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Chapter 2  
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

2.01 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the organizational structure of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), from the Office of the Secretary of VA to the Regional Offices (RO). It outlines the functions of each office, as well as the major duties associated with each member of the management, technical and support teams.

2.02 VA Overview

a. Mission of VA

The mission of VA is to fulfill President Lincoln’s promise, “To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan” by serving and honoring the men and women who are America’s Veterans.

b. Organizational Structure of VA

The following table describes the major functional areas that comprise VA:

Functional Area	Description
Office of the Secretary	Appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, and is responsible for administering benefit programs for Veterans, their families and their survivors.
Office of the General Counsel	Interprets all laws pertaining to VA and provides necessary legal services. Serves as chief legal officer on all matters of law, litigation and legislation.
Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)	Administers benefits programs for transitioning Servicemembers, Veterans, their survivors and dependents. The major benefits include compensation, pension, burial allowance, vocational rehabilitation, education and training assistance, home loan guarantees and insurance coverage.

<p>Veterans Health Administration (VHA)</p>	<p>Serves the Veteran population by providing inpatient and outpatient care, nursing home care, domiciliary residences, home health services, adult day care, residential care and respite care programs. Operates and maintains a nationwide network of VA Medical Centers, research centers, outpatient clinics, Vet Centers and information resource centers.</p>
<p>National Cemetery Administration (NCA)</p>	<p>Provides burial space for Veterans and their eligible family members; maintains national cemeteries; marks Veterans' graves with headstones, markers, and medallions; and administers grants for establishing or expanding state and tribal government Veteran cemeteries.</p>
<p>Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA)</p>	<p>Makes final decision on appeals made to the Secretary by a Veteran regarding decisions made by VA staff on VA benefits and services.</p>
<p>Office of the Inspector General (OIG)</p>	<p>Responsible for conducting and supervising audits and investigations; recommending policies designed to promote economy and efficiency; preventing and detecting waste, fraud and abuse; and ensuring the Secretary and the Congress are informed of problems and deficiencies in VA programs and operations, and the need for corrective actions.</p>
<p>Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) Liaison</p>	<p>Facilitates positive and effective working relationships with Veterans service organizations.</p>
<p>Other Elements</p>	<p>In addition to the functional areas listed above, VA is also comprised of the Board of Contract Appeals; the Center for Minority Veterans; the Center for Women Veterans; the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization; the Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication; and the Office of Regulation, Policy and Management.</p>

2.03 VBA Overview

a. Mission of VBA

The mission of VBA, in partnership with VHA and NCA, is to provide benefits and services to Veterans and their families in a responsive, timely and

compassionate manner in recognition of their service to the nation.

b. Organizational Structure of VBA

VBA administers a wide variety of benefit programs authorized by Congress. The following chart outlines the management structure of VBA:

Title	Function
Under Secretary for Benefits (USB)	Acts as principal advisor to the Secretary on all Veterans' benefits issues and is responsible for the administration of all VBA activities.
Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits	Assists the USB as advisor to the Secretary on all Veterans' benefits issues and in the administration of all VBA activities.
Deputy Under Secretary for Field Operations	Has day-to-day supervisory responsibility for regional offices throughout the United States, Puerto Rico and the Philippines.
Deputy Under Secretary for Disability Assistance	Has oversight responsibility for five of VBA's core business lines: Compensation Service, Pension Service, Insurance Service, Benefits Assistance Service, and Fiduciary Service.
Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity	Has oversight responsibility of the Education, Loan Guaranty, and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Services.
Chief of Staff	Responsible for the analysis of all VBA proposals, policy, program, and budgetary issues. Recommends appropriate courses of action to the USB, and has oversight of three directors: The Director of Office Management, the Director of Office Resource Management, and the Director of Office of Performance Analysis and Integrity.
Director, Office of Management	Has oversight of five staff offices: the Office of Human Resources; Office of Diversity Management and Equal Employment Opportunity; Office of Facilities, Access and Administration; Office of Employee Development and Training; and Acquisition Staff. Each of these staff offices manages, coordinates and integrates programs that support both VA Central Office and RO operations.

<p>Director, Office of Strategic Planning (OSP)</p>	<p>Responsible for directing and coordinating VBA’s transformation and innovation efforts while providing program and project management. Offices within the OSP include: Office of Business Process Integration, Veterans Benefits Management System Program Office, Veterans Relationship Management Program Office, and Chapter 33 Long-Term Solution Program Management Office.</p>
<p>Director, Office of Resource Management (ORM)</p>	<p>Provides leadership and top-level management expertise by effectively obtaining and accounting for financial and other resources, and by effectively planning and measuring results.</p>
<p>Director, Office of Performance Analysis and Integrity (PA&amp;I)</p>	<p>Develops and maintains the Enterprise Data Warehouse to enable the generation of recurring and ad hoc reports in response to VBA decision-making and business needs.</p>

c. Program Elements of VBA

VBA has several business lines referred to as Services, which are administered at VA Central Office. The following table lists their responsibilities:

Business Line	Responsibilities
<p>Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&amp;E) Service</p>	<p>Administers programs for Veterans with service-connected disabilities to help them achieve maximum independence in daily living and, to the extent feasible, prepare for, obtain, and maintain suitable employment. Suitable employment is defined as an occupation that matches a Veteran’s pattern of skills, abilities and interests, and is within his/her physical, cognitive and psychological capabilities.</p> <p>Also administers counseling and evaluation services provided to individuals eligible for other VA education programs.</p>
<p>Education Service</p>	<p>Administers education or training benefit programs for eligible Veterans, Servicemembers, Reservists and dependents.</p>

<p>Loan Guaranty (LGY) Service</p>	<p>Administers a home loan guaranty program that provides use of the Government’s guaranty on loans in lieu of the substantial down payment and other investment safeguards applicable to conventional mortgage transactions. Also oversees the Specially Adapted Housing grant program.</p> <p>VA loan guaranties may be made to Servicemembers, Veterans, Reservists and unmarried surviving spouses.</p>
<p>Compensation Service</p>	<p>Administers the following programs: Disability Compensation, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Automobile Allowance/Adaptive Equipment and Clothing Allowance.</p>
<p>Pension and Fiduciary Service</p>	<p>Pension and Fiduciary Service administers Disability Pension, and Death Pension of beneficiaries in the Fiduciary programs. Beneficiaries are classified as minors, Veterans and other adults. The latter group includes helpless adults, surviving spouses, dependent parents and some insurance payees.</p>
<p>Insurance Service</p>	<p>Insurance Service administers VA life insurance programs. Programs provide insurance benefits for Veterans and Servicemembers who may not be able to get insurance from private companies because of the extra risks involved in military service or a service-connected disability.</p>

d. Organizational Chart of VBA

See Appendix W for the VBA Organizational Chart.

2.04 VR&E Service Overview

a. Mission of VR&E Service

The mission of VR&E Service in VA Central Office is to plan, organize, and administer the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program within the VBA. VR&E Service formulates policies and procedures and has oversight responsibility to ensure field staff provides timely high-quality services.

b. Organizational Structure of VR&E Service

The following table describes the organizational structure of VR&E Service in the VA Central Office.

Title	Function
Director, VR&E Service	Responsible for management of VR&E Service and administration of VR&E program activities.
Deputy Director, VR&E Service	Assists the Director in the management of VR&E Service and administration of VR&E program activities; directly supervises the Executive Assistant, Assistant Director for Rehabilitation Services, Assistant Director for Program and Project Management, and the Assistant Director of Oversight and Outreach
Assistant Director for Rehabilitation Services	Responsible for management of the VR&E program through the supervision of Supervisor of Rehabilitation Services, Supervisor of Policy and Procedures, Senior Policy Analyst, and Independent Living Coordinator.
Assistant Director for Program and Project Management	Responsible for the management of the VR&E program through the supervision of Supervisor for Program and Project Management, and Supervisor of Training.
Assistant Director for Oversight and Outreach	Responsible for the management of the VR&E program through the development and administration of outreach programs and initiatives, and the supervision of the Supervisor of Employment and Outreach, and Quality Assurance Officer.
Executive Assistant	Responsible for management of the budget and support of VR&E Service operations.

c. Operational Elements of VR&E Service

VR&E Service has three main operational elements:

1. Rehabilitation Services
2. Program and Project Management
3. Oversight and Outreach

d. Operational Elements of Rehabilitation Services

The main functions of Rehabilitation Services include:

1. Responding to inquiries from Veterans, field staff, congressional offices, the GAO, OIG and other stakeholders
  2. Conduct Administrative Reviews and develop Advisory Opinions
  3. Developing legislative proposals and regulations
  4. Developing and disseminating policies and initiatives related to employment services, independent living services and vocational rehabilitation
- e. Operational Elements of Program and Project Management

The main functions of Program and Project Management are the following:

1. Developing and presenting training for VR&E managers, counselors, Employment Coordinators (ECs), and other stakeholders
  2. Coordinating and overseeing VR&E contracting activities
  3. Coordinating information technology product development and enhancements
  4. Designing, developing, and distributing performance management reports to field offices, Office of Field Operations, Congress and other stakeholders
  5. Project management of national projects and initiatives
- f. Operational Elements of Oversight and Outreach

The main functions of Oversight and Outreach are the following:

1. Conducting quality assurance reviews and site surveys of VR&E field offices
2. Developing and administering outreach programs and initiatives
3. Managing employer accounts to create employment opportunities for Veterans

g. Organizational Chart of VR&E Service

See Appendix U for the VR&E Service Organizational Chart at VA Central Office.

2.05 VA Regional Office (VARO) Overview

a. Mission of VARO

The mission of each VARO is to provide benefits and services to Veterans and their families within their jurisdiction in a responsive, timely and compassionate manner. The VAROs report to the Office of Field Operations through their respective Area Offices.

b. Organizational Structure of VARO

A VARO is comprised of six divisions that carry out the functions of VBA. Generally, a regional office includes the following:

1. Veterans Service Center
2. Finance Division
3. Support Services Division
4. Human Resources
5. Loan Guaranty Division
6. Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Division

NOTE: At some locations the support functions, such as human resources, may be shared with a VA medical center. At some VAROs, divisions such as human resources, support services and finance are consolidated. In other areas, certain functions such as Loan Guaranty are consolidated with other offices. Some offices have a Regional Processing Office (RPO) for processing of education claims, and an insurance processing center.

2.06 VR&E Division Overview

a. Mission of VR&E Division

The mission of the VR&E Division in each VARO is to provide benefits and services in a responsive, timely and compassionate manner to Veterans with

service-connected disabilities and individuals eligible for counseling under other VA benefit programs.

b. Organizational Structure of VR&E Division

The positions within a VR&E Division may vary depending on factors, such as workload and available resources. VR&E Division staff may include the following:

Title	Function
VR&E Officer	Manages all VR&E Division activities, including providing direction to VR&E staff, and oversight of VR&E operations.
Assistant VR&E Officer	Assists the VR&E Officer in the management of all VR&E Division activities, including providing direction to VR&E staff and oversight of VR&E operations.
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC)	Provides the full range of rehabilitation and counseling services, including all services leading to suitable employment or independent living, such as comprehensive evaluations, entitlement determinations, vocational counseling, rehabilitation planning, job placement and case management.
Employment Coordinator (EC)	Provides job-ready services and coordinates with employers to assist Veterans with service-connected disabilities and other entitled Veterans in their pursuit of suitable employment.

VR&E Divisions may also employ individuals who perform various support functions, including program support clerks or technicians, program or management analysts and vocational rehabilitation technicians.