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### Applying for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Benefits

Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University

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### APPLYING FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

#### CHAPTER 31

Chapter 31 *Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E)* is a program for disabled veterans. **THIS IS NOT THE G.I. BILL** and **NOT** an educational benefit program. Education costs may be part of rehabilitation and training for employment. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) pays full tuition, fees, books and in many cases, parking costs to the school. In addition, the student gets a monthly stipend depending on training status. The veteran must work with VR&E caseworker for eligibility information.

#### ELIGIBILITY

Active duty service members are eligible if:

- The service member expects to receive an honorable discharge upon separation from active duty.

**OR**

- They obtain a memorandum rating of 20% or more from the VA, and
- Apply for VR&E services.

#### VETERANS ARE ELIGIBLE IF THEY:

- Have received, or will receive, a discharge that is other than dishonorable.
- Have a service-connected disability rating of at least 10%, or a memorandum rating of 20% or more from the VA.
- Apply for VR&E services.

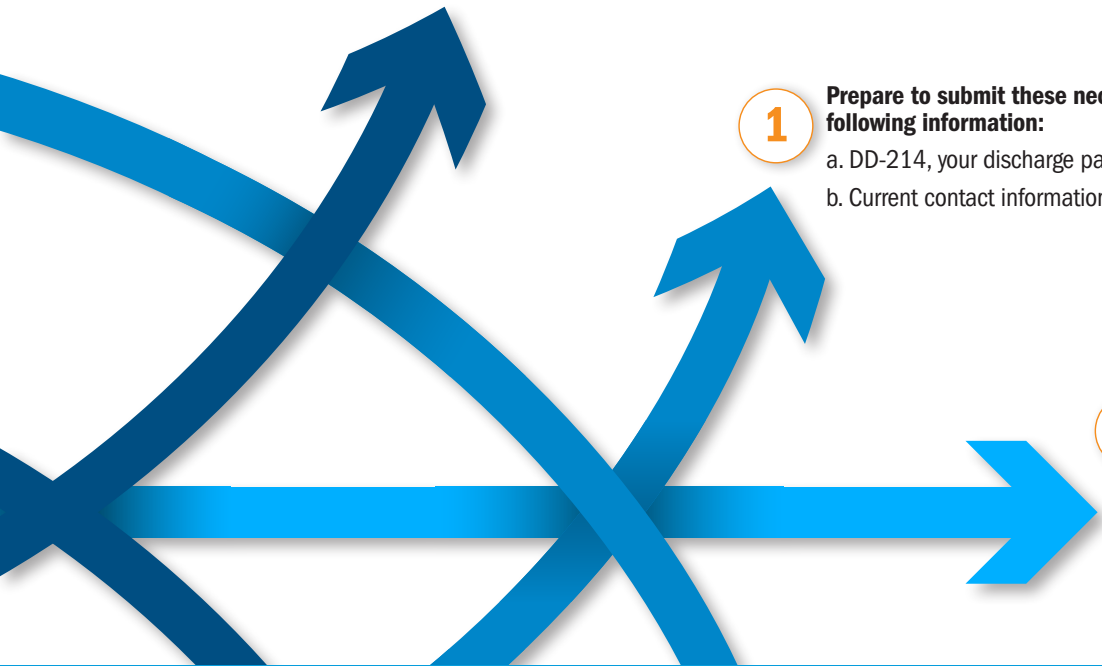
#### BASIC PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY

The basic period of eligibility in which VR&E services may be used is 12 years from the latter of the following:

- Date of separation from active military service, or
- Date the veteran was first notified by the VA of a service-connected disability rating.

The basic period of eligibility may be extended if a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) determines that a veteran has a Serious Employment Handicap.

#### STEPS TO APPLY FOR VR&E BENEFITS



**1**

**Prepare to submit these necessary forms by collecting the following information:**

- a. DD-214, your discharge papers and separation documents
- b. Current contact information

**2**

**Complete Form 28-1900. There are two ways to do this:**

- a. Complete a paper version of this form, which can be downloaded from <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-28-1900-ARE.pdf>

**OR**

*(continued on the other side)*

## STEPS TO APPLY FOR VR&E BENEFITS (CONTINUED)

2

b. Submit this form online at [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov)

- Click the “Apply for Benefits” tab (should be top left on the page)
- Click the “Apply for Benefits via VONAPP” link (should be in a blue box toward the right side of the page)
- If you already have a DS logon, you can go directly to, <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>
- Choose “I am a new VONAPP user” or “I have used VONAPP before”
- Under the “Create a New Form” drop-down menu,
- Select “Vocational Rehabilitation” (Form 28-1900)
- Click “Add New Form”
- Follow the instructions from there to apply

3

### After completing Form 28-1900:

- You will be given an appointment with a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) for a comprehensive evaluation to determine if you are entitled to services

*A comprehensive evaluation includes:*

- An assessment of the veteran’s interests, aptitudes, and abilities.
- An assessment of whether a service-connected disability impairs the veteran’s ability to find and/or hold a job using the occupational skills he/she has already developed.
- Vocational exploration and goal development leading to employment and/or maximum independence at home and in the veteran’s community.

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### After verifying entitlement:

- The veteran will work with the VRC to develop a rehabilitation plan, which includes your educational plans.
- A rehabilitation plan is an individualized, written outline of the services, resources and criteria that will be used to achieve employment and/or independent living goals. The plan is an agreement that is signed by the veteran and the VRC, and is updated as needed to assist the veteran in achieving his/her goals.

*Depending on their circumstances, veterans will work with their VRC to select one of the following five service tracks (see definitions for more detail):*

- Re-employment (with a former employer)
- Direct job placement services for new employment
- Self-employment
- Employment through long term services including OJT, college, and other training
- Independent living services

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### After the plan

- After a plan is developed and signed, a VRC or case manager will continue to work with the veteran to implement the plan to achieve suitable employment, education and/or independent living.
- The counselor will provide a Form 28-1905, which is used to apply for funds to support the veteran’s education or employment plans. This form can only be obtained by working with a VRC.
- The VA may pay for tuition, fees, books, equipment, tools, or other supplies needed to succeed in a program. During a program, you may qualify for a monthly subsistence allowance to help you meet your living expenses. The allowance received depends on the type of training, rate of attendance, and number of dependents. The veteran will receive this allowance in addition to any VA compensation or military retired pay received.

For more information about Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefits is available at

<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/index.htm>