

Chapter 4
FIVE TRACKS TO EMPLOYMENT

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Chapter 4 FIVE TRACKS TO EMPLOYMENT

4.01 Introduction

Five Tracks to Employment provides greater emphasis on exploring employment options early in the rehabilitation planning process, greater informed choice for the Veteran regarding occupational and employment options, faster access to employment for Veterans who have identifiable and transferable skills for direct placement into suitable employment and an option for Veterans who are not able to work, but need assistance to lead a more independent life. This chapter identifies and defines each of the tracks, and suggests the type of rehabilitation plan to use with each track. The chapter also contains statutory and regulatory provisions governing Five Tracks to Employment.

4.02 References and Resources

Laws:	38 United States Code (U.S.C.) 3107 38 U.S.C. 3108 38 U.S.C. 3120 38 U.S.C. 4301 – 4335, The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA)
Websites:	www.osc.gov/userra.htm www.vetsuccess.gov www.sba.gov/ www.score.org/
VA Forms (VAF):	VAF 10-0103, Home Improvement and Structural Alterations (HISA) VAF 26-4555, Specially Adapted Housing (SAH)

4.03 Employment Resources for Track Selection

The transition from comprehensive evaluation to planning and provision of rehabilitation services includes the use of the following resources to facilitate track selection:

a. Triage

Triage is used to evaluate a Veteran's job placement priorities, arrive at a preliminary track selection, identify appropriate resources, and coordinate services with other Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) team members.

b. Job Resource Lab (JRL)

The JRL features state-of-the-art career services designed to help Veterans with disabilities prepare and distribute their resumes, and use the Internet to research employment opportunities. These resources include:

- Career exploration
- Job readiness (resume development)
- Job search capabilities

The JRL expands a Veteran's ability to actively prepare for a vocational rehabilitation program and carry out the essential functions of job readiness to achieve suitable employment.

c. State Veterans' Employment Representatives

The Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist and/or Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) provide local and/or regional labor market information; act as liaison with other state and local resources; evaluate the Veteran's job readiness, job seeking and interviewing skills; conduct job development and job placement activities; and advise on reemployment rights under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA). USERRA is a federal law intended to ensure that persons who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, Reserves, National Guard or other uniformed services are not disadvantaged in their civilian careers because of their service; and are promptly reemployed in their civilian jobs upon their return from duty.

d. Employment Coordinator (EC)

VR&E ECs provide employment assistance to job-ready Veterans with disabilities; oversee the activities of job readiness, to include job seeking services, job development/job placement, and labor market information gathering; develop employer partnerships; network with other agencies; and consult with other VR&E staff members.

e. VetSuccess.gov

VetSuccess.gov is a specialized job bank that provides access to millions of jobs, job resource tools, a resume builder, interviewing skills training, and career resources. It also enables users to access the following information:

- VetSuccess program overview

- Orientation to Five Tracks to Employment
- VR&E application procedures
- Online self-help
- Small business resources
- Vocational educational counseling
- Employer and other working partnerships
- Expert vocational and career advice
- Employment resources
- Integrated Labor Market Information
- Links to other VA benefits and services

4.04 Five Tracks to Employment Defined

The Five Tracks to Employment are as follows:

a. Re-Employment

This employment track is for Veterans who served on active military service or in the National Guard or Reserves, and are now returning to employers for whom they worked prior to going on active duty. Protected under USERRA, after the Veteran completes a comprehensive initial evaluation and selects this track, services may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Job abilities assessment
- Special needs and accommodations assessment
- Recommendation and provision of necessary assistive technologies
- Short-term training or certification
- Development of reassignment options if necessary
- Medical/psychological treatment referrals
- Follow-up with employer and Veteran to ensure maintenance of employment
- Personalized case management support
- Job accommodations
- Job modifications
- Work adjustment assistance

- Consultation with employer
- b. Rapid Access to Employment

This employment track is for Veterans who express a desire to obtain employment as soon as possible and already have the necessary skills to qualify for competitive employment in a suitable career. After completion of a comprehensive initial evaluation and selection of this track, services may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Job skills assessment
- Veteran preference documentation
- Employment readiness preparation (resume writing and interview skills training)
- Short-term training or certification
- Self-directed/assisted job search
- Use of specialized employment resources/career centers
- Career counseling
- Medical/psychological treatment referrals
- Post-employment consultation and assistance

- c. Employment Through Long-Term Services

This employment track is targeted to Veterans who need long-term services, such as remedial or refresher courses, specialized training, and/or post-secondary education, to obtain and maintain suitable employment. After completion of a comprehensive initial evaluation and selection of this track, services may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Traditional vocational assessment
- Specialized testing and evaluation
- Career guidance
- Labor market analysis
- Medical/psychological treatment referrals
- Career development and skills acquisition
- Training and education (tuition, fees, books, tools, supplies)

- Employment assistance
 - Post-employment follow-up and evaluation
 - Apprenticeships
 - On-the-job training
 - Non-paid work experience
 - Subsistence allowance
- d. Self-Employment

This employment track is targeted to Veterans who have limited access to traditional employment, need flexible work schedules, or need a more accommodating work environment due to their disabling conditions or other life circumstances. To ensure success, Veterans must have the interest, financial resources and aptitude to pursue self-employment. After completion of a comprehensive initial evaluation and selection of this track, services are determined by the severity of the disability and limitations to employability.

- e. Independent Living

This track is for Veterans where the pursuit of a vocational goal is determined not currently reasonably feasible due to the effects of their disability, and services are needed to improve their independence in daily living. After completion of a comprehensive initial evaluation and selection of this track, services may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Independent living needs assessment
- Housing referral assistance
- Assistance with filling out applications for grants, such as Specially Adapted Housing (SAH), VAF 26-4555, and/or Home Improvement and Structural Alterations (HISA), VAF 10-0103 (See Appendix O, VA Forms, for information on how to access VA forms)
- Home health aide (referral from physician required)
- Transportation
- Assistive technology
- Independent living skills training
- Medical/psychological treatment referrals

- Linkage to community services
- Follow up to consider employment services, and/or redevelopment of a vocational goal

4.05 Plans Based on Track Selection

Following track selection, further assessment of specific needs is conducted, a rehabilitation plan is developed, and services leading to rehabilitation are provided. A determination regarding the current reasonable feasibility for achieving a vocational goal must be made before track selection.

Use the following information to determine which rehabilitation plan to use with the selected track:

a. Re-Employment

The Re-Employment track utilizes an Individualized Written Rehabilitation Plan (IWRP) or a combined IWRP/Individualized Employment Assistance Plan (IEAP). For more information on how to develop rehabilitation plans for this track, see M28R.IV.C.5.

b. Rapid Access to Employment

The Rapid Access to Employment track utilizes an IWRP or a combined IWRP/IEAP. For more information on how to develop rehabilitation plans for this track, see M28R.IV.C.6.

c. Employment Through Long-Term Services

Develop an IWRP when providing employment through long-term services. For more information on how to develop an IWRP for this track, see M28R.IV.C.7.

d. Self-Employment

The Self-Employment track utilizes an IWRP or a combined IWRP/IEAP. For more information on how to develop rehabilitation plans for this track, see M28R.IV.C.8.

e. Independent Living

Develop an Individualized Independent Living Plan (IILP) when providing IL services. For more information on how to develop an IL plan, see M28R.IV.C.9.