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## DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

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Category: Veterans
Subject: REALifelines (RLL) Program Guidance Letter
Source: Federal - U.S. DOL/VETS
Revise/Replace: Colorado One-Stop System Policy Guidance Letter: 09-02-V
Contact: State REALifelines Coordinator – Monica Bryce
Distribution: All Directors, Managers; Workforce Regional Field Directors, Workforce Center Directors, Employment & Training Program and Administrative Staff to include: DVOP, LVER, and Employment Service (ES) professionals.
Colorado One-Stop System Policy Guidance Letter: 11-19-V
Date: December 29, 2011

### **I. REFERENCE(S):**

- A. DASVET Memorandum: 01-08, dated March 10, 2008
- B. Public Law 107-288 (Jobs for Veterans Act) – November 7, 2002
- C. Wagner-Peyser Act, (29 U.S.C. 49), CFDA 17.801 and 804
- D. Veterans' Program Letter No. 07-09, Sec VII, dated November 10, 2009

### **II. PURPOSE:**

- To facilitate REALifelines (RLL) Program awareness at State and local levels while providing specific program guidance to Workforce level professionals to ensure uniformity and standardization of program requirements

### **III. BACKGROUND:**

- The REALifelines (RLL) program was formally launched by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) on October 4, 2004. The program is a collaborative partnership among the Department of Labor (DOL), the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), and the State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). USDOL/VETS is designated the lead agency for program management and implementation of the program nationwide. The Colorado Director of Veterans' Employment and Training (DVET) implemented the RLL program in Colorado in January 2006. The Colorado Department of Labor & Employment (CDLE) assumed responsibility in August 2006 and serves as the State Workforce Agency (SWA) program manager and liaison. Subsequently, CDLE assigned an LVER as the State RLL Coordinator to facilitate and oversee program requirements. The RLL program is required to provide intensive employment and training services to seriously wounded or injured service members who have served in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). This service is facilitated by the State RLL Coordinator through the local Workforce

- Center (WFC) Employment and Training Staff, to include the DVOP, LVER, or other designed Employment Service (ES) professionals.

#### **IV. POLICY/ACTION:**

##### **A. REALifelines Participants:**

1. Program participants are transitioning service members or veterans who were seriously wounded or injured in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) (Afghanistan), who require or request employment or reemployment services to help them transition from the military to the civilian workforce. REALifelines' participants should be provided the full array of services available, to include:

- a. Intensive employment & training services
- b. Labor market information
- c. Career counseling or vocational guidance
- d. Reemployment rights information
- e. Job development, referral, and placement
- f. Referral to other Federal, State, Local, Community or Faith-based organizations to assist in addressing barriers to employment, training, or benefits

2. REALifelines' participants are generated from many sources; however, the primary sources for state purposes are:

- a. **USDOL/VETS** to the SWA REALifelines Coordinator.
- b. **State REALifelines Coordinator** to local SWA Staff - the primary source of RLL referrals.
- c. **Local SWA Staff**, to include DVOPs, LVERS, and other Employment Service (ES) professionals. Staff may encounter transitioning service members (SM) and Veterans that qualify for REALifelines during their daily work activities.

##### **B. Roles and Responsibilities.**

DASVET MEMORANDUM: 01-08, dated March 10, 2008, established the roles and responsibilities for VETS REALifelines Director, RLL Program Manager; RAVET (Regional Administrator), Director of VETS (DVET) at the State level, and the State Workforce Agency (SWA).

##### **C. SWA Roles:**

1. **State Workforce Agency (SWA) REALifelines Coordinator** is assigned to CDLE's Workforce Development Programs, Field Operations. This position is the state's primary representative and liaison to VETS in support of the Federal REALifelines program. All RLL program information, referrals, and services are facilitated through this office with direct coordination to the local SWA staff.
2. **SWA's Workforce Center (WFC) staff** includes: the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist, Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER), or a designated Employment Service (ES) professional. For all intents and purposes relative to this PGL, all WFC Staff are known as "Employment Professionals." The Employment Professional (EP) will deliver intensive services to REALifelines' participants upon referral from the SWA RLL Coordinator or through internal WFC identification. The RLL Coordinator may also refer the spouse of RLL participants to the workforce centers for any appropriate services.

- a. The Employment Professional (EP) will provide intensive services In Accordance With (IAW) guidelines established by VPL 07-05, Section VII (A) (1) and this PGL to qualified RLL transitioning service members (SM) or Veterans. Intensive services use the case management approach identified by the National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI). In order to qualify as intensive services, the Employment Professional may include any combination of the following services, but at a minimum the first two are required.
- 1) Conduct an assessment (minimum requirement)
  - 2) Develop a plan of action that is documented (minimum requirement)
  - 3) Provide career/vocational guidance
  - 4) Coordinate supportive services
  - 5) Make job development contacts
  - 6) Provide referrals to training
  - 7) Make referrals to job openings

The case management approach, initiated by an assessment and anchored by the Plan of Action, is developed by the Employment Professional and implemented with the acceptance of the RLL participant. This Plan of Action is considered a living document with potential changes to establish a realistic, achievable, individualized, Plan of Action for each RLL participant. This is the foundation of the REALifelines' program.

### 3. Referral Process:

**The State RLL Coordinator is the primary point of contact (POC) for all RLL referrals and transfers of RLL participants** within and outside of the State of Colorado. Accountability for all RLL participants rests with the State's RLL Coordinator.

- a. **The RLL Coordinator referral** to the local WFC Employment Professional is by email and may include up to three (3) attachments. An example of each attachment is included in this PGL.
- 1) RLL Assessment Form (Attach 1)
  - 2) RLL Contact Form (Attach 2 )
  - 3) RLL Welcome Letter (Attach 3)
- b. **The WFC Employment Professional** is required to contact the RLL participant within three (3) business days to schedule an appointment that is convenient for both parties. Intensive services are required.
- c. **Contact Requirements.** A minimum of three different types of documented contact attempts are required. The attempts will include:
- 1) **First attempt. Three telephone calls** within five business days, not all on the same day. The telephone call case notes should reflect the reason for the call (RLL), the effort to schedule an appointment, and return contact info.
  - 2) **Second attempt. One Email** (if an email address is available) is sent upon completion of the three telephone call attempts. The email will reference the telephone call(s), effort to schedule an appointment, and return contact information.

- 3) **Third and Final Attempt.** A local WFC **Letter of Notification** to the RLL participant describing the effort to contact for a scheduled appointment. The letter will provide a 10-business-day suspense to reply by telephone, email, or return letter for a scheduled appointment. This letter should afford the participant an opportunity to identify the reason(s) why the RLL participant is not available for employment assistance (Not ready, not available, attending school, employed, etc.)

If the above three separate attempts fail to establish initial contact, the Employment Professional will officially notify the State RLL Coordinator, by email, and request closure. The RLL Coordinator will make a final determination on closure and provide a response by email.

- d. **If the WFC Employment Professional identifies a potential RLL participant**, through a walk-in or scheduled appointment, the Employment Professional, upon conducting an assessment, will immediately notify the RLL Coordinator, by email, and provide the RLL a Contact Form as addressed in attachment two (2). The EP will provide intensive services per this PGL and VPL 07-05, Sec VII.
- e. **If the WFC Employment Professional receives a RLL referral** from anyone other than the State RLL Coordinator, the Employment Professional must immediately notify the RLL Coordinator, by email, and provide the source of the contact, referral information, and any other documentation provided by the referral source.

The RLL Coordinator will contact the Referral Source and the RLL participant within three (3) business days to validate the identification and eligibility of the RLL participant. Upon confirmation, the RLL Coordinator will notify the DVET by email and direct the WFC Employment Professional, via the RLL Contact form (Attach 2), to provide assistance.

#### 4. **Reporting:**

It is vital to the success of the RLL Program that strict recording and reporting guidelines are established and adhered to. Internal local WFC spreadsheets and reporting outcomes may be utilized. Several examples for reporting information are provided below.

- A. **Monthly REALifelines Report.** The RLL Coordinator will generate, by email, a monthly RLL Report to each WFC Employment Professional listing all active RLL participants assigned. This report will be provided on or about the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month and will require validation to ensure a case management service has been provided..
- B. **The WFC Employment Professional** is required to validate, by the same email, the current status of RLL participant no later than the 23rd of that month to the RLL Coordinator. If the 23rd falls on a holiday or weekend, then the following business day is the deadline.
- C. **If at any time the RLL participant is employed, attending school, not available, not interested, transferring to another location, deceased, or not responsive** to the Employment Professional's attempted contacts, notify the REALifelines' Coordinator immediately, by email, and for a final determination from the RLL Coordinator. Please provide the following information in your email:
1. **Employed** - provide the employer's name (ABC Company), effective date of hire, rate of pay, job title, and permanent or temporary position. Provide any success stories toward assisting this individual. If applicable, close the VS/RL file, document on

Connecting Colorado's F10 Notes Screen, and conduct the 90, 180, 270 day follow-up as required.

2. **School attendance** – If the participant is not available for employment assistance, provide school information such as: Attending VA Voc Rehab for a BAS degree in Business Admin, graduates in December 2013. Close the VS/RL file and document accordingly, if applicable.
3. **Not available** - provide the reason the person is not available, such as “unable to work due to medical reasons, retired, death” etc. and document accordingly.
4. **Not interested** - provide reason for non-interest and document accordingly.
5. **Transferring to another State or Location** - provide contact information to include future new address, telephone number, and email address. Also, include the effective date of move and the availability for employment assistance at the new location.
6. **Non-Responsive to continued contacts** – document per this PGL, paragraph IV. C. 3. c. and notify the State RLL Coordinator accordingly.

In all situations, the RLL Coordinator will make the final determination to close or keep open an RLL participant's file.

**D. Updating Case Management Notes.** At anytime any actions are taken or services are provided to the RLL participants, the file notes In Connecting Colorado must be properly dated and annotated with updated information from the personnel:

- 1) **USDOL/VETS** to the SWA REALifelines Coordinator.
- 2) **State REALifelines Coordinator** to local SWA Staff - the primary source of RLL referrals.
- 3) **Local SWA Staff**, to include DVOPs, LVERS, and other Employment Service (ES) professionals. Staff may encounter transitioning service members (SM) and Veterans that qualify for REALifelines during their daily work activities.

**V. IMPLEMENTATION DATE:**

Upon receipt of this PGL

**VI. INQUIRIES:**

Please direct inquiries to the State's REALifelines' Coordinator, Monica Bryce at (303) 653-1255; or Elaine Edon, State Veterans' Coordinator at (303) 318-8937.

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