

VRE/MRS Working Together

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(VR&E)

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(MRS)

Mission Statements

- Veteran Affairs Mission: To fulfill President Lincoln's promise “To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan” by serving and honoring the men and women who are America’s Veterans.
- Michigan Rehabilitation Services Mission: MRS partners with individuals and employers to achieve quality employment outcomes and independence for individuals with disabilities.

Who We Serve

VA - VRE

- Veterans with a Service Connected Disability rating of 10% or higher are eligible to apply. In order to be entitled for services the Veteran must demonstrate the SCD is the substantial barrier to employment
- With a Memo Rating we can service Veterans who are waiting for a Rating Disposition

MRS

- A person with a documented disability if it causes them to have problems in preparing for, finding or keeping a job
- A person with a documented disability who can benefit from services with MRS
- A person with SSI or SSDI who is motivated to work and is cleared to work from their doctor

Services Provided

We Both

- Vocational guidance and counseling
- Training
- Follow Along services once employed
- Resume Assistance
- Assistive Technology
- Tools, equipment & licenses
- WOTC & OJE/CBW options

Where We Differ

- MRS
 - Individualized job placement assistance
 - Transportation Assistance
 - Interview/Work Clothes
 - Medical Services
- VA
 - Up to 48 mo. of educational benefits
 - Non-Paid Work Experiences
 - Independent Living
 - No interest emergency loan
 - Referral to VAMC services

When do we call on each other?

VA calls on MRS when....

- Working with a Veteran who is ready to work and needs one on one job development services
- Working with a Veteran who needs bus pass assistance, clothing, or other support services

MRS calls the VA when....

- Working with a Veteran who is in need of more education and training
- Working with a Veteran who would benefit from a longer work assessment program
- Any service connected Veteran who is not connected yet with the VA and feels they would benefit from both programs

VR&E MOA

- <http://mrselearn.org/vr/moa/> to see the guidance regarding the formal agreement
- Here is the formal agreement but lets talk about how we really do it here in the Greater Grand Rapids Area for our Veterans
- We call each other, we talk to each other, three way meetings, we trust each other educational counseling background and professional judgement for any vocational direction decisions that have already been made
- Skip the hoops and loops – Veterans have enough barriers and go the source, still have to do the regular legal stuff we need for us to do for our jobs, but don't make them wait and bypass the traditional application and orientation process. We work better and more efficiently on a personal scale and our Veteran Employment ratings show that too.

Examples

- MRS working with a SC veteran who they deem appropriate for long term training
 - Call/email VRE and we set up a meeting for the veteran, MRS and VRE to discuss the services available through each agency and to make sure everyone is on the same page
 - VRE collects application at meeting and send in to the RO for veteran
 - With proper ROI able to share copies of previous testing results and any other relevant vocational exploration documents that have been generated
 - Agree to which services will be provided through each agency and write complimentary IWRPs

Examples

- VRE working with veteran who has recently completed training and requires additional placement assistance
 - VRE will reach out directly to MRS to refer the veteran for those services
 - MRS will establish meeting with veteran, if eligible for services collect application signature at meeting, eliminating need for group orientation process
 - MRS will then coordinate for direct placement services for the veteran
 - This will count as a positive closure for both agencies upon employment

Additional Community Partners and Resources

- Veterans Networking Job Club
 - This group currently provides a veteran session monthly in conjunction with Michigan Works!, the SOM Career Advisors (formerly known as DVOPs) and VHA voc rehab staff.
 - There is an educational component and actual employers at each session.
 - Community partners also meet prior to the meeting to staff cases and provide referrals to best support the veterans
- VCAT/West Michigan Veterans Coalition
 - Employment subgroup
 - In the past evening events for veterans seeking professional positions

Stand Down Coordination

- Work with organizers for VRE, MRS and if available VHA vocational rehabilitation staff to share a table
- We are then able to make sure that the veteran is working with all available resources they might qualify for
- Ensures the veteran isn't having to visit multiple locations for possibly overlapping services

Questions?

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