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VETERANS' PROGRAM LETTER NO. 5-07

TO: ALL REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS AND DIRECTORS FOR
VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING
ALL STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY ADMINISTRATORS
ALL REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS, EMPLOYMENT AND
TRAINING ADMINISTRATION (INFO)

FROM: 
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SUBJECT: The Recovery and Employment Assistance Lifelines Program
(REALifelines)

- I. **Purpose:** To provide guidance to States and Veterans' Employment and Training Services (VETS) field staff on the Recovery and Employment Assistance Lifelines (REALifelines) Program.

REALifelines provides information and assistance for the economic recovery and employment or reemployment of service members who were seriously wounded or injured in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and are transitioning to civilian life. The program addresses the employment needs of participants, identifies any barriers to employment they might have, and helps them overcome these barriers.

The REALifelines Program is a collaborative partnership among the Department of Labor (DOL), the Department of Defense (DoD), the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA), the State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) and private and public employers. The program is administered by DOL/VETS.

- II. **Background:** REALifelines responds to the need for comprehensive and seamless transition employment assistance for returning service members who were wounded and injured in OIF or OEF. Other transitioning service members and

veterans, including those with disabilities, will continue to be served at the Career One Stop Centers located throughout the country.

The purpose of REALifelines is to provide each participant with one-on-one, personalized employment services, including targeted job information for their geographic location, career counseling, case management specific to their individual needs, job referrals and job placement.

III. Program participants and services: Program participants are transitioning service members and veterans who were seriously wounded or injured in OIF or OEF that require or request employment or reemployment services to help them transition from the military to the civilian workforce. REALifelines services could include, but are not limited to:

- intensive employment services;
- labor market information;
- career counseling or vocational guidance;
- reemployment rights information;
- job development and short-term placement opportunities (for example, Operation War Fighter);
- job training, job referral and placement; and
- referral to other federal, state, community or faith-based organizations to assist in addressing barriers.

IV. Program Implementation: An integral component of the REALifelines program is the out-stationing of both a VETS staff member and a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Bethesda Naval Medical Center, Tripler Army Medical Center, Naval Medical Center San Diego, Brooke Army Medical Center and Madigan Army Medical Center. Other major medical treatment facilities (MTFs) may be added later. VETS REALifelines staff members are also stationed at the Military Severely Injured Center (MSIC).

Each VETS Regional Administrator (RAVET) will designate a Regional Coordinator who will plan and coordinate REALifelines activities for VETS staff, market the REALifelines program with employers, and track and analyze the participant information reported by the Directors for Veterans' Employment and Training (DVETs). RAVETs should direct this effort to best address the needs of their regions.

The Regional Coordinator will be the main Point of Contact (POC) between the National Office and the DVET. The DVET will be the main POC for the State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) and Career One-Stop Center Staff, and also the

reporting nexus through which the information flows between the SWAs and the regional staff.

The Department of Labor's nationwide network of Career One Stop Centers is integral to the success of this program. One Stop staff, particularly DVOPs, are uniquely trained and ideally located to provide these specialized and intensive services at the local level.

States will be required to address the role of the SWA staff in supporting the REALifelines program in their FY 2009 Jobs for Veterans Act State Plans. That role includes the out stationing of DVOPs at designated major MTFs. States will negotiate program goals for REALifelines with the DVET through the annual planning process. The VPL for the Annual Modification to the State Plan will provide this guidance.

A technical assistance guide, to be published in July 2007, will provide detailed information regarding specific roles and responsibilities, goals and outcome measures, and reporting requirements for the REALifelines program.

V. **Inquiries**: Questions should be referred to the DVET.

VI. **Expiration Date**: This VPL remains in effect until superseded.