

Social Rehabilitation

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Policy

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on administering veterans' eligibility for social rehabilitation under the Veterans' Support Act 2014 (the Act). This document should be read together with the separate papers on:

- *Rehabilitation Services Eligibility*
- *Rehabilitation Section of Your Plans.*

2. Legislative Reference

2.1 The relevant legislation is the Veterans' Support Act 2014 (the Act), sections 115, 120-124, and 212, and Part 1 of Schedule 2, clauses 7-17.

3. The Purpose of Social Rehabilitation

3.1 The purpose of social rehabilitation is to assist in restoring a veteran's **independence** to the maximum extent possible.

3.2 Independence includes the capacity to function in the following areas:

- **Communication** (conveying and receiving information by using skills such as anger management, assertiveness, ability to concentrate, language, memory, numeracy, social awareness, social skills, speech production and development, and using communications technology.)
- **Domestic activities** (cleaning, laundry, meal preparation and associated shopping activities)
- Financial management (ability to budget and manage income versus expenses and to make payments)
- Health care (e.g. the ability to self-medicate)
- Hygiene care (the ability to keep self and home clean and hygienic)
- Mobility (ability to move freely and easily)
- Motivation (initiative and self-confidence to undertake tasks without supervision or another's prodding)
- Safety management (ability to make judgements about own safety and therefore to be left alone and to respond to an emergency, also personal and physical safety in the home in the absence of modifications)

- Sexuality (intimacy and relationship issues, sexual functioning and psychological needs compared with pre-injury/illness state)
- Cognitive tasks of daily living (how well the veteran makes decisions about daily living)
- Use of transport (the ability to drive a vehicle or use public transport independently).

4. Eligibility for Social Rehabilitation

4.1 Go to section 4 of separate paper on Rehabilitation Services Eligibility.

Sections 121(4)(c)(i) and 117 of the Veterans' Support Act 2014

4.2 Subject to the outcome of the veteran's needs assessment or reassessment (**Go to section 6**) Veterans' Affairs may provide social rehabilitation services if Veterans' Affairs considers they are:

- required as a direct consequence of the injury and illness for which the veteran has eligibility
- consistent with the purpose of **rehabilitation outcomes**
- necessary and appropriate, and of the quality required, for social rehabilitation
- of a type normally provided by a rehabilitation provider; and
- agreed in the veteran's Your Plan, if one has been prepared.

4.3 "Social rehabilitation services" include:

- **aids and appliances**
- **attendant care**
- **child care**
- **home help**
- **modifications to the home**
- **training for independence**
- **transport for independence**

Go to separate policy papers for detail of each of these individual social rehabilitation services.

4.4 Veterans' Affairs may provide other social rehabilitation not covered by the rehabilitation services listed above if:

- It is required as a direct consequence of the injury or illness for which the veteran is receiving entitlements
- The veteran's need for it has been identified in the rehabilitation section of the veteran's Your Plan, or before the programme of rehabilitation is formally agreed if it is appropriate in the circumstances and in line with the purpose of social rehabilitation (section 3), and
- It meets the conditions in paragraph 4.2.

Sections 121 and 122 of the Veterans' Support Act 2014

- 4.5 Veterans' Affairs will not pay or contribute towards the costs of companion, guide, or service dogs. This includes costs relating to their training, food or health care. We also do not cover the costs of training the veteran to manage the dog.
- 4.6 We will continue to monitor overseas research on the effectiveness of service dogs for supporting veterans with mental health issues such as PTSD, anxiety or depression.

5. Applications for Social Rehabilitation

- 5.1 **Go to section 6 of separate paper on Rehabilitation Services Eligibility.**

6. Social Rehabilitation Needs Assessment

- 6.1 **Go to sections 3 and 4 and Appendix I flowchart of separate paper on Rehabilitation Section of Your Plans for process of carrying out a needs assessment of the veteran and determining which agency should take the lead on providing rehabilitation.**
- 6.2 The Rehabilitation Advisor will determine whether another agency has already conducted a rehabilitation needs assessment, whether the needs assessment is based on comparable criteria to that which Veterans' Affairs uses and what assessments need to be done.
- 6.3 Where the social rehabilitation needs assessment is to be undertaken by Veterans' Affairs, the Rehabilitation Advisor will engage with suitably qualified assessors who are **health practitioners** to undertake the assessment and will provide the assessor with all the relevant information held.
- 6.4 Health practitioners can be engaged to provide assessments across a wide range of areas or in specific areas where they may have specialist knowledge. Veterans' Affairs is responsible for paying assessors to do assessments.

Section 212 of the Veterans' Support Act 2014

- 6.5 The social rehabilitation needs assessment will take into account:
- The level of the veteran's independence prior to and after the injury or illness

- The veteran's limitations as a result of the injury or illness and the appropriate social rehabilitation to minimise the identified limitations
- The **rehabilitation outcome** that would be achieved through providing social rehabilitation
- The alternatives and options available to achieve the relevant social rehabilitation outcome in the most cost-effective way
- Any social rehabilitation (not provided as vocational rehabilitation) that may reasonably be provided to assist the veteran to obtain, regain or acquire work if they are entitled to vocational rehabilitation; and
- Where the veteran lives (and the practicality of delivery of services and achievement of outcomes as expected).

6.6 In the case of a reassessment, the following will be considered:

- any changes in the veteran's circumstances and conditions, including other non-service-related conditions;
- the effect of these changes on the ability to achieve outcomes since the last assessment; and
- whether any of the social rehabilitation assistance previously provided needs replacing.

6.7 **Go to section 9 on Monitoring and Updating the Rehabilitation Plan of the separate paper on Rehabilitation Section of Your Plans.**

Section 124 of the Veterans' Support Act 2014

7. Second Opinion

7.1 Veterans' Affairs reserves the right to obtain a second opinion with regard to the assessment and provision of rehabilitation services.

7.2 If a veteran seeks an independent opinion he/she does so at his/her own cost and Veterans' Affairs may take that opinion into consideration.

8. Reimbursement for Social Rehabilitation

8.1 **Go to separate paper on Rehabilitation Section of Your Plans sections 11 and 12.**

9. Veterans Living Overseas

9.1 The social rehabilitation policy applies equally to all New Zealand veterans, irrespective of their country of residence.

10. Reviews, Appeals and Complaints

- 10.1 If a veteran disagrees about a decision concerning eligibility for an entitlement or service **go to separate policies on Reviews and Appeals**. If a veteran is concerned about Veterans' Affairs' administration of an entitlement or service **go to separate policy on Complaints**.

Glossary

accepted disability [policy definition]

Means an injury, illness or condition that Veterans' Affairs accepts as being service-related.

aid or appliance [clause 7 Schedule 2]

Means any item likely to assist in restoring a veteran to independence.

attendant care [clause 7 Schedule 2]

(a) means:

- (i) personal care; and
- (ii) assistance with cognitive tasks of daily living, such as communication, orientation, planning, and task completion; and
- (iii) protection of the veteran from further injury or illness in his or her ordinary environment; and

(b) includes training a person to provide attendant care, if **Veterans' Affairs** agrees to fund the training; but

(c) does not include child care, domestic activities, or home maintenance.

child [section 7]

In relation to a veteran:

(a) means a natural child of the veteran; and

(b) includes an adopted child of the veteran; and

(c) includes any other child who would ordinarily be regarded as a child of the veteran because the veteran:

- (i) is or was the spouse or partner of one of the child's parents; and
- (ii) acted as a parent of the child.

child [clause 7 Schedule 2]

(a) means a child under 14 years; and

(b) includes any other child, if the child needs child care because of his or her physical or mental condition.

communication [clause 7 Schedule 2]

Means conveying and receiving information by using skills such as anger management, assertiveness, ability to concentrate, language, memory, numeracy, social awareness, social skills, speech production and development, and using communications technology.

domestic activities [clause 7 Schedule 2]

Means cleaning, laundry, meal preparation, and associated shopping activities, in relation to the veteran's home.

health practitioner [section 7]

Has the same meaning as in section 5(1) of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003.

home [clause 7 Schedule 2]

- (a) means residential premises in which the veteran lives and which are owned, rented, or otherwise lawfully occupied by the veteran or his or her parent, guardian, or spouse or partner; and
- (b) includes residential premises in which the veteran proposes to live after they are built and which will be owned, rented, or otherwise lawfully occupied by the veteran or his or her parent, guardian, or spouse or partner; but
- (c) does not include any hospital, hostel, hotel, motel, rest home, or other institution.

home help [clause 7 Schedule 2]

Means the provision of domestic activities.

impairment [section 7]

Means a loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological, or anatomical function or structure.

independence [clause 7 Schedule 2]

Includes the capacity to function in the following areas:

- (a) communication
- (b) domestic activities
- (c) educational participation
- (d) financial management
- (e) health care
- (f) hygiene care
- (g) mobility
- (h) motivation
- (i) safety management
- (j) sexuality
- (k) cognitive tasks of daily living, such as orientation, planning, and task completion
- (l) use of transport.

modifications to the home [clause 7 Schedule 2]

- (a) means alterations to a veteran's home that:
 - (i) have the purpose of assisting a veteran to live as independently as practicable, having regard to the limitations caused by his or her injury or illness; and
 - (ii) remove structural barriers or add features fixed to the home; and
- (b) includes real estate fees, legal fees, removal costs, and the costs of any modifications incurred in relocating a veteran to a new home, if VANZ decides that relocation is the most cost-effective alternative to modification of the veteran's existing home.

personal care [clause 7 Schedule 2]

Means physical assistance to move around and to take care of basic personal needs such as bathing, dressing, feeding, and toileting.

rehabilitation outcome [clause 7 Schedule 2]

Means:

- (a) before an individual rehabilitation plan is agreed, a rehabilitation goal, objective, or result determined by Veterans' Affairs
- (b) if an individual rehabilitation plan is agreed, a goal, objective, or result specified in the plan.

service-related [section 7]

In relation to an injury, an illness, a condition, or a whole-person impairment, means an injury, an illness, or a whole-person impairment caused by, contributed to by, or aggravated by qualifying service.

training for independence [clause 7 Schedule 2]

Includes:

- (a) training and coaching a veteran to assist in restoring the veteran's independence:
- (b) training in using and maintaining aids or appliances, and integrating them into the veteran's daily life, for a veteran who needs aids or appliances.

transport for independence [clause 7 Schedule 2]

- (a) means assistance with the cost of, for example:
 - (i) escorted travel by vehicle
 - (ii) modifying a vehicle
 - (iii) purchasing a vehicle
 - (iv) travelling by public transport
 - (v) travelling by taxi; and
- (b) includes driver licence retraining, for a veteran who previously had a driver licence.

veteran [section 7]

Means:

- (a) a member of the armed forces who took part in qualifying operational service at the direction of the New Zealand Government; or
- (b) a person:
 - (i) who has been:
 - (A) appointed as an employee of the Defence Force under section 61A of the Defence Act 1990; or
 - (B) seconded to the Defence Force with the permission of the Chief of Defence Force; and
 - (ii) who took part in qualifying operational service at the direction of the New Zealand Government; or
- (c) a person who, immediately before the commencement of Part 3 of this Act, is eligible for a pension under the following provisions of the War Pensions Act 1954:
 - (i) section 19 (but only if the person was a member of the forces):
 - (ii) section 55 or 56:
 - (iii) Parts 4 and 5