



Te Tira Ahu Ika A Whiro

**VETERANS'
AFFAIRS**

New Zealand

Policy

Social Rehabilitation

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Policy

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy provides guidance on administering veterans' eligibility for social rehabilitation under the Veterans' Support Act 2014 (the Act). It 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, 118, 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 See 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 (see 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**

See 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 **See section 6 of separate paper on Rehabilitation Services Eligibility.**

6. Social Rehabilitation Needs Assessment

6.1 **See 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
- where the veteran lives (and the practicality of delivery of services and achievement of outcomes as expected); and
- any support given to the veteran by their spouse or partner, children or dependants, or any other person who provides non-professional support, and the needs of any of those persons in relation to the support they give.

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

Sections 124 and 118(2)(aa) 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 **See 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 **see separate policies on Reviews and Appeals**. If a veteran is concerned about Veterans' Affairs' administration of an entitlement or service **see 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—

- (i) an adopted child of the veteran; and
- (ii) a child of whom the veteran is or has been a guardian; and
- (iii) a grandchild or a whāngai of the veteran in relation to whom the veteran acts or has acted as a parent or a guardian; and

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

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

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.

dependant [section 7]

In relation to a veteran, means any of the following persons:

(a) a person (not being the spouse, partner, or child, of the veteran) who—

- (i) is under 18 years of age; and
- (ii) is wholly or primarily dependant on the veteran for financial support; and
- (iii) ordinarily resides with the veteran:

(b) a person (not being the spouse, partner, or child of the veteran) who—

- (i) is 18 years of age or more; and
- (ii) is under the care of the veteran; and
- (iii) ordinarily resides with the veteran because the person is unable to live independently of the veteran due to disability, illness, or advanced age:

- (c) a person who—
- (i) is a child of the veteran; and
 - (ii) is 18 years of age or more; and
 - (iii) is under the care of the veteran; and
 - (iv) is unable to live independently of the veteran due to physical or mental infirmity

domestic activities [clause 7 Schedule 2]

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

guardian [section 7]

Has the same meaning as in section 15 of the Care of Children Act 2004.

health practitioner [section 7]

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

home [section 7]

- (a) means residential premises in which the veteran lives and that are owned, rented, or otherwise lawfully occupied by the veteran or the veteran's parent, guardian, spouse or partner; and
- (b) includes residential premises in which the veteran proposes to live after they are built and that will be owned, rented, or otherwise lawfully occupied by the veteran or the veteran's parent, guardian, spouse, or partner; and
- (c) includes any other premises in which the veteran lives and for which the veteran is solely responsible for home maintenance; but
- (d) does not include any hotel or motel, or any hospital, hostel, 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.

member of the armed forces [section 7]

Means a person who is or has been a member of the New Zealand armed force raised by the Governor-General on behalf of the Sovereign,—

- (a) whether in New Zealand or elsewhere; and
- (b) whether before or after the passing of this Act.

partner [section 7]

Means a civil union partner or a de facto partner.

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.

qualifying operational service [section 8]

Means—

- (a) service in any deployment treated as a war or emergency for the purposes of the War Pensions Act 1954; or
- (b) service on any deployment declared to be operational service under section 9.

qualifying routine service [section 8]

Means service in the armed forces before 1 April 1974 that is not qualifying operational service.

qualifying service [section 8]

Means—

- (a) qualifying operational service; or
- (b) qualifying routine service.

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
- (aa) a member of the armed forces who took part in qualifying routine service before 1 April 1974; 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.

whāngai [section 7]

Means a child adopted by the veteran in accordance with Māori custom.