

## **BRIEFLY...**

Highlights of Report Number 06-14-001-02-001, issued to the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training.

### **WHY READ THE REPORT**

The U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) offers employment and training services to eligible veterans through its Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) Program. Under this grant program, funds are allocated to State Workforce Agencies in direct proportion to the number of veterans seeking employment within their state. The grants support two principal staff positions: Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs). DVOP specialists provide intensive services to meet the employment needs of disabled veterans and other eligible veterans, with an emphasis directed toward serving veterans with barriers to employment. LVERs conduct outreach to employers and engage in advocacy efforts with hiring executives to increase employment opportunities for veterans.

VETS estimates that the U.S. military discharges about 270,000 service members annually. Department of Labor programs will be challenged to meet the employment needs of this expected influx of veterans. For VETS specifically, the Department projects that approximately 90 percent of future JVSG participants will require intensive services, such as career planning and counseling, skill assessment, referral to training and support services, and post-transition follow-up, to overcome significant barriers to employment.

### **WHY OIG CONDUCTED THE AUDIT**

OIG conducted the audit of the JVSG program operated by Florida's Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) to answer the following questions:

1. Did VETS ensure Florida DEO's JVSG staff adequately provided intensive services to meet employment and training needs of veterans through its JVSG program?
2. Did VETS ensure Florida's DEO reported JVSG program measures accurately?

### **READ THE FULL REPORT**

To view the report, including the scope, methodology, and full agency response, go to:

<http://www.oig.dol.gov/public/reports/oa/2014/06-14-001-02-001.pdf>.

**March 27, 2014**

## **VETS' OVERSIGHT OF FLORIDA'S JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANTS PROGRAM NEEDS TO BE STRENGTHENED**

### **AUDIT RESULTS**

VETS did not ensure Florida DEO's JVSG staff adequately provided intensive services to eligible veterans. Florida DEO's JVSG program did not maintain documentation showing that it had assessed veterans' employment needs, identified barriers to employment, developed a plan to address identified barriers, or provided appropriate intensive services. Without such information, VETS could not determine whether the Florida DEO JVSG program was successfully meeting the employment needs of the veterans it served.

VETS policies contained conflicting guidance to the states operating the JVSG program on the provision of intensive services, did not define barriers to employment, and did not specify documentation requirements. Moreover, VETS' monitoring of the Florida DEO JVSG program did not include verifying the information the Florida DEO reported regarding the services provided through its JVSG program. Instead, VETS relied on the self-assessments of DVOP specialists, interviews of Florida DEO staff, and summary activity data. These guidance and monitoring issues further impeded VETS' ability to ensure that the JVSG program in Florida was operating as intended.

### **WHAT OIG RECOMMENDED**

We recommended the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training develop new JVSG intensive service guidance for DVOP specialists and new JVSG monitoring procedures to review intensive service documentation and verify states' JVSG performance data.

The Assistant Secretary agreed with the recommendations and described planned actions and actions already in process to implement the recommendations.