

Chapter 1
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT
(VR&E) MANUAL, M28R

- 1.01 Introduction
- 1.02 References and Resources
- 1.03 General Information on the M28R
 - a. VA Offices Affected
 - b. Benefits and Services Covered
 - c. Organization of the Manual
 - d. Authority of Decisions
 - e. Distribution of the M28R
 - f. Updates

Chapter 1
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1.01 Introduction

This chapter provides information on the organizational structure of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) manual, M28R. The M28R identifies the benefits and services available to participants of the VR&E program and provides procedural guidance on the delivery of these benefits and services. The procedures are based on statutory and regulatory guidance provided by the United States Code (U.S.C.) and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), as well as other relevant policy and procedures documents developed by VA and VR&E Service.

1.02 References and Resources

Laws: 38 U.S.C. Chapter 31

Regulations: 38 CFR Part 21

Websites: www.benefits.va.gov/gibill
<http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/>
<https://vaww.portal.va.gov/sites/VRWKM/pages/home.aspx>

1.03 General Information on the M28R

a. VA Offices Affected

The M28R applies to VA Regional Offices (RO), out-based locations within the jurisdiction of an RO and VA Medical Centers with RO activities, (VAMROC).

b. Benefits and Services Covered

The M28R provides operational procedures for administration of the VA VR&E program prescribed in law under Chapter 31. The manual also provides guidance on providing counseling for Veterans and their dependents utilizing the following educational benefit programs:

1. 38 U.S.C., Veterans Benefits

- Chapter 18, Benefits for Children of Vietnam Veterans and Certain Other Veterans
- Chapter 30, All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program

- Chapter 32, Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance
 - Chapter 33, Post 9/11 Educational Assistance
 - Chapter 35, Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance
 - Chapter 36, Administration of Educational Benefits
2. 10 U.S.C., Armed Forces
- Chapter 1606, Educational Assistance for Members of Selected Reserve
 - Chapter 1607, Reserve Educational Assistance Program

Information regarding the above educational benefits (except Chapter 31) may be obtained at www.benefits.va.gov/gibill

c. Organization of the Manual

This manual contains eight Parts:

- Part I, Overview
- Part II, Office Administration
- Part III, Program Administration
- Part IV, Evaluation, Entitlement and Rehabilitation Planning
- Part V, Case Management
- Part VI, Employment Services
- Part VII, Other Benefits Case Management
- Part VIII, Program Oversight

Each Part is denoted by an uppercase Roman numeral. Sections are denoted by upper case letters (e.g. Section A). In parts without multiple sections, the part's entire contents are under Section A. Each section is divided into chapters indicated by Arabic numbers (e.g. Chapter 1).

Beyond the chapter level, paragraph numbers are expressed as a two-digit decimal number following the chapter number (e.g. 1.01). The digit to the left of the decimal indicates the chapter number and digits to the right indicate main paragraphs.

Some paragraphs are subdivided, denoted by lower-case letters beginning with "a". When further levels of organization are needed, topics are denoted by an Arabic number "1". Below that, blocks are denoted by a lower case letter in parentheses (a). For example:

- 1.01 Chapter and Paragraph
 - a. Sub-paragraph
 - 1. Topic
 - (a) Block

To cite information at a particular location in the M28R, use the appropriate numbers and letters only, without spaces, separated by a period. For example, information in M28R, Part I, Section A, Chapter 1, Paragraph .01, Sub-paragraph a, Topic (1), Block (a) is cited as M28R.I.A.1.01.a.1.(a).

d. Authority of Decisions

Actions and procedures described in the M28R originate from the laws included in 38 U.S.C. VA promulgates regulations to implement these laws, which are published in the CFR. When policy clarification is needed regarding certain regulations or modifications to procedures contained in the M28R, VR&E Service in Central Office issues circulars, or policy or procedural guidance letters. It is critical that VR&E staff adhere to the following:

1. 38 U.S.C.
2. 38 CFR
3. M28R
4. Circulars
5. Policy or procedural guidance letters
6. Similar guidance issued by VR&E Service, the Under Secretary of Benefits, or the Secretary of VA

It is important to note that previously issued VA and VR&E Circulars and Policy Letters have been incorporated into the M28R, as appropriate. As a result, those circulars and policy letters have been rescinded. The rescission information, to include the date of revision and where the information is currently found in the M28R, is available on the Knowledge Management Portal (KMP). Rescission information is available on the "Policies and Guidance" page on the KMP, in the "Rescinded" and "Rescinded By" columns.

This information can be accessed on the KMP at <https://vawww.portal.va.gov/sites/VRWKM/pages/home.aspx>

e. Distribution of the M28R

The M28R is available to VR&E staff in electronic format on the KMP at <https://vawww.portal.va.gov/sites/VRWKM/pages/home.aspx>

VR&E Service encourages the use of the KMP when accessing the M28R as the KMP has a search feature that allows the user to search for information on the KMP. To access the search feature, the user can either:

- Use the search box located at the top left side of a page
- Use the advanced search feature, located in the top navigational menu

The M28R is also available on the Web Automated Reference Material System (WARMS) at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/WARMS/>

It is the responsibility of the VR&E Officer to ensure that each VR&E Division staff member has access to the M28R.

f. Updates

Updates to the M28R will be made as needed and posted to the KMP and WARMS. Updates will be denoted with a revised publication date. Notification of updates will issued via email and discussed in the VR&E Hotline call in the month immediately preceding each update.

When a M28R chapter is updated, the previous version is retained in the KMP. VR&E Service retains these versions for legal reasons and audit purposes. To access previous versions of a M28R chapter in the KMP:

- Go to the M28R page
- Point to the chapter name, for example M28R.I.A.1
- Click the down arrow that appears to the right of the chapter name
- Click "Version History" from the drop down menu
- Click the hyperlink in the "Modified" column to view the needed version
- Click the back button in the top menu bar to return to the version history page

Versions are numbered and listed in reverse order, with the most recent version listed first. Some chapters may have more than one version listed in the version history. This is due in part to the correction of minor, non-substantive errors identified after publication. For audit purposes, the only versions that need to be reviewed are:

- Initial version, listed as version 1.0
- Most recent version, which will always be listed first in the version history
- Any version with "Substantive Change" listed in the comments column