Chapter 3
SITE VISIT PROGRAM

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3.01   Introduction

The VR&E Site Visit is an oversight function conducted in the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Division in each Regional Office (RO) to ensure provision of services to Veterans and their dependents is consistent with laws which are set forth in regulations, manuals, circulars, program policies and other directives.

VR&E Service conducts site visits to evaluate the following:

- Program management and operational processes for accuracy

- Consistency in service delivery, program integrity and vulnerabilities to waste, fraud and abuse of benefits

- Best practices, strengths and areas for improvement

- Implementation of systematic analyses of operations

- Other concerns or issues of special interest

The site visit focuses on assurance of appropriate rehabilitation outcomes and accuracy, enhancement of program integrity, improvement of quality in service delivery and consistency of field practices.

3.02   References and Resources

Law: Public Law 106-117, The Veterans Millennium Health Care
                      and Benefits Act
                      38 United States Code (U.S.C.) 3697

Regulations: 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 21.60

Websites: www.arnet.gov/far

3.03   Site Visit Process

a. Objectives

The VR&E site visit is an oversight function, which aims to accomplish the following:

- Identify program deficit trends.

- Identify good management practices and effective local procedures that are appropriate for consideration for nationwide adoption.

- Provide clarifications, recommendations and assistance to ROs in improving and/or correcting identified deficiencies.

- Develop a self-assessment tool for each office using the site visit model.

- Ensure consistency in ROs' processes and practices.

- Foster effective relationships with the local offices.

b. Composition of the Site Visit Team

Staff members of the VR&E Systematic Technical Accuracy Review (STAR) Team conduct the site visits. Responsibilities of the Team also include conducting STAR Reviews and administering the Regional Office QA Review program.

Additional members such as VR&E Service staff or VR&E Officers (VREOs) may be added for special site visits, as the need arises.

c. Site Visit Schedule

Approximately twenty ROs are scheduled for site visits each fiscal year. An established selection process using specific criteria is used to identify offices with best practices or problematic issues. Selection is also based on the time of the most recent visit and a transition to new VR&E Officer.

The schedule for each fiscal year is posted on the VR&E Intranet website.

d. Preparatory Work Prior to the Site Visit

Prior to the site visit, data is collected and analyzed to determine potential areas of concern and particular interest. Results from other audits conducted by other offices are also reviewed. This approach allows the Site Visit Team to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the office's program management and service delivery.

1. Data Sources

Available and most recent, generally within the past 12 month period, data elements are reviewed. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Scores for the performance measures and management data

- National and local Quality Assurance (QA) review results

- Corporate Case Management Information System (Corporate WINRS [CWINRS]) data, including contracting information, voucher processing, Financial Management System (FMS) data and case management information

- Combined Assessment Program (CAP) results conducted by the Office of Inspector General (OIG)

- Financial Management Review results conducted by the Financial Management Assurance Service (FMAS)

- Quarterly Management Briefings

- Systematic Analysis of Operations (SAO) reports

- Resource Allocation Model

- Monthly Operations Reports

- VR&E Intranet Reports

- QA Reports

2. Case Reviews

   (a) Purpose of Case Reviews

   Case reviews are conducted to closely examine specific areas that are not included in the QA reviews and to further validate the office's QA findings. The reviews also verify that the processes and procedures are within the specified regulatory guidelines.

   (b) Case Selection

   Cases are selected and reviewed prior to the site visit. The case selection is based on random sampling and results of data analyses with potentially out-of-line situations, such as cases maintained in a specific status for extended periods, and/or particularly low scores resulting from the QA reviews.

   Additional case reviews may be conducted on-site based on potential findings for deficiency.

   (c) Requesting Cases for Review

Cases for review are requested through a formal notification via email from the QA mailbox to the RO's mailbox about thirty days prior to the scheduled site visit.

3.04   Site Visit Implementation

a.   Duration

The site visit is normally conducted within five workdays.

b.   Entrance Briefing

The visit commences with an entrance briefing on the first day of the site visit with the RO management, which includes the Director, Assistant Director, VREO and Assistant VREO.

c.   Significant Findings

Any findings of major significance are discussed with the Director and the VREO at the time they are identified.

d.   Meeting with RO and VR&E Staff Members

Meetings are scheduled with the RO staff such as the Information Security Officer (ISO), Support Services, Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) representative (if assigned in the office), Contract Officer, etc. The purpose of the meetings is to obtain information regarding the RO's overall processes and operations.

Additionally, a segment of the site visit is reserved for a meeting with the VR&E staff members for a question-and-answer session and/or training session.

e.   Exit Briefing

The visit concludes with an exit briefing with the RO management, VR&E Service, Office of Field Operation (OFO) and Area Office on preliminary findings. A written report may not be provided at that time.

f.   Reporting Method

The VR&E Service develops an Executive Summary and a Final Site Visit Report. The protocol for issuing these reports is as follows:

1.   Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is submitted to the Office of the Under Secretary

within ten workdays of completion of the site visit. The Executive Summary provides a synopsis of findings and potential recommendations.

2. Final Survey

The Final Survey Report is submitted to the Office of the Under Secretary and OFO within thirty calendar days of completion of the site visit. The final report provides details of findings and the required action items for areas that need improvement.

g. RO Response to Action Items

The RO is provided thirty calendar days from the time of receipt of the final report to respond to all action items. The RO response will include a plan for each action item and specific dates of completion. Responses are submitted in a memorandum through the RO Director to the Director of VR&E Service.

A follow-up contact with the RO will be conducted to ensure that all required action items are completed three months after the notification date of the RO's response to the action items.

h. Site Visit Findings

Best practices identified during the site visits are communicated quarterly to all ROs via email from the QA mailbox to the RO's mailbox.

When recurring issues from different offices are found during the site visits, VR&E Service may issue policy clarification letters to all ROs.

3.05   Scope of the Site Visit

a. Program Management

Program Management is assessed for the overall effectiveness of the VR&E Division management and operations. The review focuses on the following:

- Internal controls

- Fiscal and contracting activities

- Physical location and accessibility

- Workload management and staffing

- National and local QA review results

- Information Technology (IT) support

b. Service Delivery

This area is assessed for the office's overall processes and procedures for delivering quality and timely services to the Veterans. The review focuses on the following:

- Entitlement determinations

- Case management services

- Fiscal payments

- Appellate services

- Case closures

Case reviews are also conducted for this section to verify that appropriate processes and procedures are being followed in the administration of the Chapter 31 benefits.

3.06   Site Visit Protocol

The Site Visit Protocol provides the specific areas for review, data sources and methodology.

a. Program Management

1. VR&E Division Overview

This section specifies the period for the scheduled visit and identifies the Site Visit team members. It also includes a brief work-related background of the RO Director and Assistant Director, which are routinely obtained from the Director's Trip pack and personal interviews.

2. Facility

This section focuses on the following:

- Physical layout of the office

- Conduciveness for counseling and physical accessibility to Veterans

- Protection of the Veterans' Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

- Counseling/Evaluation/Rehabilitation (CER) folders.

Review Elements	Method
Is the office accessible to individuals with disabilities?	Walk through the office and observe its physical layout.
Are parking spaces available for Veterans?	Check for available for public and handicap parking.
Does the office provide adequate privacy for counseling?	Check if rooms used for counseling provide privacy.
Is the division organized to facilitate functional activities and reception of clients?	Observe if there is adequate space provided for receiving visitors.
Is the staff provided with personal computers and equipment necessary to perform their particular jobs?	Check employee work areas.
Are sensitive records securely protected?	Check sensitive records are filed in locked cabinets or drawers.
Is there a testing room? If yes, is the room equipped adequately?	Check testing room.
Is the Job Resource Lab (JRL) equipped adequately and used effectively?	Check JRL and Log-in sheet and discuss use of the JRL with the VREO and Employment Coordinator (EC).

3. Staffing

This topic focuses on the division's organizational structure, utilization of staffing resources and workload management.

Data Sources: VR&E Intranet Report (National Workload Summary, RO Workload Summary); CWINRS Workload Summary Report; CWINRS Reports, Division Organizational Chart, Personnel Records (Performance Standards; Position Descriptions)

Review Elements	Method
Is the size and organization of staff consistent with the division workload?	Review the division's organizational chart for staff configuration and strength.
Is there adequate administrative support to accomplish all of the program activities?	Compare station staffing with other ROs of comparable size and composition.

Review Elements	Method
Are position descriptions and performance standards properly developed and maintained?	Review performance standards and position descriptions on file for each staff.
Are there Counseling Psychologists (CP) assigned to the office? If yes, how is the workload distributed between the CPs and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRC)?	Discuss caseload distribution with the VREO.
If VRCs and CPs manage specialized caseloads, how does this impact division workload management?	Discuss workload management with VREO.
What are the responsibilities for the EC in the office?	Discuss job duties with EC and with VREO.
Is there a DVOP representative assigned to the office?	Discuss job functions with the DVOP representative and the VREO.
Are employment services contracted?	Discuss contracting activities for employment services with the VREO

4. Out-Based Sites

    This section focuses on the division's out-based offices including geographic locations and supervision of out-based staff members.

Review Elements	Method
Describe the out-based office.	Visit or discuss office locations with VREO.
Are out-based sites strategically located to insure all Veterans are reached?	Review Geographic Estimate Report for Veteran population within the area(s).
Are out-based sites properly staffed?	Discuss out-based staffing with VREO.
Are out-based offices provided with necessary support tools and equipment, e.g., internet access, T1-line/VPN account to connect to CWINRS/BDN, etc.?	Interview VREO and out-based staff regarding equipment support and resources.

Review Elements	Method
Is implementation of policies and procedures consistent with those implemented in the regional office?	Interview out-based staff and VREO regarding consistencies in implementation of policies and procedures. Discuss participation in staff training.
Does an effective and ongoing relationship exist between the out-based staff and management and staff in the RO?	Interview out-based and RO staff and VREO regarding participation in staff meetings and out-based requests for support and assistance.

5. Training

This section focuses on staff competency to ensure that ongoing training and development is provided to the staff engaged in providing rehabilitation services to the Veterans.

Review Elements	Method
Is the training plan for the current fiscal year completed?	Review the division's training plan and schedule. Obtain copies of the training agenda.
Does the office conduct regular training sessions? How often?	Review the division's training plan and schedule.
Does the division's training plan include professional and technical staff development on issues, such as policy and procedural changes and implementation?	Review the division's training plan and schedule for inclusion of policy changes and implementation.
How do the out-based staff members participate in the division training?	Discuss division training with VREO and out-based staff.
Does the division have adequate access to training rooms and equipment?	Examine training room(s) and equipment.
How are new staff members trained? Is there a formalized training program for new staff members?	Discuss with VREO and interview new employees.
Are professional training activities encouraged, and training opportunities provided to the staff?	Discuss developmental activities with staff members and VREO.

Review Elements	Method
Is a Talent Management System (TMS) Coordinator assigned in the Division to monitor all training requirements are completed? How is non-compliance to training managed?	Discuss assigned duties with VREO and TMS Coordinator, if any.

6. Quality

This section focuses on quality of rehabilitation services as measured by the local and national Quality Reviews.

Data Sources: VR&E QA Website, QA Review Results Analysis (Attachment: QA Corrective Actions Report), Maximum Rehabilitation Gain (MRG) Review Results Analysis for each session for Fiscal Year To Date (FYTD) and previous Fiscal Year (FY).

Review Elements	Method
Are local QA reviews conducted regularly?	Review Intranet website for Review of Quality.
Are local QA Reviews properly entered into the QA website?	Review FYTD and previous FY local validation reports.
Are QA review results used to assess program deficient trends?	Review management reports to determine if QA review results are analyzed and utilized.
Are corrective actions completed when identified during the local and national QA reviews?	Review files for the corrective actions and RO Corrective Action Report.
Is training conducted for significant or recurring issues found during the local and national QA reviews?	Review the division's training plan and schedule.

7. Internal Control

This section focuses on program and data integrity and oversight of the division via reports and briefings. It examines how information in these reports and briefings are utilized in the division's strategic planning.

Data Source: Management Reports

Review Elements	Method
Are reports provided to the RO Director to assess how well the office is performing?	Review all management reports from last fiscal year to present.
Are counter measures for deficiencies implemented to identify opportunities for improvement?	Review all management reports from last fiscal year to present.
Are actions taken for improvement, such as resource management, staff and training development, etc., when deficiencies are found?	Review all management reports from last fiscal year to present.
Are source data for the SAO reports maintained so that a separate review would result in consistent findings?	Review source data for the SAO.
Are system access authorities appropriately established outlining the appropriate commands and levels of access for each staff member?	Review VAF 20-8824; VAF 20-8824e; Interview ISO.
Are levels of access authority outlined in the OFO Letter 20F-12-04 followed?	Review VAF 20-8824; VAF 20-8824e; Interview ISO. Detail the levels of authority for each staff member.
Does Information Resource Management (IRM) provide support for user training and computer applications for the division?	Discuss with VREO and IRM
Is Cyber-Security training and other required training provided to staff?	Review training plan and discuss with VREO.
Are BDN and CWINRS Security guidelines followed?	Discuss with VREO and ISO.
What action is taken when the Violation Report is received in the division?	Discuss with VREO and ISO.

8. Fiscal Activities

   This section focuses on the division's fiscal activities and the fiscal oversight provided within and outside the division.

   Data Sources: Purchase Card Statement Files, CWINRS Finance Tab

Review Elements	Method
Who has been issued purchase cards? What is the single purchase and monthly limit?	Interview Purchase Card Coordinator.
Are purchase cards appropriately utilized according to the set guidelines?	Review purchase card statements and signatures.
Who is the purchase card Approving Official? Purchase Card Coordinator?	Interview VREO and Finance Personnel.
Are purchase card transactions properly documented and readily available for audit?	Review purchase card log sheets
Are purchase card statements reconciled timely by the card holder and approved by the Approving Official?	Review purchase card statement file.
Are cost thresholds effectively implemented and requests for increase appropriately made?	Review Cost Threshold Statement and requests for increase.
Are purchase card transactions appropriately documented in CWINRS?	Review CWINRS Finance Tab.
Who processes Chapter 31 invoices from training facilities, contractors and other vendors for payment?	Interview VREO and appropriate staff.
Are invoices timely reviewed and approved for payment by the case managers?	Review invoices.
Are voucher payments properly documented in CWINRS and paid through FMS?	CWINRS Financial data.
Are Revolving Fund Loans (RFL), Employment Adjustment Allowances (EAA), retroactive induction and beneficiary travel payments processed timely and accurately?	Review CER Folders; RFL files, and CWINRS Finance Tab.
Is the record for all RFLs kept in a central file?	Review RFL file.
Are reasons and justifications for RFLs properly documented?	Review CER folders and RFL file.
Are subsistence allowance awards processed timely and accurately?	Review CER folders.

Review Elements	Method
Are purchases for Chapter 31 books, supplies and services appropriately justified and documented?	Review CER folders and CWINRS Finance Tab.
Are computer purchases appropriately made, justified and documented in the CER Folder and in CWINRS?	Review CER folders and CWINRS Finance Tab.
Is there signed documentation to verify that supplies and equipment were received by the Veteran?	Review CER folders and CWINRS Finance Tab.
What audit procedures are in place to provide oversight to purchase card and voucher processing activities?	Review vouchers and purchase card statements. Discuss with VREO and Finance personnel.

9. Contracting Activities

This topic focuses on review of contracting activities, such as contract agreements, disbursement and insuring station's adherence to contracting guidelines to include the VetSuccess Contracts.

Data Sources: Contracts, Letters of Agreement; Delegations of Authority; Contracting Officer Representative (COR) Certificates of Completion; Centralized Administrative Accounting Transaction System (CAATS) Reports; Contract Files; Web-Enabled Approval Management System (WEAMS); Electronic Contract Management System (eCMS)

Review Elements	Method
Are contracts or letters of agreement appropriately developed?	Review division contract files for implementation of the contracts and agreement. The files include the VetSuccess contracts and local contracts such as tutorial, Special Employer Incentive, etc.

Review Elements	Method
Is a master contract file maintained for each contract with the appropriate documentations? • Executed contract to include signed Standard Form 1449, solicitation and price list(s) • Copies of Authorizations for Services (referrals) • COR Nomination to National CO • COR Delegation Letter • Quality Assurance Reports • Past Performance Reports • Trade-off documentation when higher cost contractor is utilized • Market research • Sole Source Justification • Memo authorizing option renewal • Bilaterally and unilaterally signed modifications • Copy of Contractor's Insurance Certificate • Contractor's invoices or a notice in the file of their electronic location • Supporting documents, such as Contractor's proposals and requests to Contracting Officer to process modifications	Review the division's contract file for implementation of agreement in accordance with the VR&E Contract file Maintenance.
Are contracts and agreements executed timely and reflective of current fees and services?	Select representative sample of cases and review to assure provided services are in compliance with the terms of the contract.

Review Elements	Method
Do employees have appropriate COR Training?	Review COR certificates of completion, and delegations of authority for employees involved with contracting activities.
Are contracted services provided in compliance with the terms and conditions of the contract?	Review contract files to determine if provided services are in compliance with the terms of the contract and reviews of completed work are properly documented.
How many and what types of contractual services are currently in place for the VetSuccess contracts and local contracts?	Review contract files to determine the number and types of services procured.
Are payments made within the established budget limits?	Review CWINRS and contract files to determine if payments are within the established budget limits.
Are contracts accurately obligated and paid in CWINRS?	Review contract files to verify accuracy of obligation and payments are entered in CWINRS.
Are contracting activities properly documented in CWINRS and CER folder to avoid duplication of services such as contracting CH36 services, etc.?	Review CWINRS/CER folders.
Are contractors paid in accordance with the Prompt Payment Act? If there is disparate payment, explain.	Review Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 52.232-25 Prompt Payment Act at www.arnet.gov/far.
Do the Contracting Officer and COR provide appropriate guidance and oversight in compliance with VR&E guidance?	Review CWINRS and contract files.
Is the station complying with the procedures for requesting waivers for local procurements over $25,000?	Review CWINRS and contract files to ensure compliance appropriate guidelines.

Review Elements	Method
Are facilities and contractors appropriately designated in CWINRS and WEAMS?	Review CWINRS and contract files to ensure compliance with appropriate guidelines.
Are appropriate cost codes and Budget Object Codes (BOC) being utilized?	Review CWINRS and contract files to ensure compliance with appropriate guidelines.
Are task orders, referrals, payment tracking in CWINRS and payment processing with CAATS being completed per the contract and Finance requirements?	Review CWINRS and contract files to ensure compliance with contract and Finance requirements.
Are contracts over $3,000 entered into the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS), and contracts over $25,000 entered into eCMS?	In accordance with VBA letter 20-09-23, Maintenance of Acquisition Files.

10. Working Relationships

This topic focuses on VR&E Division's effective working relationship within the RO and other federal and state agencies.

Review Elements	Method
Is a working relationship established with the Veterans Service Organizations (VSO), such as, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, etc.?	Interview VREO and VSO representatives. Review CER folders to see if VSOs are notified of adverse actions taken.
Is a working relationship established with the VA Medical Center?	Interview VREO and case managers.
Is a working relationship established with the Veterans Service Center (VSC)?	Interview VREO and VSC Manager. Review Chapter 31 application processing procedures.
Is a working relationship established with the state?	Interview VREO to evaluate relationship with State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, State Employment Service, etc.

Review Element	Method
Is there an existing Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Department of Labor and VR&E?	Review MOA. Interview the DVOP representative and/or Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER).
Is a working relationship established with other federal agencies, e.g., Social Security Administration and other agencies, such as Small Business Administration (SBA), Service corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)?	Interview VREO and review MOA file, if there is any.
Are working relationships established with employers?	Interview EC. Review CER folders.
Are working relationships established with other private sector entities, e.g. Faith-based initiatives, Helmets to Hardhats, etc.	Interview EC. Review CER folders.

b. Service Delivery

The section examines each individual office's processes or procedures for delivery of quality and timely services to the Veterans. This is conducted through the selected case reviews.

Note: The case reviews for the site visit are not conducted in the same manner as the STAR Reviews performed in the QA Program. These reviews primarily focus on examining the office's processes and procedures.

1. Motivation and Outreach Activities

This topic focuses on VR&E Division's implementation of motivation and outreach activities.

Data Sources: VETSNET Operational Report (VOR), Share, CWINRS

Review Elements	Method
Are there military installations in the RO jurisdiction? Are Transition Assistance Program (TAP) activities conducted within the office's jurisdiction?	Discuss the TAP activities conducted within the RO jurisdiction.
Does the division monitor the pending 810 diary codes in the VOR monthly? Are the 810 codes cleared timely in Share when an application is submitted prior to the control date?	Discuss the process with VREO and the staff member responsible for updating the VOR.
Are the Operation Enduring Freedom/ Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) and Operation New Dawn (OND) processing given priority in the office?	Discuss with VREO the completion of application processing and case management for Veterans designated as OEF/OIF/OND.
Is the Coming Home to Work (CHTW) program set up to provide transition assistance to hospitalized Servicemembers at military treatment facilities and VA medical centers?	Discuss with VREO the activities and processes associated with the CHTW program.
Are requests for educational and vocational counseling services under Chapter 36, processed timely? Are counseling services conducted by VR&E staff or by VA contractors? If, provided by contractors, describe the level of quality of services.	Discuss with VREO the counseling services. Review the Chapter 36 counseling folders
Is there a VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) representative assigned from this office? Describe the responsibilities and location(s) of the campus.	Discuss with VREO and the VSOC representative the designated responsibilities.
What is the division's no-show rate?	Calculate the no-show rate. Discuss contact/scheduling procedures with VREO and responsible staff members.
Are efforts made to contact Veterans to remind them of counseling or initial evaluation appointments?	Review CER folders and review scheduling practices.

Review Elements	Method
Are specialized outreach efforts conducted for transitioning and hospitalized Servicemembers through the following activities? • Post Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA) • Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) • Integrated Disability Evaluation • System (IDES) • VSOC	Discuss with VREO each activity and associated VR&E role and responsibilities.
Are attempts for follow-up contacts made to Veterans in Interrupted (INT) status? Are these contacts made timely, ongoing, and documented in Veterans' counseling file?	Review cases in INT status.

2. Eligibility Determination

This section focuses on vocational rehabilitation claims processing to ensure timeliness in processing.

Data Sources: Intranet Reports, CWINRS

Review Elements	Method
Is the automated General Eligibility Determination (GED) processing performed within the VR&E division?	Discuss Ch31 claims processing with responsible staff member. Review CWINRS.
Are the CEST and CAUT commands appropriately assigned to staff members?	Interview VR&E Officer, ISO.
What is the average number of days to process an application using GED?	Review Intranet Report (End Product [EP] 719). Review CER folders
What is the average number of days to process an application for a memorandum rating?	Review Intranet Report (EP 095, 295, 719).
If there is a delay in the application processing, in what area does the delay occur, e.g., VR&E, Service Center, etc.?	CER Folder review, CWINRS intranet reports

3. Initial Evaluation

This section focuses on initial evaluation process to ensure timeliness and appropriateness in determination of entitlement.

Data Source: Monthly Operations Report (MOR), CER folders

Review Elements	Method
What is the average number of days for clearing pending issue 719?	Review number of days to notification of entitlement determination from current MOR.
Is Veteran notified when the entitlement determination is made?	Review cases with completed entitlement determination.
Are entitlement determinations correct?	Review cases with completed entitlement determination.
Are entitlement determinations adequately documented?	Review cases with completed entitlement determination.
Is a Transferable Work Skills analysis used in the evaluation?	Review cases with completed entitlement determination.
Is an assessment of the Veteran's interests, abilities and aptitudes conducted?	Review cases with completed entitlement determination.

4. Extended Evaluation

This topic focuses on the process to determine feasibility of Veteran to achieve a vocational goal.

Data Source: CER folders

Review Elements	Method
Are the reasons for utilizing extended evaluation properly justified?	Review cases in Extended Evaluation (EE) status.
Is the reason for decision concerning feasibility properly explained and well documented?	Review cases in EE status.
Are appropriate extended evaluation services prescribed to determine whether it is reasonably feasible for Veteran to pursue a vocational goal?	Review cases in EE status.

Review Elements	Method
Are appropriate Extended Evaluation services outlined in the Individualized Extended Evaluation Plan (IEEP)?	Review cases in EE status.
Are Veterans receiving Extended Evaluation services appropriately supervised?	Review cases in EE status.

5. Rehabilitation Planning

This section focuses on the processes the case manager utilizes to develop appropriate individualized plan of services with a vocational goal.

Data Source: CER folders

Review Elements	Method
Is information adequately developed to plan rehabilitation services to meet the Veteran's needs?	Review cases in Rehabilitation To the point of Employability (RTE) status; discuss local processes in developing a rehabilitation plan.
Does the plan outline all services necessary to meet the Veteran's needs as identified in the initial evaluation?	Review cases in RTE status.
Has vocational exploration occurred?	Review cases in RTE status.
Are problem areas, such as, medical, financial needs, accommodations and academic deficiencies identified and addressed?	Review cases in RTE status.
Are plans redeveloped as the needs of the Veteran change and when there is a shift in the economy?	Discuss with EC and case managers to verify use of local labor market trends in developing rehabilitation plan.
Are rehabilitation plans developed to correspond to the local labor market trends and forecasts?	Review cases in Job Ready (JR) status.
Is market analysis utilized in developing employment goals?	Review cases in RTE status.

6. Employment Services

    This section focuses on the process the case manager uses to determine Veterans' job readiness and to assist them in obtaining a suitable employment.

    Data Source: CER folders

Review Elements	Method
Is Individualized Employment Assistance Plan (IEAP) developed 60 days prior completion of objectives of the Individualized Written Rehabilitation Plan (IWRP)?	Review cases in JR status; discuss local processes in providing employment services.
Has the Veteran been appropriately determined to be job ready and placed into JR status timely?	Review cases in JR status.
Are monthly follow-up contacts made to determine Veteran's job search status and properly documented?	Review cases receiving employment services.
Are Veteran's job search activities documented?	Review cases in JR status.
What assistance does the EC provide in the job search process? The DVOP?	Review cases in JR status.
If Veteran is unable to obtain employment, is a need for additional services explored?	Review cases in JR status.
Is determination of suitability of employment determined before Veteran is declared rehabilitated	Review cases in JR status.
Are post-placement employment services provided to the Veteran?	Review cases in JR status.
Are the days to employment accurate?	Review cases in JR status.
What practices impact the days to employment?	Review cases in JR status.

7. Independent Living (IL) Services

This section focuses on the process the case manager utilizes to provide Veterans with services necessary to achieve independence in their daily living.

Data Sources: CER folders, MOR

Review Elements	Method
Are IL plans based on comprehensive IL needs assessments?	Review cases in IL status.
Are IL objectives measurable, observable and sustainable?	Review cases in IL status.
Are IL services efficiently and timely provided to meet the Veteran's needs?	Discuss local processes in providing IL services.
Are all psychological, medical and legal issues addressed in the evaluation when developing an IL plan? Review IL CER folders.	Review cases in IL status.
Is adequate supervision and oversight of IL cases being conducted?	Review cases in IL status.
Is station percentage of IL consistent with the national average?	Review Monthly Operations Report (MOR).

8. Appellate Services

This section focuses on the provision of due process to ensure that Veterans are provides with their appellate rights.

Data Sources: CER folders

Review Elements	Method
Are Veterans properly advised of adverse actions and their rights to appeal a decision?	Review cases in INT, Rehabilitated (REH) and Discontinued (DIS) statuses
Are appropriate due process procedures followed upon declaration of rehabilitation or discontinuance?	Review cases in REH and DIS status
Are statements of the case properly prepared and provided to Veterans?	Review Statement of the Case (SOC) files and associated CER folders.

Review Elements	Method
Are accredited Veterans Service Organizations appropriately informed of actions concerning decisions on Veterans claims?	Review CER folders.

9. Case Closures

This section focuses on procedures for placing cases in DIS status to ensure that the cases are closed appropriately.

Data Source: Current MOR

Review Elements	Method
What is the trend in days to close Applicant (APP) and Evaluation and Planning (EP) statuses?	Compare the trend in days with the national average.
What is the disallowance rate for failure to pursue a claim?	Compare the disallowance rate with the national average.
What is the disallowance rate for non-entitlement?	Compare the disallowance rate with the national average.
What is the trend in days to close cases from a plan of services? Are cases closed after 60 days of the due process period?	Determine if cases are closed within the 60-day period and identify cases that are out of line.

10. Case Status Development

This section focuses on timely and effective update in case statuses, specifically for cases in EP status, RTE status, INT status and JR status. This review is conducted to ensure that cases are maintained in the appropriate statuses and are monitored regularly.

Data Sources: Current MOR

Review Elements	Method
What is the percentage of the active workload in EP status?	Compare the percentage with the national average.
What is the average number of days of cases in EP status?	Compare the average with the national average.

Review Elements	Method
What is the percentage of cases in EP status that are over 365 days?	Compare the percentage with the national average. If the percentage appears to be out of line, determine the cause for the extended period.
What is the percentage of the active workload in INT status?	Compare the percentage with the national average.
What is the average number of days of cases in INT status?	Compare the average with the national average.
What is the percentage of cases in INT status over 365 days?	Compare the percentage with the national average. If the percentage appears to be out of line, determine the cause for the extended period.
What is the percentage of the active workload in JR status?	Compare the percentage with the national average.
What is the average number of days of cases in JR status?	Compare the average with the national average.
What is the percentage of cases in INT status over 18 months?	Compare the percentage with the national average. Review the cases for out-of-line situation.
What is the percentage of cases in RTE status that are not receiving subsistence allowance?	Compare the percentage with the national average.
What is the percentage of cases in RTE status that have not received subsistence allowance for over six months?	Determine if placement in RTE status is valid for these cases.

11. Information Technology (IT)

This section focuses on IT support for the VR&E database (e.g., Benefits Delivery Network [BDN] and CWINRS) to ensure appropriate and efficient update of Veterans records.

Data Sources: BDN, CWINRS

Review Elements	Method
Are Ch31 Master Records and CWINRS records properly established and maintained?	Select (#) cases and review BDN M35 screens and CWINRS data.
Is the number of cases in each case status in CWINRS consistent with BDN?	Compare number of cases in each status in BDN and in CWINRS.
Is the disallowance of claims for non-entitlement and failure to pursue appropriately processed in BDN?	Conduct CER Folder and BDN review of disallowed cases.
Is CWINRS accurately and timely updated?	Review CER Folders and CWINRS
Are case activities under different programs accurately and timely entered in CWINRS?	Review CER Folders and CWINRS

12. Requested Counseling

This section focuses on counseling services provided to Veterans or Servicemembers under the Chapter 36 program.

Data Sources: CWINRS – Active and archived Chapter 36 cases

Review Elements	Method
How many requested counseling cases have been completed in the past 12 months?	Review CWINRS for Ch36 cases completed with and without counseling within the 12 months.
How does the number of Ch36 applications for this office compare with the national average	Review CWINRS Workload Summary for Chapter 36 (Local and national).
Are counseling folders properly established for the Chapter 36 cases?	Review Ch36 folders.
Does the date stamped on VAF 28-8832, Education/Vocational Counseling Application, consistent with the Applicant date in CWINRS?	Review counseling folders and CWINRS for Chapter 36 cases.
Are counseling services provided by a contractor or a VR&E staff?	Discuss with VREO regarding the counseling process.

Review Elements	Method
Does the Ch36 folder contain the appropriate narrative report for counseling, if completed with counseling? Are contact narratives and services clearly documented?	Review Ch36 folders.
Are the Veterans or Servicemembers notified in writing of case closure?	Review Ch36 folders for a copy of the closure notification letter.

13. Vocational Rehabilitation Panel (VRP)

This section focuses on the organization and function of the VRP as required in 38 CFR 21.60.

Data Source: CWINRS Chapter 36 Workload Summary Report, VRP Files

Review Elements	Method
Has a VRP been established in the RO and appropriately staffed?	Review VRP files for delegation of authority of panel members.
Are issues presented to the panel for considerations appropriate, e.g., feasibility, assistance with rehabilitation planning?	Review VRP files for case referrals.
Are cases for review by panel accurately prepared and submitted?	Review VRP files for the requests for panel deliberation.
Are the panel's recommendations effectively utilized and considered by the staff?	Review VRP files for panel recommendations.
How often does the VRP meet?	Review VRP files for frequency of meetings and deliberations.
Are the Chapter Special Restorative Training (SRT) cases referred to the panel for assistance in developing a plan?	Review Chapter 35 cases with completed plans and the VRP files to determine if Chapter cases have been referred to the VRP.