7 Steps to:
Preparing FOR YOUR Next Mission

1.800.827.1000
If your service-connected disability (SCD) prevents you from continuing your former career, you may be entitled to receive Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VocRehab) benefits, including one-on-one support to help you identify and prepare for exciting new career opportunities. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRCs) and Employment Coordinators are ready to help you every step of the way.
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“Having a good counselor to reach out to occasionally ... and say, ‘How are you doing?’ It’s a good thing.”

— Joyce Gammelmo
Step 1. The Application

If you have an injury or illness related to or made worse by military service, you are eligible to apply for VocRehab benefits.

- Register for an account at www.eBenefits.va.gov.
- Click on “Apply for Benefits” near the top left of the page.
- Navigate to VA Form 28–1900.
- Fill out the form and click “submit.”

You can also download and print VA Form 28–1900 and mail it to your nearest VA Regional Office.

For Servicemembers: If you are ill or injured and have not yet received an SCD rating, follow the steps above but also submit VA Form 28–0588 along with any requested supporting documentation. VA will issue a temporary rating to facilitate your VocRehab application.

If you were referred to VocRehab by a Medical Evaluation Board or Physical Evaluation Board, you may already qualify.
Step 2. Letter of Eligibility

Once you’ve made your initial application, you will receive a letter confirming your eligibility and inviting you to attend an orientation session. If you are not eligible for services, you will receive a letter explaining why your eligibility was denied.
Step 3. Orientation

Your letter of eligibility will include an invitation to attend an orientation session at the nearest VA Regional Office. During this session, a counselor will provide an overview of VocRehab benefits and services, discuss time limits that may affect what benefits you are entitled to, explain how VocRehab determines entitlement on a case-by-case basis, and answer any general questions.

*Allow at least two hours for the orientation session.*
Step 4. Individual Assessment

Following the orientation, a counselor will work with you one-on-one to conduct an in-depth assessment of your interests, abilities, and aptitudes. The assessment process also includes a review of your service-connected disability and its impact on your career options, and an academic evaluation.

Following the assessment, your entitlement to benefits will be determined. VocRehab’s goal is to help Veterans with SCDs prepare for, find, and maintain suitable careers. If your SCD does not impair your ability to find and keep a suitable job, your counselor may refer you to another VA program. Each case is different; the only way to determine your entitlement is to apply.

*Assessments may take from two to five hours.*
Vocational exploration is an ongoing process by which you and your counselor find the appropriate program and structure to support your career goals. You will discuss the training programs, job opportunities, or Independent Living services that will best meet your needs. Your counselor will make suggestions and give you advice to help you make best use of your benefits.

By the end of this phase, you will have chosen a career path and defined the services you need to be successful in your career. All of the requirements needed to put your plan in action, including applications for school and jobs and research for special equipment, will be lined up.

*The vocational exploration process may include several follow-up meetings with your counselor.*
Step 6. The Rehabilitation Plan

Once you’ve completed the vocational exploration phase, you and your counselor will develop and sign off on a rehabilitation plan. Your rehabilitation plan is your individualized outline of the services, resources, and criteria that will be used to help you achieve your career or Independent Living goals.
Step 7. Preparing for Your Next Mission

You will continue to work with your counselor to accomplish the goals outlined in your rehabilitation plan. Your counselor will provide ongoing guidance and support to help you reach your career goals; coordinate services; and process payments for education, training, and equipment.
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