Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E)
Career Center Service Guide

September 2016

The following information is enclosed:

I. **The goal of the partnership between U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL)**
II. **Process timeline**
III. **3 referral types**
   - **Labor market information (rehabilitation planning)**
   - **Internship/work experience (during rehabilitation)**
   - **Job search ready**
IV. **Case management services**
V. **Monthly summary reports**
VI. **Report of employment**
VII. **Case closure**
VIII. **Resources**

I. Goal of the Partnership

Efficient and seamless service is the common goal and responsibility of the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) and the United States Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) staff that provide assistance to veterans with disabilities; particularly those who receive services through the VR&E Chapter 31 program. These veterans are seeking guidance and assistance with one of the most important aspects of their lives – finding meaningful employment in a **suitable** career field. Effective communication and coordinated efforts between the NYSDOL and the VA will ensure these disabled veterans receive a comprehensive, efficient, caring, and professional service resulting in successful achievement of the veteran's goals.

VA Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) and Career Center Staff collaboration:

Labor Market Information Referral:

- The veteran initially meets the VRC at the VA office to begin services
- Subsequently, the veteran will be required to meet with the Career Center staff member to complete a VR&E LMI Summary Report
- The Career Center visit is typically a **one-time service** for Labor Market Information (LMI)
- The VRC may meet with the veteran multiple times depending on the veteran's needs and employment barriers until an Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan (IWRP) is developed by the VRC and signed by the veteran
- The needs of the veteran determine the VRC's delivery of career counseling, individual based support, and personal adjustment counseling

Internship/Work Experience and Job Ready Referrals:

- Assigned Career Center staff members meet monthly with the veteran for case management services
- Minimal personal adjustment counseling through the VRC should be needed at this point
- If personal adjustment issues begin to interfere with the veteran's effective job search, the VRC will resume face-to-face meetings
- Monthly communication between the Career Center staff member and VRC ensures quality customer service

VA VRC and Career Center Staff communication:

Career Center staff should reasonably expect a response from the VRC within 5 business days of initiating contact. If there is no reply after 5 business days, Career Center staff must notify the Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC). Some common reasons for direct communications between the VRC and the Career Center staff member include:

- Changes in the veterans' status that will affect their ability to actively participate
    - Development of a new barrier to employment
    - Return to full-time training/school
    - Report of new employment
- Veteran is non-responsive or chronically missing scheduled Career Center appointments
- Lack of veteran participation in their job search activities
- Veteran is searching for work outside of the agreed upon career/vocational path as noted in their VR&E referral
- Changes to the veterans' contact information

Role of the NYSDOL Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC):

- Process initial referral from the VA to the appropriate Career Center manager
- Provide guidance and direction to Career Center staff members
- Facilitate open communication and mediate any concerns related to shared cases between the Career Center Staff and VRC
- Ensure VR&E Monthly Summary reports are received by all parties in a timely manner and address any problems indicated in the reports
- Update and monitor the USDOL VR&E tracking report using the Monthly Summary reports and submit final version quarterly to USDOL/VETS

II. Process Timeline

1st
- VR&E referrals are received by Central Office from the VA

2nd
- VR&E referrals are forwarded to Career Center managers within 1 day for staff assignment

3rd
- Assigned staff attempt to contact the VR&E veteran within 2 days of the Career Center manager receiving the VR&E referral

4th
- VR&E veterans meet in person with assigned staff within 2 weeks of VA referral

Assigned Staff - Upon receiving any referral type

- Establishing contact:
  1. First attempt, in the form of a phone call followed up by an email, is made within **2 business days** upon receiving a referral
  2. Second attempt, in the form of a phone call followed up by an email, is made on a different day and time within **2 business days from the first attempt**
  3. If no response from the veteran, the ***VR&E Formal Letter*** must be sent on the **5th business day** following voice mail/email messages. Assigned staff must notify the ISC when the formal letter is sent. The VR&E Formal Letter is located on the NYSDOL Veterans' Services intranet page
  - If no response within **7 business days** of the Formal Letter sent date, assigned staff must notify both the Career Center Manager/Supervisor and Central Office ISC of non-compliant status for case closure

- Record contact and any attempts to contact the veteran in detail in OSOS comments, including phone numbers, email addresses, and/or physical addresses used

  Example of contact attempt*: Feb 27, 2016 Called vet at 518-555-5555 at 8:15am. Left a voice mail requesting a return call. Sent an email requesting a call, provided contact information.*

  Example of contact made*: Feb 27, 2016 Called vet at 518-555-5555 at 8:15am. Discussed… set up a next appointment on March 1, 2016 at 2:00pm*

III. Referrals

Labor Market Information (rehabilitation planning) Referral

The goal of this referral is to identify relevant **occupational** and **labor market information** that will assist the VA in developing a realistic training plan for the VR&E veteran. Per the VA, the labor market information appointment is mandatory for the VR&E veteran.

The VA VRC meets initially with the Chapter 31 eligible veteran to identify preliminary occupational interests. The VA Employment Coordinator (EC) then sends a release form and a Labor Market Information (rehabilitation planning) referral to NYSDOL requesting a meeting with a Career Center staff member. The referral includes:

- Preliminary occupational interests/jobs
- Work history and education
- Barriers to employment (e.g. physical limitations, legal record, etc.)
- Date of next VA appointment

Assigned staff ***and*** the referred veteran jointly prepare a written summary using the ***NYSDOL - VR&E LMI Summary Report*** form located on the NYSDOL Veterans' Services intranet page. Refer to pages 9 and 10 of this guide for a completed example. The summary must include:

- Research on the work environment and schedule for identified occupational areas
- Qualifications (required work experience, certifications, licenses, and education)
- A list of job duties
- Occupations requiring similar skills
- A realistic starting salary and benefits
- Number & types of businesses with qualified job openings in the local area

Provide the veteran with a copy of the written LMI Summary, instruct them to bring it to their next appointment with the VA VRC, and save a copy to your computer.

Documentation

Assigned staff members are responsible for fully documenting the appointment in OSOS:

- ✓ Ensure the VR&E veteran's OSOS record is complete and up to date
- ✓ Record the **VA Labor Market Information** (non-enrolling) activity
- ✓ Enter detailed comments including the significant aspects and outcome of the appointment

Example of comments*: Vet has occupational interests of ….. Labor market information shows; the work environment for … is a busy office setting with a large amount of data entry. Work schedule generally consists of 1st shift. The realistic salary for this occupation is between $25, 000 – $35, 000 per year with health benefits. There are 17 companies including (IBM, Office Inc…) with administrative offices in the area. There were approximately 43 jobs relating to this goal. Skills and certifications required or highly recommended in these postings include: General computer skills including Microsoft office programs, types 40 wpm, and 1-2 years of experience. The duties for these positions include: data entry, customer service, contracts, dictation, scheduling, and managerial skills.*

Internship/ Work Experience (during rehabilitation) Referral

The goal of this referral is to assist the VR&E veteran with identifying and obtaining applicable **internship** or **work experience** opportunities during rehabilitation. The internship or work experience assists the veteran in gaining a competitive advantage upon completion.

The VA EC sends NYSDOL the release form, a modified IWRP (Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan), and an internship/work experience referral form requesting a meeting with a Career Center staff member. The referral includes:

- IWRP job goal
- Preferred internship, work experience (paid or unpaid)
- Schedule requirements (day of week, time of day, or shift)
- Specific skills to be developed
- Work history and education
- Barriers to employment

The assigned staff member provides the referred veteran with the following assistance in obtaining an **internship** or **work experience** to support the IWRP job goal:

- Enrollment into the applicable service delivery model (Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) *or* Individual C3E if your Career Center does not have a DVOP Specialist)

  Refer to the ***Veteran Career Center Service Guide*** for further guidance about serving veteran customers.

- *Plus:*
  - Provide updated local labor market information
  - Coordinate with the Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) and/or Business Services staff for job placement services
  - Develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP)
    - Short term – to obtain an internship or work experience
    - Long term – to work with corporate recruiters on campus, connect with professional affiliations or organizations, conduct research on employers and participate in professional networking, all for securing **suitable** employment

Provide the veteran with a copy of the IEP, instruct them to bring it to their next appointment with the VA VRC, and save a copy to your computer.

Documentation

Assigned staff members are responsible for fully documenting the appointment in OSOS:

- ✓ Ensure the VR&E veteran's OSOS record is complete and up to date
- ✓ Record the **Assigned Case Manager (Vets Only Service)** activity
- ✓ Enter all activities/comments as required by the applicable service delivery model
- ✓ Record the **LVER Job Matching Referral** activity

Job Search Ready Referral

The goal of this referral is to provide assistance to the VR&E veteran in obtaining **stop gap** or **suitable employment** in accordance with the occupational goal set forth by the VA.

The VA EC sends NYSDOL the job search ready referral form, the Individual Employment Assistance Plan (IEAP), and a release form requesting a meeting with a Career Center staff member. The referral will include:

- IEAP job goal
- Specific skills
- Work history and education
- Resume (if available)

The assigned staff member provides the referred veteran with the following assistance in obtaining **stop gap** or **suitable employment** to support the IEAP job goal:

- Enrollment into the applicable service delivery model (DVOP *or* Individual C3E if your Career Center does not have a DVOP Specialist)

  Refer to the ***Veteran Career Center Service Guide*** for further guidance about serving veteran customers.

- *Plus:*
  - Provide updated local labor market information
  - Coordinate with local LVER and/or Business Services staff for job placement services

Documentation

Assigned staff members are responsible for fully documenting the appointment in OSOS:

- ✓ Ensure the VR&E veteran's OSOS record is complete and up to date
- ✓ Record the **Assigned Case Manager (Vets Only Service)** activity
- ✓ Enter all activities/comments as required by the applicable service delivery model
- ✓ Record the **LVER Job Matching Referral** activity

IV. Case Management Services

VR&E veterans who come into our system as an **Internship/Work Experience** referral or a **Job Search Ready** referral receive case management services.

Case management services must be provided on a **monthly** basis to include consistent job search assistance, job leads, and two-way communications. All documentation (activities/comments) in OSOS regarding contact with the veteran or attempts to contact the veteran must be recorded in detail on the day that they occur each month.

- ✓ Record the **Received Case Management Services (Vets Only Service)** activity only when two-way communication has occurred ***and*** services have been provided
- ✓ Enter all activities/comments as required by the applicable service delivery model
- ✓ Record the **LVER Job Matching Referral** activity

V. Monthly Summary Reports

All staff members assigned with VR&E **Internship/Work Experience** or **Job Search Ready** referrals are required to complete Monthly Summary Reports for each of their VR&E veteran customers. Monthly Summary Reports are not required for completed **LMI** appointments.

Reports are submitted via email to the following individuals ***within 5 business days after*** the end of each month:

1. The Regional VA Employment Coordinator (EC) – Region found at top of each VR&E Referral form:
   - New York City: Ayleen Alago: ayleen.alago@va.gov
   - Syracuse: Betsy Webb-Bronzetti: betsy.webb-bronzetti@va.gov
   - Buffalo: Ramona Estrada: ramona.estrada@va.gov
2. The VA Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) – Individual VRC contact information found on each VR&E referral form
3. The NYSDOL Central Office Intensive Services Coordinators (ISC) – Jason Piacente: jason.piacente@labor.ny.gov and David Guzman: david.guzman@labor.ny.gov
4. The assigned staff member's Career Center Supervisor and Manager

These monthly reports provide all recipients with a documented record of the NYSDOL services provided to the veteran and aid us in ensuring the veteran's compliance.

Some benefits of the Monthly Summary Reports include:

- Highlighting all case management services and job referrals provided during the month
  - Include information about all services provided to the veteran in the narrative section (i.e. – meetings with employment counselor, referrals for services, workshops, etc.)
  - List all job leads in the "Job Leads Provided to Veteran" section only. Provide enough detail so that VR&E staff can ensure the types of referrals are appropriate. When outlining job leads, provide detailed information about the types of jobs, including position titles (rather than just Job Orders numbers), any required experience/skills/abilities/education, and any additional helpful information
    - Additionally, include matches and referrals provided to the veteran by the LVER

- Allowing VR&E and NYSDOL staff to stay current on veteran progress and to better coordinate services
  - Outline all communications with the veteran (email, phone, and in-person), including unsuccessful outreach attempts or unattended appointments
  - Include any feedback from the veteran (i.e. – about a workshop, resource, event, etc.)

- Providing a comprehensive record of new employment for both VA and NYSDOL
  - There is a separate section for employment information on the report; place this information in this section only

The ***VR&E NYSDOL Monthly Summary Report*** form is located on the NYSDOL Veterans' Services intranet page. Refer to page 11 of this guide for a completed example. Assigned staff can use their comments from OSOS so long as they are objective, informative, and soundly illustrate the month's activities.

VI. Report of Employment

Any reports of employment for VR&E veterans must be verified by the assigned staff member with the veteran and then communicated to Central Office.

Documentation

Assigned staff are responsible for fully documenting the report of employment in OSOS:

- ✓ Record the **Report of New Employment** activity
- ✓ Enter detailed comments including the following information:
  - Date entered into suitable employment
  - Employer
  - Job title
  - Hourly wage

Assigned staff members are required to verify continued employment at **30 days** and then again at **60 days**. Confirmation of continued employment can be done verbally or via email and must be recorded in OSOS comments. Monthly Summary Reports regarding these follow-up communications are required.

VII. Case Closure

Only the VA or NYSDOL Central Office can close a VR&E case. A VR&E case is closed after the veteran has been successfully employed for at least 60 days, identifies disability or sole source income, moves out of New York State, enters training or school, has no successful outcome, or any other reason as determined by the VA.

Exit case management activities are ***not*** recorded in OSOS unless directed to do so by Central Office. Assigned staff **will be provided guidance from Central Office** about which activity to record and the supporting comment to document.

Documentation

Assigned staff members are responsible for fully documenting the case closure in OSOS:

- ✓ Record *one* of the **VETS Case Management Outcomes** activities
- ✓ Enter detailed comments fully explaining the reason for exit

If the VA reports that a VR&E veteran has a change in status other than a case closure, Central Office will promptly inform the assigned staff. Central Office will provide guidance regarding individual modifications to the service delivery model and relevant documentation to be recorded in OSOS. The VA Employment Coordinator may reissue a VR&E referral at any time and the assigned staff member will be *notified by Central Office* to resume case management services.

VIII. Resources

NYSDOL - VR&E LMI Summary Report (EXAMPLE)

Complete this form on your computer and save a copy

NAME OF VETERAN: Joe Sample	
STAFF MEMBER: Mr. Smith, DVOP	**VA CONTACT:** Mr. Jones, EC

IDENTIFIED OCCUPATION: ***Computer and Information Systems Manager***

Computer and information systems managers held about 332,700 jobs in 2012.
The industries that employed the most computer and information systems managers in 2012 were as follows:
Computer systems design and related services - 19%
Finance and insurance – 12%
Information – 11%
Management of companies and enterprises – 9%
Government – 7%

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

Indoors, environmentally controlled, spend time sitting, typically an office environment.
As network speeds increase, telecommuting is becoming more common. Although few managers can work remotely, many have to supervise employees who work from home.

WORK SCHEDULE:

Most computer and information systems managers work full time. Many of them must work overtime to solve problems. In 2012, about one third worked more than 40 hours per week.

QUALIFICATIONS: (required work experience, certifications, licenses, education, etc.)

Typical education needed for entry: **Bachelor's degree**
Typical work experience needed for a job in this occupation: **5 years or more**
Typical on-the-job training once you have a job in this occupation: **None**
Certifications: CCNA, A+, C++, CISCO, Microsoft, CCIE, MCSE, CISSP, Desktop support, Help desk support

JOB DUTIES:

1. Assign and review the work of systems analysts, programmers, and other computer-related workers.
2. Consult with users, management, vendors, and technicians to assess computing needs and system requirements.
3. Control operational budget and expenditures.
4. Develop and interpret organizational goals, policies, and procedures.
5. Develop computer information resources, providing for data security and control, strategic computing, and disaster recovery.
6. Direct daily operations of department, analyzing workflow, establishing priorities, developing standards and setting deadlines.

7. Evaluate data processing proposals to assess project feasibility and requirements.
8. Evaluate the organization's technology use and needs and recommend improvements, such as hardware and software upgrades.
9. Manage backup, security and user help systems.
10. Meet with department heads, managers, supervisors, vendors, and others, to solicit cooperation and resolve problems.
11. Prepare and review operational reports or project progress reports.
12. Provide users with technical support for computer problems.
13. Purchase necessary equipment.
14. Recruit, hire, train and supervise staff, or participate in staffing decisions.
15. Review and approve all systems charts and programs prior to their implementation.
16. Review project plans to plan and coordinate project activity.
17. Stay abreast of advances in technology.

REALISTIC STARTING SALARY AND BENEFITS:

Location	Pay Period	2012				
		10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	Hourly	$36.03	$45.55	$58.15	$73.26	$90.00+
	Yearly	$74,900	$94,700	$121,000	$152,400	$187,200+
New York	Hourly	$39.72	$50.60	$66.08	$85.74	$90.00+
	Yearly	$82,600	$105,200	$137,400	$178,300	$187,200+

OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS IN LOCAL AREA:

SOC Code[1]	Title	Employment		Change		Annual Average Openings		
		2013[2]	2015[2]	Net	Percent	Total	Growth	Replacement
11- 3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	1,480	1,520	40	2.7%	40	20	20

OCCUPATIONS REQUIRING SIMILAR SKILLS:

1. Computer Programmers
2. Computer Science Teachers, Postsecondary
3. Computer User Support Specialists
4. Librarians
5. Mathematical Science Teachers, Postsecondary
6. Medical and Health Services Managers
7. Operations Research Analysts

COMPLETED BY: Mr. Smith & Joe Sample | **DATE:** 3/2/2016

VR&E NYSDOL MONTHLY SUMMARY REPORT (EXAMPLE)

NAME OF VETERAN: John Smith	**LAST FOUR SSN:** 5555
VOCATIONAL GOAL: Environmental Engineer	
STAFF MEMBER: Joseph Johnson	**VA CONTACT:** Phillip Abernake

MONTHLY ACTIVITY: Job Search Services	**REPORTING MONTH:** October 2015

Brief Overview of Services Provided:

10/7/2015: Initial Assessment and introduction: Critiqued resume and made improvements. Reviewed LMI and present job openings. Determined a need for additional computer training and scheduled for Online Job Applications Workshop on 10/14/2015. Next appointment scheduled for 11/4/2015.

10/14/2015: Met with veteran briefly following Online Job Application Workshop. He feels more comfortable with the process and will continue to increase those skills by searching for and applying to jobs online using the websites that have been recommended.

10/21/2015: Spoke with veteran via phone. Computer skills have improved and he has been able to apply to provided job referrals as well as openings found on his own. Confirmed our next appointment on 11/4/2015.

JOB LEADS PROVIDED TO VETERAN:
Entry-Level Wastewater Engineer: ACME Irrigation Systems
Environmental Analyst: Wyle C. Construction Services
Environmental Engineering Technician: NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

****PLEASE PROVIDE THE BELOW INFORMATION IF THE VETERAN HAS OBTAINED EMPLOYMENT****

JOB TITLE:	
START DATE	**HOURLY SALARY $**
NAME OF EMPLOYER:	
ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER:	
NAME OF SUPERVISOR:	
TELEPHONE NUMBER	

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	**BENEFITS INCLUDED: Y/N**
List Benefits:	

JOB DUTIES:

JOB RETENTION:	**Follow-Up Date:**
Comments:	