



RESOURCES FOR BENEFITS COUNSELING

Research suggests that providing benefits-related counseling to people who receive veteran's benefits and other public benefits can help them to increase their hours worked, their earned income, and their net income (including benefits). The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) requires that anyone counseling a veteran about their VA benefits be certified as an Accredited Representative. However, many veterans receive benefits (such as food stamps or subsidized housing) from other sources, and counseling veterans about the effect of work on these benefits does not require certification. Following are some resources and organizations that can help Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program staff when counseling veterans about benefits.

American Legion Veterans Benefit Center

<http://www.legion.org/veteransbenefits>

The American Legion offers information for Accredited Representatives and individual veterans. Among the resources is a mobile app called [Claims Coach](#), which helps veterans identify benefits for which they may be eligible and initiate the process of working with a benefits specialist. The site also includes a [Benefits Calculator](#) that helps determine eligibility.

Social Security Administration Work Incentives Planning and Assistance

<https://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/WIPA.html>

The Social Security Administration's (SSA) Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program is intended to enable beneficiaries with disabilities to make informed choices about work and to support working beneficiaries in making a successful transition to self-sufficiency. The program supports Community Work Incentives Coordinators (CWICs) in each state who receive training to counsel Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries about the effect of earned income on their Social Security and other benefits.

Ticket to Work Program

<http://www.chooseworkttw.net/>

SSA maintains a website to educate SSI and SSDI beneficiaries about employment supports that can help them increase their income through work. The Ticket to Work (TTW) website helps beneficiaries locate help through numerous programs and understand how the programs relate to each other. Among the resources are short videos that explain eligibility for TTW and how the process works. The site's [Path to Work](#) section covers the entire process from signing up through managing benefits after starting work.

Veterans Benefits Administration

<http://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/>

The VA's Veterans Benefits Administration offers resources and information about various benefits offered by VA and the Department of Defense. The [Benefits A-Z](#) section is a comprehensive list of individual benefit programs, while the [fact sheets](#) provide general information about categories of benefits, such as disability benefits and vocational rehabilitation programs.

Veterans of Foreign Wars—Assistance

<http://www.vfw.org/Assistance/>

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) offers assistance to individual veterans and helpful resources. Included on the site are an [overview of benefits](#) by category, as well as links to the VFW's National Veterans Service representatives in local communities.

Virginia Commonwealth University, National Training Center

<http://vcu-ntdc.org/>

The SSA has contracted with Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) to work with individual WIPA projects and train CWICs. VCU's National Training Center offers a comprehensive [training curriculum](#) and detailed [resources](#) about the different types of benefits for veterans who have disabilities. The resources explain how working affects these benefits and how they relate to other benefits, such as those administered by the SSA.

NVTAC

National Veterans Technical Assistance Center

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