks that all labs maintain an inventory management spreadsheet.** An example entry for such a spreadsheet is shown below. Importantly, it is strongly recommended to include a photo of each inventory item, as well as a photo of the location where the item is stored. This makes searching for items much easier. At the end of this document there are instructions for how to properly lock a photo into an excel spreadsheet cell, to prevent the pictures from becoming disorganized when spreadsheet rows are sorted, added, or deleted. As a back-up, the photo of each item should be saved in a separate computer folder with the EE number as the file name. It is recommended that each lab have at least one person who is specifically assigned to inventory management. This person can keep the inventory spreadsheet up to date and meet with SCM during the annual inventory process to guide them to the location of each piece of equipment. An alternative to guiding an SCM employee through the lab is that researchers can request to borrow a scanner from SCM to scan the inventory of their own labs.



Researchers can also obtain inventory information through the Strategic Equipment Planning Guide (SEPG) on VA Sharepoint. From the NF/SGVHS home page (<https://vaww.northflorida.va.gov/>), click on "Sharepoint" on the left side of the page. Then click "Associate Director of Operations", then "Supply Chain Management", then the box "SEPG & EER". This brings you to a query form called "Equipment Drill-Through Report". With this query you can search for various useful information. First enter our VISN (8) and Facility (573). An example of

a common search would be to enter an EE#, which will provide information about that piece of equipment, including the room number where it should be located (i.e., where SCM will expect to find it). Another example is to enter a room number, which will provide a list of all equipment that is assigned to that location.

VA equipment can be stored off-site by completing a VA Property Pass form (with ACOS/Research approval). However, this off-site equipment remains VA property and is still subject to annual inventory. It must either be brought back to the VA for inventory, or SCM may allow a current photo of the EE sticker to be used for confirmation purposes.

Outmoded, inoperable, and unused equipment should be turned in via VA Form 2237. This form is also used to report missing, lost, or stolen equipment. VA computers should be turned in through the “YourIT” portal. If you need to move equipment between different EILs or need to create a new EIL (e.g., for a new lab or investigator), please contact the ACOS for Research Service.

Recommended Information to Include in Inventory Spreadsheet for Each Lab

Room	EIL	EE#	Label Name	Manufacturer and Product Name	Location	Picture
153A-12-GV	39AGV	EE999999	Computer-Laptop-GV	Artinis Portalite fNIRS		

Room: Room Number (e.g., 153A), Building (e.g., 12), Station (e.g., Gainesville).

EIL: Electronic Inventory List (number assigned to Principal Investigator or lab).

EE#: Serial number on the barcode sticker.

Label name: Equipment name assigned by SCM and printed on the barcode sticker; this often has a poor description of the actual equipment.

Manufacturer’s product name: Descriptive name that will be recognized by PI and lab staff.

Location: Photo showing location within the room; helpful for equipment stored in a closet, shelf, drawer, etc.

Picture: Photo of actual item as it would appear to SCM staff who are searching for it. See the instructions below for how to lock a picture into a spreadsheet cell.

Other information: Information that could be added if it might also be useful such as PI/Lab name, primary user of the equipment, monetary value, warranty expiration date.

How to lock a picture into a spreadsheet cell in Microsoft Excel

This feature should work for installed versions of Excel software, but may not work for web-based versions.

- paste a picture into the desired cell
- right click on the picture
- click size and properties
- click on properties
- check the “Move and size with cells” option
- this will allow for row sorting/adding/deleting, and the pictures will stay in their correct cell

