



BOOTS IN THE BOOT

Desert of Louisiana, A.E.A.O.N.M.S and Daughters

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Beware of Fake VA Phone Numbers

A single mistyped or misheard digit can route your call to a fraudulent operation rather than the VA. Verify VA phone numbers online.

Official VA Number	Fraudulent Look-Alike
GI Bill Hotline: 1-888-442-4551	1-888-442-4511
VA National Contact Center: 1-800-827-1000	1-888-442-4511
My HealtheVet Helpdesk: 1-877-327-0022	1-800-327-0022



If You Believe You Have Reached a Scam Hang up immediately. Do not provide any personal information, or payment details.

Report the incident by calling: 1 - 833-38V-SAFE (833-388-7233) or www.VSAFE.gov.

The Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) Service has a web-based tool and series of videos that are designed to increase understanding of the VR&E program and enhance the Veteran experience. The Veteran Orientation Express is intended for transitioning service members, Veterans and other partners interested in the VR&E program, and is hosted here:

Our goal is to provide individuals with clear, accurate information about the VR&E program before deciding to apply, including:

- VR&E eligibility
- Basic information about what VR&E offers
- VR&E process
- VR&E’s Five Tracks to Employment



How does the tool work?

The tool will initially prompt users with a few basic eligibility screening questions. If the service member or Veteran appears to be eligible, the tool continues with the orientation of the VR&E program by presenting detailed information and short videos explaining VR&E’s tracks. At the end of the orientation, the individual will have a better understanding of the services that VR&E provides and can decide if they want to apply to the program or learn about other VA benefits.



If the individual decides to apply, they will be directed to [VR&E's How to Apply webpage](#) to access VR&E's application. It should take the average user approximately fifteen minutes to complete the questions and orientation. The tool complements VA's modernization efforts to improve the Veteran experience, like VR&E's electronic Virtual Assistant (e-VA) and tele-counseling.

What specific information is included in the orientation?

During the orientation portion, service members, Veterans and interested partners will be able to view a series of short videos and learn more about VR&E's basic benefit information and processes.

Most importantly, the orientation will cover an overview of the five VR&E tracks (or paths to employment). The five tracks will help Veterans discover their career path, present exciting employment opportunities, and succeed and grow in their chosen profession.

Here's a breakdown of VR&E's Five Tracks to Employment :

- Reemployment track is for Veterans seeking to successfully return to a civilian job previously held before deployment.
- Rapid Access to Employment track is to quickly secure employment with a Veteran's existing skills and experience.
- Self-Employment track is for Veterans planning to start a business or pursue entrepreneurial endeavors.
- Employment through Long-Term Services track is to obtain training and/or education, college or certification programs, on the job training, non-paid work experience, apprenticeships, and/or internships.
- Independent Living track is for a Veteran who can't return to work right away and needs assistance with being as self-sufficient as possible.

We hope this tool will help to better explain VR&E to our next generation of program participants.

For more information about VR&E, visit <https://www.va.gov/vre>.

SBA Outreach Centers

The SBA helps veteran and military spouse entrepreneurs build resilient businesses that are ready for the future. Through Veterans Business Outreach Centers, you can access expert guidance and resources to strengthen your business foundation. With support ranging from workshops to business planning and accessing capital, you'll be prepared for whatever comes next.



The **Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC)** program is designed to provide entrepreneurial development services to service members veterans, National Guard and Reserve members, military spouses, and family members interested in starting or growing a small business. SBA has 31 organizations participating in this cooperative agreement and serving as VBOCs.

SBA's VBOCs offer workshops, training, counseling, and mentorship opportunities in your area. VBOCs can also help you navigate SBA's extensive resource partner network and refer you to a community partner, lender, or SBA program.

Transition assistance programs

VBOCs work closely with SBA District offices and Transition Service Managers at military installations to conduct [Boots to Business](#) classes for service members and military spouses. VBOCs also help conduct [B2B Reboot](#) classes off installations for veterans of all eras, National Guard and Reserve members, and military spouses.

Pre-business plan workshops and preparation

VBOCs conduct entrepreneurial development workshops dealing specifically with the major issues of self-employment. Each client is afforded the opportunity to work directly with a business counselor.



VBOCs assist clients in developing and maintaining a [business plan](#). The business plan includes such elements as the legal form of the business, equipment requirements and cost, organizational structure, a strategic plan, market analysis, and a financial plan. VBOCs provide assistance in identifying and analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the business plan to increase the probability of success.

Mentorship

VBOCs conduct, as appropriate, on-site visits with clients to ensure adherence to their business plans. Additionally, VBOCs review monthly financial statements to determine whether a revision of the business plan is warranted or that desired results are being attained.

Other business developmental-related services

VBOCs also provide assistance and training in such areas as manufacturing, international trade, franchising, internet marketing, accounting, and more.

Where to go for this valuable information, please reach out to:

- **Veterans Business Outreach Center at Mississippi State University**
- Coverage: **Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alaska, and Arizona**
- Address: 60 Technology Blvd., Suite 105C, Starkville, MS 39759
- Website: www.vboc.msstate.edu
- Telephone: 662-325-4990
- Email: vboc@business.msstate.edu



Talking about end-of-life planning is never easy, but it's essential. VA provides a variety of benefits and services to help Veterans and their loved ones prepare. From life insurance to burial costs, learn how you can plan ahead with VA benefits.

Providing financial protection

VA offers life insurance to help Veterans prepare for the future and protect those who matter most. [Veterans Affairs Life Insurance \(VALife\)](#) offers guaranteed acceptance whole life coverage up to \$40,000 for Veterans with service-connected disabilities. With [Veterans' Group Life Insurance \(VGLI\)](#), you can convert and keep your [Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance \(SGLI\)](#) coverage amount after you leave the military. Learn about the two programs and [find the right coverage for you](#).

Prepare vital documents

In the event you're not able to make your end-of-life care wishes known, it's important to have them written down so someone else can represent them on your behalf. To help with this, VA offers [Advance Care Planning \(ACP\)](#), in which a Veteran can clarify their preferences for future health care based on personal values and beliefs. As part of ACP, you can also nominate an individual to advocate for your care preferences and make decisions on your behalf, if you're unable to do so.

Get started on your plans for the future with help from VA. You can talk to your primary care team member to determine what your first step should be, meet with a social worker to discuss advance care planning and answer your questions, or participate in [Advance Care Planning via Group Visits \(ACP-GV\)](#) where you and your loved ones can talk with other Veterans and caregivers about how to plan for the future.

Take care of surviving family

Eligible dependents of a Veteran who died from a condition related to service or who died in the line of duty may be eligible for survivor benefits, such as [Dependency and Indemnity Compensation \(DIC\)](#). DIC is a tax-free monetary benefit that some surviving family members may qualify for. When applying for DIC, include the Veteran's DD214 and death certificate indicating the cause of death.

Keep it all together

Create a folder that has a copy of your DD214, Advance Care Plan, life insurance policy and pre-need burial eligibility decision letter. Ensure loved ones know where to find it and what actions they need to take after your death. Having important VA documents organized and easily accessible to your loved ones will relieve some stress after you pass.

For more information on planning for the future, visit VA.gov/plan-ahead.

