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News Release

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VA and Small Business Administration Team up to Help Veteran Entrepreneurs

WASHINGTON —The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is working with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to provide education and support to Veterans with disabilities interested in self-employment.

VA's [Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment](#) (VR&E) services entered into an agreement with [SBA's Office of Veterans Business Development](#) in early December to provide self-employment guidance, assistance and on-the-job training to Veterans with disabilities.

"Our partnership with the Small Business Administration brings together the best of public and private business resources to help Veterans with disabilities start their business on a firm footing," said VA Acting Secretary Robert Wilkie. "This program is available to Veterans who want to transition to self-employment and want the guidance and mentorship provided by SBA partners to increase their success."

To qualify for the program, Veterans must meet three conditions: a service-connected disability, an employment handicap and acceptance into the VR&E program.

SBA partners include SCORE, Small Business Development Centers, Veterans Business Outreach Centers, Women's Business Centers and U.S. Export Assistance Centers.

The VA-SBA memorandum of agreement formalizes a working relationship that has been in place for many years. Hundreds of Veterans with disabilities have worked with SBA partners to establish and build their businesses.

In some cases, training opportunities are available for Veterans to work with existing businesses and gain valuable business skills through the [Non-Paid Work Experience program](#). This program is similar to an internship, and participants receive a monthly VR&E housing allowance.

VR&E assists Veterans with service-connected disabilities to prepare for, obtain and maintain suitable employment in meaningful careers. For Veterans with service-connected disabilities that are so severe that they cannot immediately consider work, VR&E provides services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible.

VR&E employs nearly 1,000 professional vocational rehabilitation counselors and delivers services through a network of nearly 350 office locations. For more information on the VR&E programs go to <https://www.benefits.va.gov/voerehab/>

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