

Veterans Corner

Veterans readiness and employment program

The Veterans Readiness and Employment (VR&E) Program (formerly known as Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment) is sometimes referred to as the Chapter 31 program. The program assists veterans with service-connected disabilities to prepare for, find, and keep suitable jobs. For veterans with service-connected disabilities so severe that they cannot immediately consider work, the program offers services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible.

Services that may be provided by the VR&E Program include: comprehensive readiness evaluation, vocational counseling and readiness planning, job-training, job-seeking skills, resume development, assistance finding and keeping a job including the use of special employer incentives and job accommodations, post-secondary training at a college, vocational, technical or business school, and independent living services for veterans unable to work due to the severity of their disabilities.

Active Duty service members are eligible if they expect to receive an honorable discharge upon separation from active duty. Veterans are eligible if they have received, or will receive, a discharge that is other than dishonorable, and have a service-connected disability rating of at least 10%, or a memorandum rating of 20% or more from the VA. Active Duty and veterans must apply for this benefit.

The basic period of eligibility in which VR&E services may be used is 12 years from the date of separation from active military service, or the date the veteran was first notified by VA of a service-connected disability rating. The basic period of eligibility may be extended if a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor determines that a veteran has a serious employment handicap.

The Kings County Veterans Service Office can complete the DMV Veteran Status Verification Form for the California Veteran Designation on your driver's license and also issues Veteran I.D. cards to honorably discharged veterans. Contact Scott Holwell at the email address provided below, if you would like to receive periodic veteran's information by email. There are many state and federal benefits and programs available to veterans and their dependents. To determine if you are eligible for any of these benefits, visit or call our office. We can and will assist you in completing all required application forms. You can get information on the Web from the Kings County Veterans Service Office webpage at www.countyofkings.com/vets.

Scott Holwell, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the Veterans Service Officer for Kings County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd, Hanford, CA 93230; call (559)852-2669; or e-mail scott.holwell@co.kings.ca.us.