



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Benefits Administration

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services: Chapter 31

What is the Vocational Rehabilitation 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, find, and maintain a job. It also helps entitled transitioning Servicemembers.

If you are a Veteran or Servicemember 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 Service?

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:
 - 10 percent with a serious employment handicap, or
 - 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
 - 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 Veteran or Servicemember. 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.