Veteran Readiness and Employment: Chapter 31

What is the Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) program?

The VR&E program is authorized under Title 38, U.S. Code, Chapter 31. It is referred to as the Chapter 31 program. It assists entitled Veterans with service-connected disabilities and an employment handicap to prepare for, obtain, and maintain a job. It also helps entitled transitioning Servicemembers.

If you are a Servicemember or Veteran with a service-connected disability and not currently able to work, VR&E also offers services to help you live as independently as possible.

Basic period of eligibility

There is a 12-year basic period of eligibility for VR&E services. The period begins on the latter of the following dates:

- Date of separation from active duty
- Date you were first notified of a service-connected disability rating

Who is entitled to receive VR&E services?

Active-duty Servicemembers who:

- Expect to receive an honorable discharge
- Obtain a VA memorandum rating of 20 percent or more
- Are participating in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) or have an injury or illness that prevents them from performing military duties
Servicemembers participating in IDES are presumed entitled
• Are determined by VR&E to need vocational rehabilitation services

Veterans who:

• Have received an honorable or other than dishonorable discharge
• Have a VA service-connected disability rating of:
  o 10 percent with a serious employment handicap, or
  o 20 percent or more with an employment handicap
• Are determined by VR&E to need rehabilitation services

How is entitlement established?

You are entitled to services if:

• You have a 20 percent service-connected disability AND
• You have an employment handicap

If your service-connected disability is only 10 percent, you must have a serious employment handicap to be eligible.

A Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) will work with you to determine entitlement. The evaluation will:

• Assess your interests, aptitudes and abilities
• Assess your service-connected disability and your ability to hold a job
• Include vocational exploration activities and goal development
  o Used to determine suitable employment and maximize independent living
• Explore labor markets and wage information
• Select a VR&E program track
• Develop an individualized rehabilitation plan
What is a Rehabilitation Plan?

This plan provides a detailed outline of VR&E program services. It is individualized to meet the needs of the Servicemember or Veteran. The plan is a signed agreement between the recipient and VA. The following service delivery options may be included in a rehabilitation plan:

- Re-employment
- Rapid employment services for new employment
- Self-employment
- Employment through long-term services
- Independent living services

What other benefits may be provided?

After the plan is enacted, the VRC will provide ongoing counseling, assistance and coordination of services. These include:

- Tutorial assistance
- Job-seeking skills training
- Medical and dental referrals to the Veterans Health Administration
- Adjustment counseling
- Payment of training allowance
- Other services required to help achieve a career and live as independently as possible

How can you apply?

- Apply online: https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/about/feature?feature=vocational-rehabilitation-and-employment
- Fill out VA Form 28-1900, “Disabled Veterans Application for Vocational Rehabilitation” (You can find the form at https://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-28-1900-are.pdf. Mail the form to your closest VA Regional Office.)
For more information:

- Connect with your local VA Regional Office to speak with a VR&E representative. You can find your closest VA Regional Office here: [https://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/offices.asp](https://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/offices.asp)
- Call 800-827-1000