

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

(as of February 7, 2013)

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. This program provides service-connected veterans currently enrolled in the chapter 31 veterans program with the opportunity to obtain training and practical on the job experience.
2. Veterans in the chapter 31 program are monitored by each veteran's case manager.
3. This program can be established in federal, state and local government agencies only.

ADVANTAGES TO THE EMPLOYER

1. Recent college graduate, prescreened by the VA counselor, at zero expense to the agency.
2. Minimal paperwork
3. Simple to Implement.
4. Method of demonstrating gratitude to our veterans for their service to our country

BENEFITS FOR VETERANS

1. Establishes employment history
2. Provides exposure to potential employment opportunities.
3. Monthly subsistence allowance provided by Department of Veterans Affairs.
4. Strengthens and builds positive worker traits.

THE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

1. An informational interview with a VA case manager is the first step.
2. VA Case Manager arranges interview between the agency manager and veteran. The agency manager decides if the veteran meets their criteria.
3. VA Case Manager processes NPWE paperwork. Agency work site supervisor provides monthly progress reports and sets work schedule.
4. Veteran is expected to work established schedule as any other employee would.
5. Tools, uniforms, or any other employer requirements are provided by VA.
6. VA Case manager supervises veteran in program with monthly contacts.
7. Work Experience is normally 40 hr/wk for a period of 6 months.
8. For more information call or e-mail

U.S. DISTRICT COURT EXPERIENCE

1. Currently, we have three veterans working for the Court. One veteran is working in our IT Network Department; another is working in Legal Services, who was brought on board immediately following completion of a paralegal certificate paid for through the VA program; and the third is working in our courtroom operations department working for the courtroom clerks supervisor, learning a variety of tasks related to the work of courtroom clerks.
2. In accordance with the intent of the program, we treat the veterans as if they are compensated Clerk's Office employees. The challenge has been to keep supervisors and managers treating the veterans as employees and not simply
3. We have found it very helpful to call prospective veterans prior to bringing them in for an interview. We have had a couple of referrals that were not a good fit and discovered it up front, before we put much energy into the "hire."
4. The paperwork, though minimal, has some features that don't fit the federal Judiciary, so we had our legal services review the documents. We discussed issues with the VA and subsequently modified documents accordingly. The VA was very cooperative.
5. We also found the VA to be very flexible to work with, though with the flexibility sometimes seems less structured and organized that we expected. Nevertheless, it has not watered down the value of the program or our interest in continuing.
6. Our program is overseen by one of our managers, Steve Cohen, who serves as a facilitator of the program locally as well as a liaison with the VA. Having one point of contact is helpful.
7. One of the staff has a keen interest in helping veterans and has taken it upon herself to serve as a mentor to the veterans we have brought onboard so far. During their first day with the Court she meets with each in our Human Resources Office offering to be a support on an as needed basis and has taken them to lunch as a group so they can get to know one another. This has been a tremendous help to the veterans, that is, to have someone out of the "chain of command" with whom they can discuss their experiences and challenges freely.

TO PARTICIPATE AND RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION

1. Contact the local Veterans Administration or visit the website <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/>
2. The U.S. District Court, Central District of California VA Contact is James Malone. His telephone number is (562) 826-8000 and email is james.malone5@va.gov