



VETERANS VOICE

Winnebago County Department of Veterans Services Newsletter October 2019

VETERANS VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

If you're a Veteran or service member with a service-connected disability that impacts your ability to work, the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program (also called Voc Rehab, VR&E or Chapter 31 benefits) may be able to help. The VA offers 5 support-and-services tracks to help you find and keep a job, and live as independently as possible.

Reemployment Track

As a Veteran, you're protected under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). This means you can't be disadvantaged in your civilian career because of your service.

If you're a Veteran with a service-connected disability, the VR&E Reemployment track can help your employer accommodate your needs. Your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) can provide a full range of rehabilitation services, and can refer you directly to the Department of Labor to begin the process.

You may be eligible for help if you're a Veteran with a service-connected disability and you meet all of the following requirements:

- You have an employment barrier or handicap, **and**
- Are enrolled in Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E), **and**
- Would like to return to your former job

Note: Having an employment handicap means your service-connected disability limits your ability to prepare for, obtain, and maintain suitable employment (a job that doesn't make your disability worse, is stable, and matches your abilities, aptitudes and interests).

Rapid Access to Employment Track

If you want to follow an employment path that uses your existing skill set, the VR&E Rapid Access to Employment track can help you with your job search. Counseling and rehabilitation services that address your abilities, aptitudes and interests are offered.

Continued on Page 2..

“Peace is not absence of conflict, it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means.”

Ronald Reagan

In This Issue

- Veterans Vocational Rehabilitation Programs
- National Disability Employment Awareness Month
- VA Education Benefits for Survivors and Dependents
- Upcoming Event



Continued...

You may be eligible for these benefits if you're a service member or Veteran with a service-connected disability and you meet all of the following requirements:

- You have an employment handicap or barrier, **and**
- Are enrolled in VR&E, **and**
- Already have experience, education, or training in your field of interest.

You will get tools to help with your job search; vocational counseling; help with writing your resume and preparing for interviews; and help determining if you're eligible for Veterans' Preference.

VR&E Self-Employment Track

If you're a service member or Veteran with a service-connected disability and an employment barrier who has the strong desire, skills, and drive to run a successful business, you may be interested in the VR&E Self-Employment track.

You may be eligible for these benefits if you're a service member or Veteran with a service-connected disability and you meet all of the following requirements:

- You have an employment barrier or handicap, **and**
- You're enrolled in VR&E, **and**
- Your service-connected disability makes it hard for you to prepare for, obtain, and maintain suitable employment.

You will receive coordination services and help with developing a proposed business plan; analysis of your business concept; training in small-business operation, marketing and finances; and guidance in getting the right resources to implement your business plan. After you develop your business plan, they will review it and evaluate whether self-employment and the proposed business are viable options.

VR&E Employment through Long-Term Services Track

If you have a service-connected disability that makes it hard for you to succeed in your employment path, you may be interested in the VR&E Employment through Long-Term Services track. VR&E training can help you find work in a different field that better suits your current abilities and interests.

You may be eligible for these benefits if you're a service member or Veteran with a service-connected disability and you meet all of the following requirements:

- You have an employment barrier or handicap, **and**
- You're enrolled in VR&E, **and**
- Your service-connected disability makes it hard for you to prepare for, obtain, and maintain suitable employment.

You will get a complete skills assessment; career guidance; job-market evaluation; education and training for a vocational field that's a good fit for you; apprenticeship, on-the-job training, and volunteer opportunities; and employment assistance.

VR&E Independent Living Track

If your service-connected disability limits your ability to perform activities of daily living (like bathing, dressing, accessing the community, and interacting with others) and you can't return to work right away, you may qualify for independent living services through the VR&E Independent Living track.

You may be eligible if you're a service member or Veteran with a service-connected disability and meet the following requirements:

- You have a serious employment handicap (SHE), **and**
- Your disabilities prevent you from looking for or returning to work, **and**
- You're in need of services to live as independently as possible.

Services may include evaluation and counseling to identify your needs and goals; home consultations with specialists; referral to support resources; guidance to help you understand if you're eligible for the adaptive-housing programs.



National Disability Employment Awareness Month

In October, Americans observe National Disability Employment Awareness Month by paying tribute to the accomplishments of the men and women with disabilities whose work helps keep the nation's economy strong and by reaffirming their commitment to ensure equal opportunity for all citizens.

This effort to educate the public about the issues related to disability and employment began in 1945 when Congress enacted Public Law 176, declaring the first week of October each year as National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week. In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. Some 25 years later, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM).

The 2019 NDEAM theme is "The Right Talent, Right Now". This emphasizes the essential role people with disabilities play in America's economic success, especially in an era when historically low unemployment is creating a high demand for skilled talent.

VA Education Benefits for Survivors and Dependents

If you're a spouse or child—or the surviving spouse or child—of a Veteran, you may qualify for VA educational benefits for dependents and survivors (also called Chapter 35 benefits) or job training through a GI Bill program.

You may qualify for Chapter 35 benefits if you're the child or spouse of a service member and one of the following descriptions is true of the service member:

- Died in the line of duty after September 10, 2001, **or**
- Is missing in action or was captured in the line of duty by a hostile force, **or**
- Was detained (held) by force while in the line of duty by a foreign government or power, **or**
- Is in the hospital or getting outpatient treatment for a service-connected permanent and total disability, and is likely to be discharged for that disability. A service-connected permanent and total disability is a disability resulting from your service that doesn't go away.

You may qualify for Chapter 35 benefits if you're the child or spouse of a Veteran and one of the following is true of the Veteran:

- Is permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected disability, **or**
- Died while on active duty or as a result of a service-connected disability.

If you're a dependent who doesn't meet the above criteria, you may still qualify for VA education benefits if the Veteran or service member transferred some or all of the Post-9/11 GI Bill entitlement to you while they were on active duty. [Learn about transferred benefits.](#)

The following benefits are available:

- Education and training
- Money for tuition
- Money for housing
- Money for books and supplies

You'll need to apply for benefits. [Apply for VA education benefits \(Chapter 35 benefits\)](#)

There are 2 main GI Bill programs offering educational assistance to survivors and dependents of Veterans:

- The Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship (Fry Scholarship) is for children and spouses of service members who died in the line of duty after September 10, 2001. [Get more information about the Fry Scholarship](#)
- The Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) program offers education and training to qualified dependents of Veterans who are permanently and totally disabled because of a service-related condition or who died while on active duty or as a result of a service-related condition. [Get more information about the DEA program](#)

Note: You may qualify for both the Fry Scholarship and the DEA program, but you can use only one of them. You'll have to pick one when you apply. Once you've made this decision, you can't switch to the other program.

Under the DEA program the duration of benefits for spouses is 20 years from the service member's date of death if they died on active duty, or 10 years from the Veteran's date of death (there may be exceptions). Children may use the benefits between ages 18 and 26 (there may be exceptions). Maximum months of benefit is 45 months.

Under the Fry scholarship the duration of benefits for spouses is 15 years from the service member's date of death (but spouses lose this benefit if they remarry). Children qualify as of their 18th birthday and can use this benefit until their 33rd birthday. Maximum months of benefits is 36 months.

Upcoming Event



NEENAH MENASHA VETERANS DAY DINNER

NOVEMBER 11, 2019

WAVERLY BEACH, MENASHA

COCKTAILS 5 P.M.

DINNER 6 P.M.

**TICKETS FROM ANY AMERICAN LEGION OR
VFW MEMBER**

PURCHASE TICKETS BY OCTOBER 31, 2019

CONTACT US

Winnebago County
Veterans Service Office

Oshkosh Location
112 Otter St.
Oshkosh, WI 54901
(920) 232-3400

Neenah Location
211 N. Commercial
Neenah, WI 54956
(920) 729-4820

Stay informed about bene-
fits; join our e-mail list.
Send a request to:

CVSO@co.winnebago.wi.us

Visit us on the web at:

[www.co.winnebago.wi.us/
veterans](http://www.co.winnebago.wi.us/veterans)



[www.facebook.com/
WinnebagoCVSO](http://www.facebook.com/WinnebagoCVSO)

For a list of more events,
check out our [calendar!](#)