

STATEMENT OF SCOPE

Department of Veterans Affairs

Rule No.: VA 2

Relating to: Employment and entrepreneurship (EE) grants transition program

Rule Type: Both Emergency and Permanent

1. Finding/nature of emergency (Emergency Rule only):

The Department of Veterans Affairs finds that an emergency exists and that the proposed emergency rule is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety, or welfare. Facts constituting the emergency are as follows:

The proposed rules will enable the Department to participate in a national program to provide improved access to employment for military members transitioning from active military service and joining Wisconsin communities as veterans. To accomplish this the proposed rules would expand the current grant process authorized by s. 45.437, Stats., to include the administration, enforcement, and evaluation of this transition partnership. An emergency rule is necessary to ensure that the administrative rules relating to the granting of appropriated funds for this program are developed before the grant period begins. The revision of current administrative rules is necessary to include local non-profit partners that will work with this new transition assistance partnership and allow grant recipients to improve employment outcomes for veterans in Wisconsin. Expansion of this grant to partners in this new transition assistance program may help ensure the Department obtains partner organizations across the state to coordinate with transitioning service members by identifying and connecting them with suitable employment opportunities across Wisconsin.

The criteria and procedures must be in effect prior to the opening of the grant period for this program, which is slated for September 15, 2021. The timeline for the permanent version of this rule would not otherwise be in effect prior to the announcement of the grant. Unless the proposed rules are in place, the Department is unable to efficiently implement and administer the expanded portion of the entrepreneurship grant program. The promulgation of emergency rules will help ensure the implementation of this transition partnership remains consistent through the completion of the permanent rulemaking process.

2. Detailed description of the objective of the proposed rule:

The proposed rules will revise Administrative Code s. VA 2.08 – Veterans Employment and Entrepreneurship Grants. The primary objective of the proposed rule is to expand expenditure of grant funds to include the employment-related activities that are a crucial component of the aforementioned transition partnership. The Department will coordinate program participation and activities at the State level, which will require the services of multiple non-profit organizations across the state.

In partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of the Army, and non-profit organizations, the Department will participate in a national program to provide improved access to employment, benefits, services, and care for military members transitioning from active military service and joining Wisconsin communities as veterans. This program focuses on employment by connecting transitioning veterans to employers in the state, thus improving employment outcomes for veterans. There is no process currently in place that seamlessly reintegrates the service member into the civilian community.

This multi-faceted transition assistance program connects an exiting service member to the relevant employers, local programs, and organizations in the service member's future post-military community. Through this partnership, services will be made available to military members transitioning from active military service to civilian life. The amended rule will ensure grants authorized under s. 45.437, Stats., can be awarded to non-profit organizations to the extent the organization's participation is related to employing exiting service members and improving the employment outcomes for veterans in Wisconsin.

The goal of the program is to set conditions for service members and sponsors to achieve purpose and prosperity and reduce stress and risk by providing instrumental, informational, and emotional support. The transition period between active military service and civilian life is a critical one, with unacceptably high rates of veteran suicide and other negative outcomes. The joint intent of this program is to address these issues through a personal, comprehensive relationship with each new Wisconsin veteran using a proven model that pairs transitioning service members with local sponsors, supported by the network of community, city, and state agencies dedicated to ensuring the successful integration of veterans into Wisconsin communities and thereby improve employment outcomes for veterans in this state.

3. Description of the existing policies relevant to the rule, new policies proposed to be included in the rule, and an analysis of policy alternatives:

The existing policies relevant to the proposed rules are administered under the current entrepreneurship grant program in s. VA 2.08 (5) and limits award of grants to organizations that provide "entrepreneurship training, technical or business assistance, financial assistance, or other assistance to veteran entrepreneurs to improve employment outcomes." The rule will expand these policies for the implementation and administration of the aforementioned transition partnership to meet the statutory charge and limitation "to improve employment outcomes for veterans in this state." There are no alternative means to address the need for the proposed administrative rules as presented above.

4. Detailed explanation of statutory authority for the rule (including the statutory citation and language):

Section 45.03 (2), Stats., authorizes the Secretary of the Department to promulgate rules necessary to carry out the purposes of Ch. 45 and the powers and duties conferred upon it.

Section 45.437 (4), Stats., requires the Department to "...promulgate rules implementing this section. The rules promulgated under this subsection shall include rules establishing the specific goals grant recipients must meet and requiring that those goals be met before any grant moneys are disbursed."

5. Estimate of amount of time that state employees will spend developing the rule and of other resources necessary to develop the rule:

100 hours

6. List with description of all entities that may be affected by the proposed rule:

Veterans, employers that hire veterans, and nonprofit organizations and entities that provide assistance to veterans.

7. Summary and preliminary comparison with any existing or proposed federal regulation that is intended to address the activities to be regulated by the proposed rule:

None.

8. Anticipated economic impact of implementing the rule (note if the rule is likely to have a significant economic impact on small businesses):

The department anticipates that the proposed rules will have no to minimal economic impact statewide or locally, nor have an effect upon small businesses.

Contact Person:

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