



**U.S. Department of Labor
Veterans' Employment and Training Service**

and

**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment
Service**

**Technical Assistance Guide
December 2008**

**"A Team Approach for Providing Employment Services
to Veterans with Disabilities"**



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Introduction

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service, and the Department of Labor (DOL), Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) concur that the successful readjustment of veterans with disabilities into the civilian workforce is a mutual responsibility and concern. In order to advance, improve, and expand the employment opportunities for veterans with disabilities, both agencies met in early 1995 to discuss ways for improving services to their mutual veteran clients. In August of that year, the first Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the agencies was signed.

Since entering into this agreement, thousands of veterans with disabilities have benefited from the resulting increased cooperation and coordination between the two Federal Agencies and staff employed by each State Agency (SA) that receives Jobs for Veterans State Grant funding from VETS. However, as time passed and service delivery systems evolved, the need to revisit the MOA and the policies, processes, and procedures for serving veterans that apply for and receive Chapter 31 benefits became apparent. As a result, a new MOA was signed by both agencies on October 3, 2005 (Appendix J).

General Information: Government Accountability Office (GAO) Report to Congressional Committees, September 2005

The integration of services across agencies is essential if veterans with service-connected disabilities are to achieve their goal of successful transition and employment. In support of this mission, the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service (VR&E) and the Department of Labor (DOL) Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) programs partner to provide employment related services to service members and veterans participating in the VR&E program.

A VR&E Task Force report submitted to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs in March 2004 included recommendations to increase the VR&E program's employment focus, particularly in relation to improved collaboration with DOL VETS. A GAO study received in September 2007 also emphasized the need for improved collaboration and standardized business practices between VR&E and VETS. In response to the Task Force's recommendation and to achieve the ultimate goal of seamless delivery and services, the decision was made to form a joint workgroup (JWG) made up of members from the DOL and VA. The JWG was tasked with developing processes to fully integrate the efforts of these primary agencies, demonstrate best practices at selected sites, and implement the team approach nationally. After release of the GAO report, the JWG's charter was expanded to address GAO recommendations.

Task Force/GAO recommendations:

- Negotiate a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with DOL to improve and nationally standardize the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and VR&E business process for more effective and efficient delivery of services to veterans with disabilities seeking employment.
- Establish a demonstration project to guide the development and design of collaborative business processes for national implementation, including:
 - Shared performance metrics
 - Common data collection and reporting techniques
 - Standardized reporting and tracking process
 - Clearly defined roles and responsibilities of each agency's employment team

Benefits expected:

- VR&E and DOL VETS data will accurately reflect program outcomes.
- Increased number of veterans will become suitably employed as a result of services provided by VR&E and DOL VETS.

The Joint Work Group

The charter of the Joint Work Group (JWG) is to improve the collaboration between VA and DOL. The JWG developed a demonstration project for eight major demonstration sites to implement a best practice model to serve Chapter 31 veterans and standardize employment processes. The demonstration project required the full understanding and cooperation of partners at all levels, including State and Local Workforce Boards. Partners in the demonstration project successfully assisted in the development of:

- Performance measures to assess partnership program results;
- A joint data collection tool for reporting and analysis

This Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) describes standard operating procedures for all partners, including VETS, VA VR&E, and SA DVOP specialists and One Stop Career Center (OSCC) staff. The TAG outlines the roles and responsibilities of each organization and the processes to be followed to ensure veterans who participate in Chapter 31 services achieve successful employment outcomes.

Section I

The Demonstration Project

The purpose of the demonstration project was to identify best practices, develop common performance elements, recording and reporting processes, identify administrative barriers and methods to remove them, and provide training to VR&E, VETS and SA staff on how to implement appropriate employment processes and improve working partnerships. Eight locations were selected to test the proposed process improvements. The project began in January 2008 and continued through implementation of the joint initiative nationwide in December 2008.

Demonstration Project and Evaluation Elements

Initial Rehabilitation Planning: The ratio of veterans eligible for Chapter 31 benefits referred to the SA for registration (this measure included data on Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) veterans and the employment outcomes of those veterans that received Chapter 31 benefits)

Entered Suitable Employment:

1. Referred from VR&E: Those Chapter 31 veterans determined to be job ready and referred to the SA for registration and job search assistance (Data source: VR&E)
2. Registered: The number of job ready Chapter 31 veterans referred from VR&E registered by the SA for job search assistance each quarter (Data source: SA)
3. Carry-in from previous Fiscal Year (FY): The number of Chapter 31 veterans still in active job seeking status who were registered in the previous FY (Data source: SA, first quarter entry only)
4. Suitable Employment: The number Chapter 31 veterans registered with SA who entered suitable employment as determined by VR&E and the SA, each quarter (Data source: VR&E and SA)
5. Discontinued Status: The number of referred and registered Chapter 31 veterans no longer actively seeking employment through the SA for any reason (Data source: VR&E)
6. Average Entry Hourly Wage: The average entry hourly wage for all Chapter 31 veterans who entered suitable employment during the quarter (Data source: SA)

Demonstration Project Outcomes

With the ultimate goal of suitable employment for veterans with disabilities, the demonstration project resulted in:

1. Identified potential performance measures to evaluate performance of the respective agencies.
2. Improved data collection and reporting techniques.
3. Developed a common referral and tracking process between the local VR&E office, the SA and VETS.
4. Refined the designated roles and responsibilities of each agency's employment team members (VR&E, VETS, and SA) to ensure all are working together to assist disabled veterans.
5. Defined common terminology.
6. Standardized the elements in a universal MOA for use by local VR&E and SA representatives.
7. Developed mutual short and long range goals for VR&E and VETS.
8. Developed policies that resolve issues related to information sharing and security concerns, i.e. information access and email encryption certification.

Section II

A Team Approach to Serving Chapter 31 Veterans

Coming together is a beginning.
Keeping together is progress.
Working together is success.
~Henry Ford~

Efficient and seamless service is the common goal and responsibility of interagency staff who provide assistance to veterans with disabilities, particularly those who receive services through the VR&E Chapter 31 program. These veterans are seeking guidance and assistance with one of the most important aspects of their lives — finding meaningful employment in a suitable career field. Effective communication and coordinated efforts from all agencies involved will ensure these disabled veterans receive the most comprehensive, efficient, caring and professional service possible.

A unified team approach and partnership between VR&E, VETS, and SA staff is fundamental to a seamless, positive experience for Chapter 31 veterans as they move through evaluation, training, job search, and employment. A true partnership capitalizes on the strengths of the involved agencies and fosters the ideals of exemplary customer service. To that end, and in accordance with each team member's roles and responsibilities:

VR&E, VETS, and SA staff will **cooperate to enroll** eligible veterans, particularly service connected disabled (SCD) veterans, into special programs authorized under the Workforce Investment Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation under 38 United States Code (38 U.S.C.), Chapter 31.

Following VR&E's determination that a veteran or service-member is entitled to Chapter 31 benefits, local VR&E, VETS, and SA staff will **coordinate efforts** to complete rehabilitation planning, assess job readiness, secure suitable employment, and determine rehabilitation status.

VR&E, VETS, and SA staff will **share information** and report on individual veterans receiving Chapter 31 benefits to include information available through the VR&E Corporate Case Management System (CWINRS), Chapter 31 Tracking Report, state data collection systems such as the Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS), or other systems available in each agency. The information exchanged will be used exclusively to facilitate job development and placement services for participating veterans. All information from interviews, counseling, testing, and assessment will be used by each agency with documented consent from veterans in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and other applicable regulations. Each agency agrees to provide practical and appropriate safeguards to protect Personally Identifiable Information on Chapter 31 veterans, in accordance with applicable regulations and laws, including the

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and reauthorizations, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

VR&E staff members and DVOP specialists or other designated OSCC staff persons **will partner** to provide cooperative and comprehensive service to Chapter 31 participants as appropriate at every stage during the rehabilitation process.

VR&E, VETS and SA staff jointly determines when veterans are “Job Ready” and **all partners will focus their efforts and be mutually accountable** to place each veteran in “Suitable Employment.”

The flow chart on the following page depicts the Chapter 31 process from the point when a veteran applies for benefits, through determination of eligibility, development of a rehabilitation plan and to the ultimate goal of securing suitable employment.

Section III

Roles and Responsibilities

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Officer (VR&EO) ensures effective coordination and liaison between SA staff, VETS and VR&E to implement this agreement.

To that end, the VR&EO will:

- Maintain regular contact and communication with the Director for Veterans' Employment and Training (DVET) and appropriate SA staff;
- Identify problem areas, work toward their resolution and render technical assistance as needed;
- Distribute, on a quarterly basis, success stories about individual veterans who have been helped through the program;
- When possible, provide the SA Intensive Services Coordinator(s) (ISC) assigned to the VR&E Regional Office, work or office space, telephone and data lines, normal office supplies, and access to fax, Internet, and the appropriate portion of the VA electronic system;
- Provide appropriate training to the assigned SA employees and designate a point of contact within the VR&E office to assist SA ISCs/OSCC staff to ensure effective communication;
- Ensure that relevant information is shared with the SA ISC/OSCC staff to facilitate the veteran's job search efforts;
- Refer Chapter 31 veterans deemed Job Ready to the assigned SA ISC/OSCC staff;
- Provide SA and VETS staff with timely information relevant to the job search assistance being done by the DVOP/OSCC staff on behalf of individual Chapter 31 veterans; and

VR&E is responsible for the professional execution and completion of Chapter 31 evaluations on behalf of their assigned participants.

- The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) determines whether the veteran meets the entitlement criteria for Chapter 31 benefits, assists the veteran with identified counseling needs, and assumes primary responsibility for preparing the participant's rehabilitation plan. VR&E will work in close cooperation with SA staff to identify Chapter 31 veterans who may benefit from on-the-job training (OJT) or apprenticeship training.
- The VRC is responsible for ensuring proper evaluations are administered to gain needed insight into the participant's vocational interests, aptitudes,

abilities, and limitations. The VRC is the VA case manager for the Chapter 31 veteran as a rehabilitation plan is developed and implemented.

The SA is responsible for providing priority of service to veterans in accordance with 38 U.S.C., Chapter 41, with special emphasis on intensive services provided to disabled veterans. States identify specific categories of veterans to whom they will target services in their State Plan on Services to Veterans (State Plan). In accordance with guidance issued by VETS, the State Plan should describe how referred Chapter 31 veterans are served by DVOP specialists or other appropriate OSCC staff. Additionally, State Plans should detail services provided to include full access to the resources of the One-Stop delivery system and focused, intensive services to ensure employment compatible with the training provided by the VA is secured.

The SA will appoint a DVOP specialist or other appropriate OSCC staff to function as the ISC. SA staff and the DVET will work closely with VR&E staff to mutually develop related activities and responsibilities for the ISC including dissemination of information, data collection, and data entry into the joint tracking spreadsheet.

The following criteria apply to SA staff who work with Chapter 31 veterans:

- When possible, DVOP specialists should assist Chapter 31 veterans; in offices where no DVOP is assigned, LVER staff or other OSCC staff will provide the assistance;
- Every Chapter 31 veteran will have a complete registration and employment plan to include identification of barriers and strategies to overcome those barriers;
- All services provided to Chapter 31 veterans will be recorded as case notes;
- All Chapter 31 veteran will have a service recorded once every two weeks;
- Job search assistance and job development contacts for Chapter 31 veterans are mandatory services; contacts with employers will be made to secure job or OJT opportunities suitable for the participant's rehabilitation goal(s) and the contact will be recorded in the case file;
- When a Chapter 31 veteran obtains employment, the ISC will obtain all appropriate information to complete the Chapter 31 Tracking Report, such as employment date, employer name, job title and entry hourly wage; the ISC will provide the information to the appropriate VR&E staff;
- Upon confirmation from the VR&E staff that the employment is appropriate to the rehabilitation or employment plan, the ISC will ensure the veteran is monitored for 60 days or longer so the VRC can determine whether or not a veteran can be considered "rehabilitated."

- When a Chapter 31 veteran cannot be contacted or will not set and/keep appointments, that information will be reported to the ISC so the appropriate VR&E staff can be notified.

The ISC serves as the State Agency's central point of contact for service to VR&E participants. In addition to case management responsibilities, the assigned ISC will facilitate the dissemination of information to, and compile information from, the DVOP specialists or other SA staff who serve Chapter 31 participants. The ISC serves as the coordination point to communicate information to and from VR&E staff and the DVET.

Every effort will be made to allot space at the VR&E office for the ISC, but regardless of his or her physical location, the individual will be supervised by the SA. When physically located in the VA Regional Office (VARO), the ISC will be provided with suitable office space, computer connectivity, telephone service, and any other assistance needed to successfully implement a full partnership that ensures Chapter 31 veterans receive the assistance they need and deserve.

The DVOP or OSCC staff person provides direct employment services to Chapter 31 participants during the employment phase of rehabilitation. During the evaluation and planning phase, the DVOP or OSCC staff provides labor market and other pertinent work information. When Chapter 31 veterans seek employment while participating in rehabilitation, assigned DVOPs or OSCC staff persons provide job counseling and referral. As the participant nears the end of their rehabilitation program, the DVOP or OSCC staff person develops a job search plan and provides services such as referral to a Job Search Workshop, resume assistance, practice interviews, job development and job referral.

The VETS DVET will examine case files of VR&E participants to provide technical assistance to SA Staff. During the office review process, the DVET will pay particular attention to data available through the SA to ensure veterans enrolled in the Chapter 31 process are being tracked on the tracking spreadsheet are being provided with appropriate services. In addition, the DVET will be responsible for ensuring the VR&E staff and ISC or assigned OSCC staff work together for the benefit of the mutual veteran client. The DVET is an integral team member who facilitates actions and activity between the VR&E Staff, SA Staff, and ISC, including:

- Maintaining regular contact and communication with the VR&E Officer and appropriate VR&E staff;
- Identifying problem areas, work toward their resolution and render technical assistance as needed;
- Compiling and distributing, on a quarterly basis, success stories about individual veterans who have been helped through the programs;

- Providing VR&E staff with timely information relevant to the job search assistance being done by the DVOP/OSCC staff on behalf of individual Chapter 31 veterans.

Section IV

The Referral and Rehabilitation Process

Referral

VR&E Program:

The successful readjustment of veterans into civilian life is a mutual responsibility and concern of VETS, the VA and DVOP specialists/ OSCC staff. To this end, all parties are committed to active cooperation and coordination in the implementation of programs serving veterans. Day-to-day coordination requires that personnel from each agency have a fundamental understanding of the services and benefits provided by VR&E service as well as the basic eligibility criteria for their programs. To promote complete access to the full range of educational and training opportunities, all parties should refer eligible veterans to the Chapter 31 program when appropriate.

The REALifelines Program: <http://www.dol.gov/vets/REALifelines/index.htm>

The REALifelines (RLL) program was formally launched by the Department of Labor, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and the national naval Medical Center, Bethesda on October 4, 2004. As the lead agency, VETS collaborates with DOD, VA and SAs to identify potential RLL participants and provide the necessary information and services to ensure they make a successful transition to the civilian workforce.

Program participants are transitioning service members and veterans who were seriously wounded or injured in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom who require or request employment or reemployment services to help them transition from the military to the civilian workforce.

The DVET is the primary liaison between DOL/VETS, RLL participants, the SA, and the VR&E service. As such, the DVET negotiates with the SA and the VR&E to develop a process for the identification and referral of RLL participants to local SA and VR&E resources for assistance.

The VR&E office may play a key role in referral of RLL participants, especially when a VR&E staff person is located at a military treatment facility that does not have a RLL coordinator or out-stationed DVOP. In these cases, the VR&E staff person will identify potential RLL eligible veterans and provide the ISC with the veteran's contact information to include mailing address, phone number and e-mail address if available.

Initial Rehabilitation Planning - Following VR&E's determination that a veteran is tested if needed, local VR&E staff will coordinate with SA staff

during the VR&E process to complete the job readiness assessment, track selection and rehabilitation planning.

The VRC will obtain a signed Release of Information and provide the following information about the veteran to the SA ISC who will provide the needed assessment or refer him or her to a local DVOP or OSCC staff:

- Name;
- Date referred;
- Contact information (address, phone number, email address, etc.);
- Barriers to employment;
- Potential career fields identified; and
- Whether or not the veteran served in OEF/OIF.

The DVOP/OSCC staff will ensure the veteran is registered with the SA, advise VR&E of the registration, and contact the veteran within 15 days to provide services that may include, but are not limited to:

- A job readiness assessment to evaluate the veteran's ability to seek and obtain employment, identify possible job goals and services needed to reach those goals; or
- Labor market information (LMI) and discussion of the veteran's abilities and limitations to make informed decisions about choosing and pursuing a particular employment goal; or
- Suggested part-time jobs and other opportunities the veteran may pursue during training to enhance employability in the chosen field of work.

The SA ISC or other designated staff will track the number of referrals and of that number, the number that registered and received services. For each referred veteran, the ISC will document the:

- Date referral received from VR&E;
- Date veteran contacted;
- Date(s) of meeting(s) with veteran;
- Results of job readiness assessment;
- Date services completed; and
- Date referred back to VR&E.

The veteran will cooperate with the assigned DVOP specialist or OSCC staff, use the information provided to work with his/her VR&E counselor to complete the VR&E rehabilitation planning process, and discuss information that the SA submits to VR&E, including:

- A complete list of career fields that were initially explored; and
- A list of potential employment goals to discuss with VR&E and the LMI related to each goal.

The VRC will document the:

- Date referred to the SA;
- Date referred back from the SA;
- Date veteran contacted; and
- All information needed for rehabilitation planning including plans for employment services only.

Job Readiness Assessment and Employment Referral - Following rehabilitation plan development and/or the provision of training or other services designed to result in job readiness, VR&E and SA staff will coordinate actions to determine whether a veteran is “Job Ready” and to place the veteran in “Suitable Employment.” If the VRC determines that the veteran is job ready, a VR&E Employment Coordinator (EC) may coordinate referral to the DVOP.

The VRC and veteran will complete the Job Ready Assessment Worksheet provided as Appendix B to outline a process to refer, track and collect data on the participant. If a “Job Ready” determination is made, the VRC will refer the veteran to the SA for placement in suitable employment using the Referral Letter Sample provided as Appendix C. If the VRC determines that the veteran is job ready, a VR&E EC may coordinate referral to the DVOP.

The VRC or EC will obtain a signed Release of Information and provide the following information about the veteran to the SA:

- Name;
- Date referred;
- Contact information (address, phone number, email address, etc.);
- Barriers to employment;
- Rehabilitation plan with identified employment goal; and
- Whether or not the veteran served in OEF/OIF.

The DVOP/OSCC staff person will ensure the veteran’s registration is completed or re-activated, advise VR&E of the registration, and contact the veteran within 10 days to confirm the veteran’s readiness to seek employment in the identified or related field of work. The DVOP/OSCC staff will provide placement services to include:

- LMI to make informed decisions about job search activities; and

- Job search skills training, job referrals, and follow-up with the veteran and employers.

The ISC or other agency staff will document all data items on the Chapter 31 Tracking Report provided as Appendix H.

The veteran will cooperate with SA staff to begin employment placement activities, and document and submit to VR&E monthly:

- A list of job leads pursued and outcome of job search activity; and
- Information about employment accepted.

When a veteran fails to cooperate fully in the rehabilitation process, information about the veteran's employment and wages may help to re-establish contact to determine whether further rehabilitation services are needed or closure of the case is warranted.

The VRC or EC will document the:

- Date the veteran is referred to SA;
- Date the veteran is declared "job ready;"
- Contacts with SA and veteran;
- Date(s) of meeting(s) with veteran to follow up or provide further services, employment information, adjustment to employment; and
- Notification to SA when veteran is either rehabilitated or discontinued.

Information Collection and Reporting

VR&E/VETS/SA staff have developed a referral document and outlined a process to track and collect data on Chapter 31 veterans referred to the SA for labor market information and intensive employment assistance services. This TAG and appendixes include a sample referral document, report tool, and implementation directions.

Chapter 31 Veterans Participating in Other Special Programs and Initiatives

Responding to lessons learned from past combat periods, the VA and DOL have launched efforts to reach out to the current conflict's veterans to make sure they are aware of benefits they have earned. Both agencies are committed to a seamless delivery of services and to providing them earlier in the transition process to ease veterans' move to civilian life.

The VA regularly mails information packets to all service members separating from the military to remind them of eligibility for basic VA benefits, with additional

outreach efforts for those recently deployed to combat theaters through the VR&E Coming Home to Work program and other outreach efforts. The DOL, through the REALifelines program, focuses special attention on severely wounded and injured transitioning service members and veterans. In partnership with state and local government agencies, staff from both agencies are assigned to the military hospitals with the largest numbers of casualties to provide one-on-one services that directly connect veterans with the resources they need when they return home.

Veterans participating in the REALifelines program will be reported on the Chapter 31 Tracking Report as described in the next section. If and when other initiatives or programs become eligible for tracking, they will be added to the report. Similarly, SA staff will track and prioritize Chapter 31 Coming Home to Work participants.

Section V Data Collection & Reporting

Precise, detailed, and valid data collection is imperative to monitor success and take corrective actions. Therefore, all involved agency staff will work together to carry out the activities and actions described below.

The ISC is pivotal in the collection, dissemination and entry of data on Chapter 31 veterans receiving employment assistance. The ISC should fully understand the importance of the data collection in support of partnership objectives.

- The ISC will collect and enter all information listed on the spreadsheet provided as Appendix H. This data will be gathered from all One-Stop offices where Chapter 31 veterans have been referred and registered;
- Each quarter, the ISC will forward the completed spreadsheet to the DVET and appropriate VR&E staff no later than 30 days after the last day of the reporting quarter;
- The DVET, ISC, and appropriate VR&E staff will reconcile the data within 5 working days; then
- The DVET will email the reconciled spreadsheet to vets-vre@dol.gov with a copy to the ISC and the appropriate VR&E staff for inclusion in the Jobs for Veterans State Grant quarterly report.
- At the National Level, the Jobs for Veterans' State Grants Lead, currently Patrick Hecker (hecker.patrick@dol.gov), will be responsible for ensuring the appropriate VA staff at the Central Office receives a copy of each individual spreadsheet and a copy of the National roll-up tally compiled approximately 45 days after the end of each quarter.

Chapter 31 Tracking Report Data Specifications (Appendix H):

Column A: VARO: Enter the three-digit code for the VA Regional Office from which the veteran was referred

Column B: Last Name: Enter the referred veteran's last name

Column C: First Name: Enter the referred veteran's first name

Column D: ID Number: Enter the last four digits of the referred veteran's SSN or other unique identifier

Column E: Carry-in: If the veteran was registered last FY and carried in, enter a "Y" in this column; otherwise, leave blank

Column F: OEF/OIF Veteran: If the veteran served in the OEF or OIF theatre of operations, enter a "Y" in this column; otherwise leave blank

Column G: Other Program Participant: Enter the one-digit number that reflects the special program in which the veteran is/was a participant:

1 = REALifelines

2 = Coming Home to Work

Column H: VRC/EC Name: Enter the full name of the VRC or EC that made the referral

Column I: Employment Goal: Enter the employment goal listed on the IWRP or IEAP provided by the VRC/EC

Column J: Date Referred to SA: Enter the date the VRC or EC referred the veteran for employment assistance in the mm/dd/yyyy format

Column K: DVOP or SA Staff Assigned: Enter the name of the DVOP specialist or OSCC staff to which the veteran has been referred for employment assistance

Column L: *Date Registered by SA:* Enter the date the veteran was entered into the State's data collection system, or if previously registered the date reactivated or date next service provided

Column M: number of Days from Referral to Registration: This data item is calculated automatically based on the dates entered in Columns K and L

Column N: Date Entered Suitable Employment: Enter the date the veteran entered suitable employment as determined by the VRC/EC

Column O: Employer: Enter the name of the business or organization where the veteran is employed

Column P: Job Title: Enter the job title of the position in which the veteran is employed

Column Q: Hourly Wage: Enter the hourly wage earned by the veteran as identified from SA sources

Column R: # Days Registration to Employment: This data item is calculated automatically based on the dates entered in Columns L and N

Column S: Monitored for 60 Days after Employment: If this veteran received follow-up and monitoring for 60 days enter a "Y" in this column; otherwise leave blank

Column T: Date Case Closed: Enter the date this veteran's VR&E case was closed

Column U: Closure Reason: Enter the one letter code for the reason for case closure:

E = Entered employment by ISC; not necessarily considered suitable employment for VR&E rehabilitation purposes. Employment may be an interim position for income until a suitable job is found or while the veteran is in training.

R = Rehabilitated by VR&E; refers to a Chapter 31 veteran who meets the rehabilitated criteria as defined by VR&E staff.

I = Interrupted by VR&E; interrupted is a temporary suspension of the Chapter 31 program. VA first must determine that the veteran will be able to return to a rehabilitation program or an employment services program following the resolution of the situation causing the interruption.

D = Discontinued by VR&E; discontinued refers to the VR&E Chapter 31 registered referrals that are discontinued from the VR&E program by the VRC/CP for a variety of reasons.

S = School/Training by VR&E; this refers to a veteran who is involved in services such as a specialized training and/or education to obtain and maintain suitable employment.

O = Other by ISC or VR&E; explain in comments.

Column V: Notes/Comments: Enter information applicable to the veteran's employment assistance process

Section VI

Local Memorandums of Understanding (MOU)

All individuals who provide assistance to a Chapter 31 veteran using the best practice model get shared credit for the rehabilitation outcome. This TAG provides the foundation for a successful Chapter 31 program by outlining the roles and responsibilities of each member of the team and describing the processes used for referral and tracking. However, VR&E offices are responsible for a region vs. a state and not all offices are staffed with all positions described in this TAG. Additionally, states develop their own strategies to deploy the Jobs for Veterans State Grant. Therefore, local Memorandums of Understanding should be developed to identify key staff by name, provide contact information, outline specific responsibilities for these key staffers, and agree to any local specific processes unique to their respective jurisdictions.

The outline provided as Appendix A provides the main areas or headings that must be included in a locally developed MOU. Key VR&E, VETS and SA staff should work together to describe additional responsibilities for each staff member and the processes to be used in the respective state or region.

The language provided under each heading should be used verbatim but should not be seen as all inclusive. Each partner should edit and add information as applicable to local circumstances.

Section III – “Responsibilities” outlines the basic roles for each partner that provides services to Chapter 31 veterans. The outline provides a summary of the topic areas that the Local MOU should address more specifically for each of the following partners:

- The DVET;
- The VR&EO;
- The State Veterans’ Program Coordinator
- The SA ISC;
- The DVOP or other OSCC staff; and
- The VA VR&E VRC/CP/EC.

Appendix A

Local Memorandum of Understanding Outline

Section I

Purpose

The law and operational regulations mandate closely coordinated vocational rehabilitation and job placement services to service-connected disabled (SCD) veterans by Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service of the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) of the U. S. Department of Labor (USDOL), and federally funded state agency partners (State Workforce Agency). The purpose of this agreement is to jointly affirm the principle of inter-agency cooperation to work together to help veterans with disabilities to obtain stable, gainful, and satisfying employment.

References

38 United States Code (USC). Code, Section 523, 3116, 3117, 4103A, 4104, 4108, 4109, 4110B, 7725; Public Law (PL) 103-446; the Workforce Investment Act, PL 105-220 SEC. 112, 117, 168, 192, 322; and The Veterans' Employment Opportunities Act, PL 105-339.

Scope

Vocational rehabilitation, job placement assistance, and related services rendered under this agreement will be provided within the currently funded activity of each agency.

Section II

Cooperating Agencies

The undersigned parties to this agreement represent the VR&E Division of the {Insert Location} VA Regional Office, {Insert State} VETS office, and {Insert State Agency (SA) Name}.

Section III

An effective and efficient referral process has been cited by all partners as one of the keys to the success of this interagency effort. It is essential that the agency making the referral and the agency receiving the referral develop and implement specific standards for coordinated service delivery to veterans.

Relationships and Responsibilities

The Director for Veterans' Employment and Training (DVET) is the link between the VA VR&E office and the State Agency that provides employment services. He or she coordinates efforts by all involved parties to ensure this agreement is implemented with effective coordination and liaison.

The DVET will:

Describe the DVET's role in the following topic areas:

- Communication and coordination activities with VA VR&E and SA staff;
- Technical assistance to improve the program and activities to resolve procedural issues;
- Activities to resolve complaints from Chapter 31 veterans;
- Facilitation of professional training for SA staff from NVTI and other sources;
- Reconciliation and distribution of the Chapter 31 Tracking Report;
- Develops and distributes success stories about individual veterans helped by participation through the VETS and the Chapter 31 programs; and
- Meetings to discuss the progress toward achievement of the objectives of this agreement.
- Information sharing with VR&E staff.

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Officer (VR&EO) is the VA's link between the DVET and the VA VR&E office. He or she ensures effective coordination and liaison between SA and VR&E staff to implement this agreement.

The VR&EO will:

Describe the VR&EO's role in the following topic areas:

- Communication and coordination activities with the DVET and SA Veterans' Coordinator and/or the SA Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC);
- Technical assistance to improve the program and activities to resolve procedural issues;
- Develops and distributes success stories about individual veterans helped by participation through the Chapter 31 and VETS programs;
- Provision of work space and supplies to SA staff assigned to the VR&E office (which may include office or work space, telephone, fax and data lines, normal office supplies, Internet access, and appropriate access to the VA electronic system), as possible;

- Facilitation of professional training for SA staff from VA sources;
- Referral of Chapter 31 veterans deemed Job Ready to the assigned SA ISC or other SA staff;
- Designation and assignment of VR&E staff that coordinate activities with SA staff and implement procedures established in the TAG;
- Reconciliation and distribution of the Chapter 31 Tracking Report;
- Information sharing with VETS and SA staff; and
- Job placement information sharing with SA staff.

The VR&E Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC), Counseling Psychologist (CP), or Employment Coordinator (EC) will be the primary point of contact for referrals within VR&E.

The VR&E VRC/CP/EC will:

Describe the VRC/CP/EC's role in the following topic areas:

- Communication and coordination activities with the DVET and SA Veterans' Coordinator and/or the SA Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC);
- Participation in VR&E Employment Readiness Workshops and the VR&E Job Lab;
- Reporting VR&E procedural problems to the VR&EO;
- Activities that help the veteran determine an appropriate employment or training plan, to include apprenticeship and on-the-job training (OJT);
- Activities to assist and refer veterans who desire employment while completing their rehabilitation plan;
- Referral of "Job Ready" Chapter 31 veterans to the appropriate VR&E and SA staff;
- Efforts to secure suitable employment for referred veterans consistent with their rehabilitation plan; and
- Leveraging other agencies and resources to enhance employment opportunities for Chapter 31 veterans.

The SA Veterans Program Coordinator (or similarly designated position) helps to ensure effective coordination and liaison between the DVET, VR&E staff, and SA staff to include the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist and other One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) staff to implement this agreement.

The SA Veterans Program Coordinator will:

Describe the SA Veterans Program Coordinator's role in the following topic areas:

- Functional supervision of the SA ISC;
- Communication and coordination activities with the DVET and VR&E staff;
- Information sharing with VETS and VR&E staff;
- Technical assistance to improve the program and activities to resolve procedural issues; and
- Activities to facilitate job search and placement activities for Chapter 31 veterans statewide.

The SA ISC, out-stationed at the VA Regional Office, is the primary point of contact for Chapter 31 referrals to the SA.

The SA ISC will:

Describe the SA ISC's role in the following topic areas:

- Referral of Chapter 31 veterans entering the job search phase of rehabilitation to appropriate SA staff;
- Monitoring and assessment of services provided to Chapter 31 veterans by SA staff;
- Reporting VR&E procedural problems to the appropriate VR&E, SA, or VETS staff; and
- Reconciliation and distribution of the Chapter 31 Tracking Report.

DVOP specialists and other OSCC staff provide intensive services to veterans with barriers to employment such as veterans participating in the Chapter 31 program. Additionally, DVOP specialists and other OSCC staff provide outreach and assistance to employers on behalf of veterans with service-connected disabilities.

The DVOP or other OSCC staff will:

Describe the DVOP/OSCC staff's role in the following topic areas:

- Participation in VR&E Employment Readiness Workshops and the VR&E Job Lab;
- Activities that assist VR&E and the veteran determine an employment or training plan, to include apprenticeship and on-the-job training (OJT);

- Outreach activities with employers, apprenticeship programs, and other training sites to increase employment opportunities for veterans participating in the Chapter 31 program;
- Leveraging other agencies and resources to enhance employment opportunities for Chapter 31 veterans;
- Activities to assist veterans seeking employment while completing their rehabilitation plan;
- Creation and maintenance of case files for referred “Job Ready” Chapter 31 veterans;
- Efforts to secure suitable employment for referred veterans consistent with their rehabilitation plan; and
- Reconciliation and distribution of the Chapter 31 Tracking Report.

Orientation, Staff Training and Development

Jointly, VR&E and DVET staff agree to orient newly assigned staff to the procedures established in the TAG and to provide training needed to ensure effective implementation of this agreement.

Exchange of Information

VR&E, VETS, and SAs will share information relevant to finding employment for individual veteran participating in vocational rehabilitation and receiving employment services under the provisions of 38 U.S.C., Chapter 31 (hereafter referred in this document as Chapter 31). The information exchanged shall be used exclusively to facilitate job development and placement services to participating veterans. All information from interviews, counseling, testing, and assessment will be used by each agency under documented consent from veterans in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and other applicable regulations. Each agency agrees to provide practical and appropriate safeguards for protecting veterans’ information on Chapter 31 veterans, in accordance with applicable regulations and laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and reauthorizations, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Cooperation on Emphasis under Federal Contracts

VR&E supports the SA’s role to assist federal contractors who are required to list jobs with local SA offices under the provisions of 38 U.S.C. §. 4212, the Veterans’ Benefits Improvement Act of 1994 (PL 103-446) and the Jobs for Veterans Act (PL 107-288). SA and VETS will employ all resources as practical, to identify and contact federal contractors, for the purpose of offering assistance to contractors having contract employment provisions regarding veterans with SCDs and veterans of certain military campaigns.

Relationships on Veterans' Reemployment Rights

Under the provisions of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) of 1994, the U.S. Department of Labor, through VETS offices located in each state, will assist veterans making claims under USERRA. The law provides for enhanced protection for veterans with disabilities, including the requirement that employers make reasonable efforts to accommodate for a disability. VR&E, VETS, and SA agree to exchange all information relevant to an investigation. VR&E and SA will refer veterans making a claim under USERRA to VETS. If necessary, VETS will investigate or adjudicate claims under USERRA, as provided by law. VETS and SA staff will refer veterans with disabilities with reemployment rights to VR&E for assistance with disability related issues that lead to successful reintegration into the workplace.

REALifelines Partnership and Coming Home to Work Program

VR&E will provide services to all eligible veterans with SCDs referred through the VETS' REALifelines (Recovery & Employment Assistance Lifelines) program. VR&E will provide information to the DVET on services provided to veterans referred through the REALifelines program. Likewise, VETS staff will provide services to all eligible servicemembers and veterans referred through the Coming Home to Work program and provide information to the VR&EO on services provided to CHTW participants.

Coordination of Counseling, Training and Job Placement

In recognition that coordination is a key element to success, VR&E and SA agree to team up SA staff directly with individual VR&E counselors and/or employment coordinators in order to ensure the fullest integration of both staffs in all phases of the Five Tracks to Employment process.

Section IV

Enter contact information for all staff to include mailing address, phone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses.

Section V

Describe attachments, such as forms or other appendices.

Appendix B Job Ready Assessment Worksheet Sample

Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) Job Ready Assessment Worksheet

Completed by VRC/CP and Veteran Prior to "Job Ready"
Determination

Veteran's Name		SSN #	
VA CASE MANAGER		Date	
Employment Coordinator		D.O.T.	

Targeted Employment Goal		Job Title
Training Completion Date		

Job Seeking Skills	YES	NO	NA
Veteran has an acceptable working resume			
Veteran has cover letter and thank you notes			
Veteran has developed interviewing skills and knows to address an employer's needs during the interview			
Veteran is able to perform an independent job search			
Veteran is able to identify potential employers related to his/her transferable skills and/or newly required skills			
Veteran is able to identify potential employers related to his/her identified vocational goal			
Other (Specify)			

Employment Attitudes and Behaviors	YES	NO	NA
Veteran has appropriate interpersonal relationship skills			
Veteran has appropriate work attitudes			
Veteran is able to be punctual			
Medically stable to participate in job search activities and retain employment			
Other (specify)			
Transportation & Housing	YES	NO	NA
Veteran has suitable transportation			
Veteran has suitable housing			

Veteran has an adequate transitional income			
Veteran needs assistance in locating other financial resources, e.g., Social Services, while looking for work			

Career Preparation Activities	YES	NO	NA
✓ Veteran completed goals and objectives of Rehabilitation Plan			
✓ Veteran registered with DVOP			
✓ Veteran registered with school placement/career counseling office			
✓ Veteran completed an internship, co-op or work experience program			
✓ Veteran obtained the required work certifications/licensing to work			
✓ Veteran possesses appropriate interview attire			
✓ Veteran's personal appearance/ hygiene is suitable			
Other (specify)			

Other Factors	Veteran Response	NA
Minimum income needed (per month):		
Distance willing to commute:		
Willingness to relocate:		
Hours willing to work:		
Minimum benefits required for family:		

Work accommodations needed/narrative comments:

SIGNATURES:

VETERAN

VA CASE MANAGER

EMPLOYMENT COORDINATOR

Appendix C Referral Letter Sample



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
St. Louis Regional Office
400 South 18th Street
St. Louis, MO 63103-2271

In Reply Refer to: 28

To: Missouri Division of Workforce Development
Attention John Doe
4001 South 18th Street
St. Louis, MO 63103-2271

Subject: Job Ready Referral Letter

Please provide employment assistance to the Chapter 31 veteran listed below. The assistance should, at a minimum, consist of registration in the workforce reporting system, resume development, employment guidance, job seeking skills, and job referral assistance.

_____ Veteran is not currently employed and requires placement services in order to secure **suitable** employment that is consistent with the veteran's functional capacity and employment goals:

___ Transitional during training ___ Permanent job placement

_____ Veteran is currently employed but placement services are required in order to secure **suitable** employment that is consistent with the veteran's functional capacity and employment goals.

Veteran's Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: Home: _____ **Cell:** _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Special Hiring Authority Eligibility:

- 20% or less
- 30% or more

Employment Barriers Narrative Statement (including identification of workplace/job accommodations needed):

Contractor Information:

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Changes to the plan can only be made by VR&E (case manager).

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe, MS. CRC
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

Appendix D Release of Information Form (Sample)

OMB Number: 2900-0260
Estimated Burden: 2 minutes

Department of Veterans Affairs		REQUEST FOR AND AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE MEDICAL RECORDS OR HEALTH INFORMATION	
<p>Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Information: The execution of this form does not authorize the release of information other than that specifically described below. The information requested on this form is solicited under Title 38, U.S.C. The form authorizes release of information in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, 45 CFR Parts 160 and 164, 5 U.S.C. 552a, and 38 U.S.C. 5701 and 7332 that you specify. Your disclosure of the information requested on this form is voluntary. However, if the information including Social Security Number (SSN) (the SSN will be used to locate records for release) is not furnished completely and accurately, Department of Veterans Affairs will be unable to comply with the request. The Veterans Health Administration may not condition treatment, payment, enrollment or eligibility on signing the authorization. VA may disclose the information that you put on the form as permitted by law. VA may make a "routine use" disclosure of the information as outlined in the Privacy Act systems of records notices identified as 24VA19 "Patient Medical Record - VA" and in accordance with the VHA Notice of Privacy Practices. You do not have to provide the information to VA, but if you don't, VA will be unable to process your request and serve your medical needs. Failure to furnish the information will not have any affect on any other benefits to which you may be entitled. If you provide VA your Social Security Number, VA will use it to administer your VA benefits. VA may also use this information to identify veterans and persons claiming or receiving VA benefits and their records, and for other purposes authorized or required by law. The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires us to notify you that this information collection is in accordance with the clearance requirements of section 3507 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. We may not conduct or sponsor, and you are not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number. We anticipate that the time expended by all individuals who must complete this form will average 2 minutes. This includes the time it will take to read instructions, gather the necessary facts and fill out the form.</p>			
ENTER BELOW THE PATIENT'S NAME AND SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER IF THE PATIENT DATA CARD IMPRINT IS NOT USED.			
TO: DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (Print or type name and address of health care facility) Department of Veterans Affairs, VR&E (address of Regional Office)		PATIENT NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial) SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER 	
NAME AND ADDRESS OF ORGANIZATION, INDIVIDUAL OR TITLE OF INDIVIDUAL TO WHOM INFORMATION IS TO BE RELEASED Work-Force One-Stop Career Center, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOF)			
VETERAN'S REQUEST: I request and authorize Department of Veterans Affairs to release the information specified below to the organization, or individual named on this request. I understand that the information to be released includes information regarding the following condition(s): <input type="checkbox"/> DRUG ABUSE <input type="checkbox"/> ALCOHOLISM OR ALCOHOL ABUSE <input type="checkbox"/> TESTING FOR OR INFECTION WITH HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV) <input type="checkbox"/> SICKLE CELL ANEMIA			
INFORMATION REQUESTED (Check applicable box(es) and state the extent or nature of the information to be disclosed, giving the dates or approximate dates covered by each) <input type="checkbox"/> COPY OF HOSPITAL SUMMARY <input type="checkbox"/> COPY OF OUTPATIENT TREATMENT NOTE(S) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (Specify) Copy of Veteran's IWRP, IEAP, Military Services information, civilian employment information, pertinent work restrictions, VA disability rating %.			
PURPOSE(S) OR NEED FOR WHICH THE INFORMATION IS TO BE USED BY INDIVIDUAL TO WHOM INFORMATION IS TO BE RELEASED To assist the Veteran and the Department of Veterans Affairs with Rehabilitation and employment services to the veteran.			
NOTE: ADDITIONAL ITEMS OF INFORMATION DESIRED MAY BE LISTED ON THE BACK OF THIS FORM			
AUTHORIZATION: I certify that this request has been made freely, voluntarily and without coercion and that the information given above is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that I will receive a copy of this form after I sign it. I may revoke this authorization, in writing, at any time except to the extent that action has already been taken to comply with it. Written revocation is effective upon receipt by the Release of Information Unit at the facility housing the records. Redisclosure of my medical records by those receiving the above authorized information may be accomplished without my further written authorization and may no longer be protected. Without my express revocation, the authorization will automatically expire: (1) upon satisfaction of the need for disclosure; (2) on _____ (date supplied by patient); (3) under the following condition(s): This authorization expires 5 years from the date of signature or end of rehabilitation services, whichever occurs first.			
I understand that the VA health care practitioner's opinions and statements are not official VA decisions regarding whether I will receive other VA benefits or, if I receive VA benefits, their amount. They may, however, be considered with other evidence when these decisions are made at a VA Regional Office that specializes in benefit decisions.			
DATE	SIGNATURE OF PATIENT OR PERSON AUTHORIZED TO SIGN FOR PATIENT (Attach authority to sign, e.g., POA)		
FOR VA USE ONLY			
IMPRINT PATIENT DATA CARD (or enter Name, Address, Social Security Number)		TYPE AND EXTENT OF MATERIAL RELEASED	
DATE RELEASED		RELEASED BY	

Appendix E Common Terminology

Case Management: Case management is a process. In this process, there is one case manager (VRC/CP) and one plan of action. The veteran and the case manager (VRC/CP) develop this plan with input from other knowledgeable persons. The ultimate goal is the achievement of the Chapter 31 veteran's suitable employment goals. There can be other individuals or agencies that act as service providers assisting the veteran and the case manager (VRC) with specific issues or barriers. It is imperative that everyone working with the veteran has an understanding of, and is in agreement with, the goals of the veteran. A collaborative approach and use of the whole person concept is imperative.

Case Manager (Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) / Counseling Psychologist (CP): The case manager (VRC/CP) is the focal point for a veteran during the rehabilitation process. The case manager (VRC/CP) provides direct services only in those areas he/she has expertise. The veterans are referred to other individuals or agencies in the case manager's (VRC's/CP's) network for additional specific services. The VR&E designates the primary case manager for a Vocational Rehabilitation Chapter 31 veteran; generally it is the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) or Counseling Psychologist (CP). The Local Veterans' Employment Representative/Veterans with disabilities' Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP/OSCC/staff) serves as a resource for information and services related to the labor market, job placement preparation and individualized job development.

Central Point of Contact: The primary function of the SA central point of contact is to serve as a liaison between the SA, VR&E staff and the DVET. In some states the central point of contact may also be the Intensive Services Coordinator and may be responsible for assigning individual Chapter 31 veterans to a specific job developer, providing follow-up services, and collecting and compiling data to be shared among agencies. The central point of contact should be involved at the state level in problem identification and issues requiring problem resolution that may arise between the agencies. The responsibilities of the position vary from state to state.

Discontinued: This term refers to the VR&E Chapter 31 participants who are discontinued from the VR&E program by the VRC/CP for a variety of reasons. The termination should be documented and communicated to the SA staff assigned.

Entered Employment: Entered employment is when a veteran has become employed either by job placement (result of a referral from the Job Service) or by obtained employment (secured by the veteran after contact with the Job Service). Entered employment is not necessarily considered suitable employment for VR&E Rehabilitation purposes. The SA staff cannot deny a qualified veteran a

job referral when he/ she requests to be referred to a specific job opening. Entered employment may be an interim position for income maintenance until a suitable job is found or while the veteran is in training. SA staff should document pertinent information about the job (why and how the veteran secured the position) then convey this information in writing/e-mail to the VRC or EC. The job search process should continue until suitable employment is found.

Individualized Employment Assistance Plan (IEAP): The IEAP is written by the VRC/CP when the veteran is considered employable and is, at minimum, 60 days from job seeking. The plan takes into account the most current and projected labor market information and defines the vocational goal. The plan can include acquiring tools the veteran may need in his/ her job search, information about employer incentives, or identification of the need for short term training. IEAP goals may be incorporated in an IWRP.

Individualized Job Development: Individualized job development is the process for securing employment for the individual that fits his/her background, training and interests and does not aggravate an existing disability. Numerous resources are used when providing individualized job development services, job listings at the Job Service, AJB, local employer hot lines, cold calls to employers, etc. Individualized job development may also include:

- (1) Preparing a veteran for job interviews;
- (2) Negotiating with an employer to hire a veteran for an existing position
- (3) Negotiating with an employer to create a position that currently does not exist;
- (4) Negotiating with an employer to hire a veteran into a position which exists in the company, but for which there is not a current opening.

Individualized Written Rehabilitation Plan (IWRP): The Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan outlines rehabilitation services including, if appropriate, training to assist veterans to become employable. The plan takes into account the veteran's transferable skills, limitations due to disability, functional capacity, test results, work experience, education, military experience and interests. Analysis of this data and the most current and projected labor market information form the basis of the plan.

Job Ready: Job ready refers to veterans who are determined to be ready, willing and able to participate in job development activities, but may in fact have issues or barriers to employment such as limited transportation, child care needs, etc.

Labor Market Information (LMI): Labor market information is systematized data, produced on a regular basis, about employment, unemployment, jobs and workers. In the vocational rehabilitation realm, it encompasses more than just what jobs exist today in a particular area. It involves educated and informed predictions about current and future demands for workers in an occupation for the purpose of preparing someone for employment in that occupation. Giving a positive report on an occupation or vocational area, based only on the availability of current jobs does not serve a veteran well. The trends going on within the occupation must be examined and physical demands of jobs must be identified.

Out-stationed: This is a term that applies to a DVOP specialist located at a VR&E operation, or another suitable location, to provide services to VR&E veterans. Depending on the organizational structure within a state, the out-stationed DVOP may be responsible to perform any or all of the following duties; central point of contact, assigning cases to other individual DVOP/OSCC staff, being involved from the initial assessment of a veteran through suitable job placement, appropriate follow-up, etc.

Referred: Referred is a term used to describe the status of job ready veterans that are sent to a local DVOP/One Stop Career Center to receive employment services.

Registered: Registered refers to Chapter 31 veterans that are referred to a DVOP specialist/OSCC staff who enroll in the State Workforce Agency's data collection system.

Rehabilitated: Rehabilitated refers to a Chapter 31 veteran who has entered and maintained suitable employment for at least 60 days. Follow-up contact should be made by the assigned DVOP/OSCC staff within one week of placement, then at 30 days, and again at 60 days. The results of the follow-up contacts with the employer and the employee should be documented and communicated to the VR&E staff.

Suitable Employment: Suitable employment is a job that the VR&E counselor has determined is consistent with the veteran's interests, aptitude and abilities, does not aggravate the veteran's disability and the veteran has maintained the job for the minimum of 60 days. The VA VRC will make the determination as to whether or not a job placement is considered to be suitable, based on the rehabilitation plan and consistent with the limitations of the disability. If the job is not suitable, the case is left open with the VRC until a suitable placement is found. If the veteran declines further services from VR&E, the DVOP/OSCC staff continues to work with the veteran as needed.

Appendix F Acronyms

The following acronyms are used throughout the Technical Assistance Guide:

CM	Case Manager
CP	Counseling Psychologist
DVET	Director for Veterans' Employment and Training
DVOP	Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (Specialist)
EC	Employment Coordinator
GAO	Government Accountability Office
IEAP	Individual Employment Assistance Plan
ISC	Intensive Services Coordinator
IWRP	Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan
LMI	Labor Market Information
LVER	Local Veterans' Employment Representative
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NVTI	National Veterans' Training Institute
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
OJT	On-the-Job Training
OSCC	One-Stop Career Center
RLL	REALifelines
SSN	Social Security Number
SA	State Workforce Agency
SCD	Service-Connected Disabled (veteran)
TAG	Technical Assistance Guide
USC	United States Code
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs
VARO	Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office
VETS	Veterans' Employment and Training Service
VOPAR	VETS Operations and Program Activity Report

VPL	Veterans' Program Letter
VRC	Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
VR&E	Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment
VR&EO	Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Officer
WRIS	Wage Record Interchange System
CWINRS	VR&E Corporate Case Management System

Appendix G

Demonstration Project Participant Contact Information

Department of Veterans Affairs:

VA Primary:
Sean Burlile, VA Project Manager
Sean.Burlile@va.gov
202-461-9634

VA Secondary:
Susan Chung
Susan.Chung@va.gov
202.461.9515

Denver Regional Office

155 Van Gordon Street
Lakewood, CO 80228
Director: Janice Jacobs
VR&EO: Greg Bittle, (303)914-5540

Little Rock Regional Office

2200 Fort Roots Drive, Building 65
North Little Rock, AR 72114-1756
Director: Cheryl Rawls
VR&EO: Raymond Ortega, (501)370-3780

Manchester Regional Office

Norris Cotton Federal Building
275 Chestnut Street
Manchester, NH 03101
Director: Charles Woolford
VR&EO: Ruth Comeau, (603)222-5752 (1)

Montgomery Regional Office

345 Perry Hill Road
Montgomery, AL 36109
Director: Ricardo Randle
VR&EO: Vacant, (334)396-1986 ext 11

Oakland Regional Office

1301 Clay Street, Rm. 1300 North
Oakland, CA 94612
Director: Lynn Flint
VR&EO: Joe Warner, (510)637-6215

Philadelphia Regional Office

5000 Wissahickon Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19101
Director: Thomas Lastowka
VR&EO: Kristine Kuehnle, (215) 842-2000, ext. 4107

St. Louis Regional Office

400 South, 18th Street
St. Louis, MO 63103
Director: Dave Unterwagner
VR&EO: Gerald Bacon, (314) 552-9345

St. Petersburg Regional Office

9500 Bay Pines Boulevard
St. Petersburg, FL 33708
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 1437
St. Petersburg, FL 33731
Director: Barry Baker
VR&EO: Margarita Cocker, (727) 319-7935

U.S. Department of Labor/VETS:

VETS Primary:
Jovita Martinez-DOL Project Manager
Martinez.Jovita@DOL.GOV
(303) 844-1175

VETS Secondary:
Miguel Hernandez
Hernandez.miguel@dol.gov
(727) 324-2847

State Workforce Agencies:

Colorado:

Colorado Department of Labor & Employment
633 17th Street, Suite 700
Denver, CO 80202

Joyce Johnson, Director Field Operations
Tim Amthor, State Veterans Coordinator
Curtis Johnson, DVOP
155 Van Gordon
Lakewood, CO 80228

Arkansas:

Arkansas Department of Workforce Services
P.O. Box #2 Capitol Mall
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Mr. Artee Williams, Director
Rex Platt, State Veterans Coordinator
Arkansas Department of Workforce

New Hampshire:

New Hampshire Employment Security
32 South Main Street
Concord, NH 03301-4857

Commissioner Richard S. Brothers
Doris Lachance, Chief, Employment Services Bureau

Alabama:

Department of Industrial Relations
649 Monroe Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36131

Thomas Surtees, Director
Gregory Niel, State Veterans Coordinator
Robert Brantley, ES Program Director

David Pittman, DVOP
787 Ross Clark Circle
Dothan, Alabama 36303

California:

Oakland Workforce Agency
Joe Morales
2901 50th Street
Sacramento, CA 95817.

State Veterans Coordinator:
Jay Mcdowell, DVOP
VRC Oakland
1301 Clay St 11th Floor
Oakland CA 94601

Pennsylvania:

Department of Labor and Industry
7th & Forster Streets
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Christine Enright, Director, Bureau Workforce Partnership
Billy G. Lanham, Chief, Special Programs and Projects Section
12th Floor, L&I Building

Missouri:

Division of Workforce Development
421 East Dunklin Street
PO Box 1087
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1087

Dawn Busick, Director
Rodney Henry, Veterans Coordinator

Florida:

Agency for Workforce Innovation
Suite 100 Caldwell Building
107 E. Madison Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Monesia T. Brown, Director
Lois Scott, One-Stop Support Manager
Shawn Forehand, Veterans' Program Coordinator

Appendix H Chapter 31 Tracking Report

VARO	Last Name	First Name	ID Number	Carry In	OEF / OIF Veteran	Other Program Participant	VRC / EC Name	Employment Goal	Date Referred to SA	DVOP or SA Staff Assigned	Date Referred by SA	# Days Referral to Registration	Date Entered Suitable Employment	Employer	Job Title	Hourly Wage	# Days Registration to Employment	Monitored for 60 Days After Employment	Date Case Closed	Closure Reason	NOTES / COMMENTS	
023					y	1	Shroyer	Paralegal	3/21/2008	Longyear	9/15/2008	178										
023							Shroyer	HVAC Tech	4/8/2008	Wright	9/16/2008	161										
023							Chung	HealthCare	4/8/2008	Longyear	9/15/2008	160										
023						1	Chung	Administrative	4/15/2008	Longyear	9/16/2008	154										
023							Chung	Computer	4/15/2008	Longyear	7/31/2008	107										
023							Shroyer	Administration	4/15/2008	Wright	7/21/2008	97										
023							Shroyer	Administration	4/15/2008	Wright	8/12/2008	119										
023					Y		Shroyer	HR Director	4/24/2008	Wright	8/27/2008	125										
023							Chung	Sales Rep	4/24/2008	Longyear	8/29/2008	127										
023							Shroyer	Healthcare Adm	5/5/2008	Longyear	7/31/2008	87										
023							Shroyer	Business Mgmt	5/12/2008	Longyear	7/21/2008	70										
023							Shroyer	Aviation Tech	6/5/2008	Longyear	8/12/2008	68										
023						1	Chung	Business Mgmt	6/19/2008	Wright	8/27/2008	69										
023							Shroyer	Education	7/1/2008	Wright	8/29/2008	59	10/27/2008	Keiser College	Teacher	\$17.24	59			E		
023							Shroyer	PC Support	7/1/2008	Longyear	8/27/2008	57										
023							Chung	Administration	7/1/2008	Longyear	8/29/2008	59	8/18/2008	VAMC-Miami	Administration	\$23.20	-11	Y	11/18/2008	R		
023							Chung	Drafting	7/21/2008	Longyear	7/31/2008	10										
023							Chung	Medical Coder	7/25/2008	Wright	8/13/2008	19										
023							Chung	Sales Rep	7/31/2008	Longyear	8/26/2008	26	10/28/2008	Social Security Admin	Analyst	\$15.45	63			E		
023							Chung	Administrative	7/21/2008	Wright	8/28/2008	38										
023							Shroyer	Administrative	8/12/2008	Longyear	8/26/2008	14										
023							Shroyer	Administrator	8/21/2008	Longyear	9/8/2008	18	11/12/2008	VAMC-W Palm Bch	Administrator	\$22.50	65			R		
023						1	Shroyer	Teacher	8/28/2008	Longyear	9/5/2008	8										
023				Y		1	Shroyer	Administrator	4/3/2008	Longyear	9/9/2008	159										
023							Shroyer	Office Manager	4/14/2008	Longyear	9/4/2008	143										
023							Shroyer	Business Mgmt	4/10/2008	Longyear	9/9/2008	152										
023							Shroyer	HVAC Tech	4/3/2008	Wright	9/4/2008	154	9/3/2008	VHA-Bay Pines	Technician	\$27.62	-1	Y	11/3/2008	R		
024							Chung	Paralegal	4/24/2008	Langley	8/20/2008	118										
024							Chung	Management	4/17/2008	Langley	8/13/2008	118										
024							Williams	Broadcasting	4/29/2008	Hernandez	8/19/2008	106										
024							Williams	Culinary Arts	4/9/2008	Hernandez	8/26/2008	139										
024							Williams	A&P Mechanic	4/9/2008	Hernandez	7/31/2008	113										
024							Williams	Paralegal	4/16/2008	Hernandez	4/30/2008	14										
024				Y			Williams	HVAC Tech	4/24/2008	Hernandez	4/24/2008	0	9/10/2008	Hillel Community Day	Teacher	\$19.36	139	Y	11/10/2008	E		
024						1	Chung	HealthCare	4/17/2008	Hernandez	4/17/2008	0	7/15/2008	Hertz Corp.	Sales Rep	\$15.90	89	Y	9/15/2008	E		
024							Williams	Administrative	4/24/2008	Hernandez	8/13/2008	111										
024							Chung	Computer	4/29/2008	Langley	8/26/2008	119										
024							Chung	Administration	4/30/2008	Langley	8/28/2008	120										
024							Williams	Administration	4/10/2008	Langley	8/26/2008	138	9/11/2008	Komatsu Latin Americ	Administration	\$20.75	16	Y	11/11/2008	R		
024							Williams	HR Director	4/10/2008	Langley	8/13/2008	125										
024							Williams	Sales Rep	4/24/2008	Langley	8/20/2008	118										
024							Chung	Healthcare Adm	4/30/2008	Hernandez	9/8/2008	131										
024							Chung	Business Mgmt	4/24/2008	Langley	9/5/2008	134										
024						1	Goff	Aviation Tech	4/17/2008	Langley	9/9/2008	145										
024							Goff	Business Mgmt	4/23/2008	Langley	9/4/2008	134										
024				Y			Chung	Education	4/3/2008	Langley	5/21/2008	48										
024							Chung	PC Support	4/28/2008	Langley	6/3/2008	36										
024							Goff	Administration	4/24/2008	Hernandez	6/10/2008	47										
024							Chung	Drafting	4/16/2008	Langley	6/11/2008	56										
024							Chung	Medical Coder	5/14/2008	Langley	6/16/2008	33										
024					Y		Goff	Sales Rep.	5/15/2008	Langley	6/25/2008	41										
024							Goff	Administrative	5/15/2008	Hecker	6/30/2008	46										
024							Goff	Administrative	5/15/2008	Green	7/7/2008	53										
025							Goff	Administrator	5/25/2008	Hecker	7/8/2008	44	7/27/2008	Keiser College	Office Manager	\$27.12	19	Y	9/27/2008	R		
025							Williams	Teacher	5/21/2008	Green	7/9/2008	49										
025							Goff	Administrator	6/3/2008	Green	7/9/2008	36	8/18/2008	VAMC-Miami	Manager	\$11.20	40	Y	10/18/2008	R		
025							Goff	Office Manager	6/10/2008	Green	7/10/2008	30										
025				y			Williams	Business Mgmt	6/11/2008	Hecker	7/14/2008	33										

Appendix I VR&E 5-Tracks to Employment

Reemployment with Previous Employer

This track is designed for those individuals separating from active duty or in the National Guard or Reserves who are now returning to work for their previous employer. A Rehabilitation Plan with the goal of reemployment may include job accommodations, job modification, case management, coordination and linkages of services with VA health care, reemployment rights advice, work adjustment services and consultation with the employer. The DVET is also available to assist with any employer issues that may arise regarding the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

Rapid Access to Employment

Rapid access to employment is targeted to those individuals who have expressed a desire to seek employment soon after separation or who already have the necessary skills to be competitive in the job market in an appropriate occupation. A Rehabilitation Plan with the goal of immediate employment may include job readiness preparation, resume development, job search assistance, development of employment resources, job accommodations and post employment follow-up.

Self-Employment

Self-employment is targeted to individuals who have limited access to traditional employment, need flexible work schedules, or who need a more accommodating work environment due to their disabling conditions or other life circumstances. A Rehabilitation Plan with the goal of self-employment may provide for analysis of the viability of a business concept; development of business plan; training in the operation of small businesses, marketing, and financial assistance and guidance on obtaining adequate resources to implement the business plan.

Employment through Long Term Services

Long term services are targeted to individuals who need specialized training and/or education to obtain and maintain suitable employment. A Rehabilitation Plan with the goal of training and/or education may provide for on-the-job training (OJT), apprenticeship, internship, job shadowing, work monitoring, work-study, public-private job partnering, or higher education sufficient to obtain suitable entry-level employment.

Independent Living Services

Independent living services are targeted to individuals who may not be able to work right now and need rehabilitation services to live more independently. A Rehabilitation Plan with the goal of independent living may include assistive technology, independent living skills training, connection to community-based support services, or assistance in obtaining and maintaining volunteer work.

Appendix J

NATIONAL MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

BETWEEN:

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICE (VR&E)

AND

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE (VETS)

Washington, DC

A. PURPOSE

The Department of Veterans Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service and the Department of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) concur that the successful readjustment of disabled veterans into the civilian workforce is a mutual responsibility and concern. In order to advance, improve, and expand the employment opportunities for veterans with disabilities, both parties of this MOU commit themselves to active cooperation and coordination in meeting the goals set forth in this agreement.

B. AUTHORITY

This agreement is authorized in accordance with 38 U.S.C. §4102A(b)(3).

C. TERMS

VETS and VR&E personnel in their respective agencies, as well as those employed with their federally funded agencies and programs, shall work together to maximize the provided services that will lead to the ultimate goal of successful long term career placement for disabled veterans. Both parties agree to provide a seamless employment transition that will eliminate all duplication, fragmentation, or delay in delivery of needed employment services.

VETS and VR&E understand that the primary purpose of the VA's Vocational Rehabilitation Program is to assist disabled veterans to obtain meaningful employment that is within the limitations imposed by the

disability (s) and consistent with the veteran's abilities, aptitudes, and interests.

Beginning as early as possible in the rehabilitation process, including orientation and initial labor market analysis, VETS and VR&E agree to improve employment outcomes for all vocational rehabilitation program participants by enabling local representatives from both parties to take a team approach to job development and placement activities. The team approach will ensure that quality employment services will be provided to all VR&E participants. Members of each employment team will include the VR&E Case Manager, VA Employment Coordinator/Employment Specialist, a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist or Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER), and the VR&E participant. All VR&E participants will be advised of the benefits of registering for employment assistance and will be encouraged to register with their State Workforce Agency. To promote these efforts, the participants and local representatives from both organizations are required to establish and maintain an effective mechanism for referral and service delivery.

1. Data sharing activities between all interested parties is critical to a successful partnership. VETS and VR&E will share information and coordinate objectives, as appropriate, to carry out and support the goals of this agreement. The information exchanged shall be used to facilitate employment services to participating veterans. VETS and VR&E will share information and data accessed from Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Records and other administrative wage records as may be available to each agency, in strict compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (privacy Act). All information from interviews, counseling, testing, and assessment will be used by each agency under documented consent from participants, also in accordance with the Privacy Act, and other applicable regulations. Each agency agrees to provide practical and appropriate safeguards for participant information on vocational rehabilitation clients, in accordance with applicable regulations and laws, including: The Americans with Disabilities act of 1990; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

2. Both VETS and VR&E agree to establish and maintain management information systems that will enable accurate yearly reporting. These reports will include: total number of VR&E program participants; total

number of VR&E participants referred to DVOPs and of those the total number registered for employment services; total number of participants who entered suitable employment; and, total number of participants who maintained suitable employment for 180 days or more. Both parties agree to establish performance measures.

3. VETS and VR&E agree to establish three joint work groups with the goal of improving the quality of employment services and suitable job placements for veterans with disabilities. Each work group will have an established list of roles and responsibilities that will direct their efforts. The work groups are:

- Performance Measures for Assessment of Partnership Program Results
- National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI): Curriculum Design
- Joint Data Collection, Analysis, and Reports

Delivery of a high quality and results driven workforce program requires continual process improvement, evaluation, and identification of best practices. VETS and VR&E agree to consult with recognized experts in the field, on the design, process, service-delivery, and outcome measures for the joint workforce partnership activities.

In evaluating performance of their respective staff members, managers from both organizations will consider documented effectiveness of partnership activities between VR&E staff and DVOP and/or LVER staff. VETS and VR&E will establish and monitor common goals and measures within each Memorandums of Agreement executed with state partners. Corrective action will be taken when goals are not met.

VETS and VR&E will encourage local and, where appropriate, national participation in joint training workshops, meetings, and seminars for the exchange of professional knowledge. In addition, both parties agree to fully engage in discussions on emerging placement issues and strategies, and will, on a continuing basis, promote the suitable employment of disabled veterans.

4. VETS will appoint a Point of Contact (POC) for the provision of employment services. This POC will work closely with the VR&E staff located in each VA Regional Office's service area.

Upon agreement between VETS, its state partners and VR&E, where and when appropriate, and to the extent feasible, a DVOP or other designated individual will be co-located or otherwise provide itinerant coverage to VR&E participants to facilitate the registration of disabled veterans with the appropriate service provider.

D. EFFECT OF AGREEMENT

This agreement does not in itself authorize the expenditure or reimbursement of any funds. Nothing in the agreement shall obligate the parties to expend appropriations or other monies, or to enter into any contract or other obligation.

This agreement is an internal Government agreement and is not intended to confer any right upon any private person.

This agreement will be executed in full compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974.

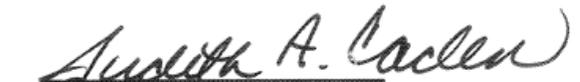
Further, this agreement shall not be interpreted to limit, supersede, or otherwise affect either party's normal operations or decisions in carrying out its mission, or statutory or regulatory duties. This agreement does not restrict the parties from participating in similar activities or arrangements with other entities.

E. TERMINATION

This agreement shall become effective upon the date of signature of the underlined parties and shall remain in effect until terminated by either party with 30 days written notice.

Signed in Washington, DC this 3rd day of October, 2005.


CHARLES S. CICOLELLA
Assistant Secretary for
Veterans' Employment and
Training
Department of Labor


JUDITH A. CADEN
Director
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment
Veterans Benefits Administration
Department of Veterans Affairs

Appendix K Technical Assistance Team Contact Information

Please contact the following individuals if you have questions or require assistance concerning the implementation or execution of the program:

Team 1: The team noted below provides coverage to the following States: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

Mike Hernandez: Hernandez.miguel@dol.gov
(727) 324-2847; FAX: (727) 324-2855 (coversheet required)

Jovita Martinez: martinez.jovita@dol.gov
(303) 844-1175; FAX: (303) 844-1179

Ronald Shroyer: ronald.shroyer@va.gov
(412) 395-6217

Joe Warner: joe.warner@va.gov
(510) 637-6215; FAX: (510) 637-6119 (call voice number to notify of incoming fax)

Team 2: This team provides coverage to the following States: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Virgin Islands, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Gerald Bacon: Gerald.bacon@va.gov
(314) 552-9345; FAX: (314)-552-9767

Sean Burlile: sean.burlile@va.gov
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Susan Chung: susan.chung@va.gov
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Rick Gray: gray.richard@dol.gov
(802) 828-2057; FAX: (802)-828-2069

Randy Wright: wright.randall@dol.gov
(717) 787-5835; FAX: (717)-783-2631