

## **VETERANS SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE I/II**

### **DEFINITION:**

Under general supervision, Veterans Service Representatives (VSRs) advise and assist veterans and their dependents with petitioning for benefits and services from the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) and other federal, state and local agencies. They provide advocacy and referrals to agencies and other services providers, and do related work as required.

### **DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:**

**Veterans Service Representative I (VSR I)** is the entry level position. Incumbents are expected to gain competence through a closely supervised self-study education program, one-on-one training, and formal classroom training when available. The VSR I must obtain USDVA accreditation by successfully passing a test administered by the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) within 12 months of employment. Failure to successfully pass this test will result in termination.

**Veterans Service Representative II (VSR II)** is the experienced level position. Incumbents in this classification are expected to work with a minimum of supervision and to capably manage the more complex and diverse claims. The VSR II performs specialist duties by preparing the presentation of claims, appeals and evidence to administrative adjudication bodies.

Promotion to Veterans Service Representative II relies heavily on prior case management experience, advocate skills, United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) accreditation, a recommendation by the Director of the Veterans Service Department, and approval of the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Depending on assignment, incumbents in this classification must be available to report to work nights, weekends and holidays in addition to their regular work schedule.

### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:**

- Gathers information through interviews with veterans, dependents or next of kin to determine eligibility for benefits
- Advises and assists veterans and their dependents in matters relating to compensation and pension, education, insurance, medical, housing, and burial benefits
- Explains applicable laws and regulations; assists applicants by assembling documentation, prepares and files completed claims and appeals for veteran's benefits

### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS: (continued)**

- Determines eligibility and authorizes benefits for State programs, i.e., College Fee Waiver program
- Research, review and explain, as necessary, legislative actions and regulatory changes
- Assembles supporting documentation necessary to prepare and submit claims, i.e., compensation, pension, healthcare, burial, etc.
- Makes presentations to military personnel and conducts community outreach
- Maximizes use of software programs to perform advocacy and case management functions
- Participates and assists in staff training
- Secures documentation of births, deaths, marriages and divorces of veterans and dependents
- Prepares correspondence and reports and gathers documentation to prepare appeals or to present evidence to administrative adjudication boards
- Makes hospital visits and home calls as necessary
- Works with the Veterans Affairs Council, hospitals, health and social service agencies and others in determining needs for individual cases
- Perform itinerant travel to outlying offices

### **OTHER FUNCTIONS:**

- Performs other job-related duties as assigned.

All Kern County employees are designated "Disaster Service Workers" through state and local laws (CA Government Code Sec. 3100-3109 and Ordinance Code Title 2-Administration, Ch. 2.66 Emergency Services.) As Disaster Service Workers, all County employees are expected to remain at work, or to report for work as soon as practicable following a significant emergency or disaster.

## **EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS:**

### **Veterans Service Representative I:**

Completion of 60 semester or 90 quarter units from an accredited college or university, which includes 12 semester or 18 quarter units in behavioral sciences OR graduation from high school, or G.E.D.; and, two (2) years of experience in a position requiring interviewing, counseling and/or guidance. As a VSR I, employee must obtain United States Department of Veteran Affairs (USDVA) accreditation through the California Department of Veteran Affairs (CDVA) within the first 12 months of employment or be terminated.

### **Veterans Service Representative II:**

Completion of 60 semester or 90 quarter units from an accredited college or university, which includes 12 semester or 18 quarter units in behavioral sciences OR graduation from high school, or G.E.D., and, one year of experience as a Veterans Service Representative I or equivalent experience at the journeyman level developing and processing veterans' claims in an accredited national veteran service organization, or a federal, state, or county veterans service office. Full accreditation with the United States Department of Veteran Affairs (USDVA) is required.

### **Additional Requirements:**

Possession of a valid California Class C Driver's License at the time of appointment is required. Incumbents must have the ability to travel to designated locations.

Service in the Armed Forces of the United States with an honorable discharge is desirable but not required.

**Knowledge of:** Department and Veteran Administration rules and regulations; Veterans' eligibility criteria; effective interviewing and counseling skills; time management concepts; effective case management techniques; written and oral presentation and communication techniques; and knowledge of California Department of Veteran Affairs (CDVA) Audit Guidelines. Completing automated/interactive forms; entering and retrieving data from automated databases; interpreting relevant regulations and applying findings to a given situation; reviewing medical and legal records; and identifying relevant information

**Ability to:** Plan, organize and prioritize multiple tasks for caseloads considering time dependence; determine clients eligibility and make suitable referrals; interact with problematical clients, contacts or co-workers; identify relevant supporting information; balance competing demands through case management; communicate effectively orally and in writing; evaluate existing laws and procedures; and make determinations and recommendations regarding veterans rights and benefits.

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