



TO: Chief Student Services Officers
Veterans Resource Center Directors
School Certifying Officials

FROM: Heather McClenahan, Veterans Program Specialist, Office of Equitable Student Learning, Experience and Impact

RE: Veterans Resource Center Minimum Standards

This guidance memo provides updated information regarding important changes to the Veterans Resource Center (VRC) Minimum Standards.

VRC Minimum Standards Background

Per [Budget Trailer Bill \(2017-18 State Budget Section 6870-101-0001 \(10.B.G\)\)](#) California community colleges receiving Veterans Resource Center (VRC) ongoing funds shall commit to either meeting and/or making progress towards meeting the minimum standards. When developing spending plans, the funds should be used to maintain a high functioning, student-centered VRC. Refer to the [Compendium of Allocations and Resources](#) for ongoing allocations and spending guidance.

The first version of the VRC minimum standards was established in 2017 to support colleges in establishing Veterans Resource Centers and focused on VRC structure, services, and staffing.

Updated VRC Minimum Standards

The new VRC minimum standards were developed collaboratively with statewide stakeholder groups to reflect VRC best practices and standards that have had a meaningful impact on veteran student outcomes over the last six years. The minimum standards have been updated to include “required” and “recommended” standards, and expanded with additional categories including administration and funding, data elements and outcomes, state and federal requirements, and resources.

The updated [VRC Minimum Standards](#) will be effective February 1, 2024, and will be continuously updated with new state and federal legislation and resources.

2024 Veterans Resource Center Professional Development Webinar Series

The Chancellor’s Office is pleased to announce that Veterans Services will offer a series of professional development webinars for Veterans Resource Centers in 2024. Webinar topics will focus

VRC Minimum Standards

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on priority areas identified by the field from the VRC Survey results. Please join in with your Veterans Resource Center directors, coordinators, counselors, faculty, administrators, SCOs, and support staff.

The first Veterans Resource Center (VRC) professional development webinar will provide an overview of the new **VRC Minimum Standards & VRC Best Practices** on Friday, February 23, 2024, from 10:00am - 11:30am.

Please [register](#) for the 2024 VRC Professional Development series.

For questions regarding this memo, contact veterans@cccoco.edu

Attachments: VRC Minimum Standards

CC: Rebecca Ruan-O'Shaughnessy, Vice Chancellor, Equitable Student Learning, Experience & Impact
Gina Browne, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Equitable Student Learning, Experience & Impact



California Community Colleges

Veterans Resource Center Minimum Standards

Colleges receiving Veterans Resource Center (VRC) ongoing funds shall commit to either meeting and/or making progress towards meeting the minimum standards. When developing spending plans, the funds should be used to maintain a high functioning, student-centered VRC. Refer to the Compendium of Allocations and Resources for ongoing allocations and spending guidance.

[Budget Trailer Bill \(2017-18 State Budget Section 6870-101-0001 \(10.B.G\)\)](#)

[Compendium of Allocations & Resources](#)

Questions email veterans@cccco.edu

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

- Use evidence-based high touch interventions.
- Collaborate with Student Services to leverage additional funding to support Veteran-affiliated students.
- Develop local annual spending plans that spend down funds within the same year allocated.
- If funds are not fully expended within the same year of allocation, the remaining funds should be the first funds expended in the following year.
- VRC involvement with local board policies and administrative procedural changes as related to Veterans and approval requirements for VA educational benefits.
- Offer campuswide professional development to support unconditional belonging for student service members and veterans.

STRUCTURE - VRC structures should consider the local needs and size of the veteran and military-affiliated student population.

Required Minimum Standard	Recommended Best Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible signage of VRC location. • ADA Compliant. • Access to a private space for counseling and/or certification of benefits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front desk and/or virtual front desk. • Lounge area and/or study area. • Access to printers, copiers and computers with software that supports accessibility.

STUDENT SERVICES & ACTIVITIES - VRCs should consider the local needs and size of the veteran and military-affiliated student population when determining services and activities.

Required Minimum Standard	Recommended Best Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use available data (local and statewide) to determine the types of student services and activities to provide to students with a focus on student outcomes. ● Collaborate and have a system of referral with other campus-based programs - Basic Needs, Mental Health, Tutoring, Financial Aid, DSPA and other local programs. ● Pre-admission advising & VA education benefits advising. ● Provide written personal summary “shopping sheet” to students with the total cost of their educational program. ● Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) military credit evaluation – CCR tit. 5 § 55050 (j) . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outreach materials, events, and promotion of VRC services and supports. ● Peer-to-peer mentoring. ● Textbook & electronic device loan program. ● Instructional materials and textbook vouchers. ● Establish and maintain intersegmental partnerships to promote and support transfer goals. ● Cultivate and maintain external partnerships – examples: housing, mental health, financial literacy, CalTAPs, 50strong, Work for Warriors, PAVE program, food services, etc.

DATA ELEMENTS & OUTCOMES

Required Minimum Standard	Recommended Best Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MIS Reporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Military Student Status SG01 ○ Student Military Dependent Status SG02 ● Verification & updating local database of enrolled students from CCC Apply Data. ● Verification and updating local database of enrolled students that did not self-identify as a veteran or military-affiliated in CCC Apply. ● Submit the “Annual Reporting Fee” report from the VA to the Chancellor’s Office that includes the number of certifications for calendar year January to December. (VA generates report sent to the SCO annually in March). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coordinated processes with Admissions & Records office with regular alerts of new veterans and military affiliated student applicants. ● Admissions & Records office point of contact for veterans and military affiliated students. ● Collect the number of students accessing the VRC annually such as the number of visits, contacts, etc.

STAFFING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT- VRCs should consider the local needs and size of the veteran and military-affiliated student population when determining staffing needs.

Required Minimum Standard	Recommended Best Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School Certifying Official (SCO) - 1 full-time SCO for every 125 GI Bill students and/or dependents enrolled in the educational institution (per VA recommendations). ● VRC Coordinator and/or Director - separate from the School Certifying Official (SCO) to oversee the day-to-day VRC operations. ● Academic Counselor - with VA education benefit training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● VA work study students to provide support in the VRC and obtain civilian job experience. ● Staff engagement in Veterans Regional Meetings, contact your regional representative for meeting schedule.

STATE AND FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

Required

[H.R. 7105 Section 1018](#) applies to Institutions of Higher Education and Non-College Degree institutions:

- Academic Counselor point of contact
- Financial Aid point of contact
- Disability Counseling point of contact

More Information [Veterans Affairs](#) & [Public Law 116-315 Section 1018](#)

School Certifying Official (SCO)

VA recommends one (1) SCO full-time employee (FTE) for every 125 GI Bill students and/or dependents enrolled in the educational institution. This number should be adjusted as appropriate by the educational institution when the SCO's duties are expanded beyond certifying GI Bill beneficiaries' enrollments. (US Dept. Veterans Affairs School Certifying Official Handbook Section: [School and Student Responsibilities](#))

SCO's are responsible for:

- Reporting initial enrollment, continuing enrollment (dual certification) and changes to enrollment
- Priority Enrollment
- Transition Act
- Enrollment Manager
- Enrolling in ACH Direct Deposit
- Reporting fees to institutions
- 85/15 Rule – Submission of 35% exemption
- [SCO Annual Training Requirements](#)
- Comply with [Public Law 116-315](#) and any other state or federally approved legislative requirements.
- Submitting CSAAVE catalog approval application

Residency	Veterans and Veteran Dependents Residency – Veterans Choice Act H.R.7105 (Section 1005) & S. 1095 (Section2) . All "covered individuals" will be charged as a California Resident.
Military Leave	Each segment of public higher education shall establish, and update as necessary, a written policy concerning students who are called to active military service EDC § 66023 In accordance with California Military Families Financial Relief Act of 2005 Section 824 (b)(1), Institutions shall make arrangements to reasonably accommodate and assist the student so that he or she is able to meet any and all coursework requirements that he or she may have missed due to military service.
Priority Registration	For members of the armed forces or veteran pursuant to Education Code section 66025.91
Transition Act	Veterans Benefits and Transition Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-407) Title 1 – Education, Section 103. Institutions are required to allow GI Bill (Chapter 33) and VR&E (Chapter 31) beneficiaries to attend a course of education for up to 90 days from the date the beneficiary provides a certificate of eligibility, or valid VAF 28-1905. The District will not impose a penalty, or require the beneficiary to borrow additional funds to cover tuition and fees due to late payments from VA.

OTHER RESOURCES

CalVet Fee Waiver	Samples of VRC Spending
VA Work Study Site Supervisor Handbook	50strong Veteran Employment & CCC Opt-In Form
MAP Initiative - CPL	Battlefields to Ballfields
CPL Implementation Toolkit	Warrior Scholar
Center for Veteran Transition and Integration	