

(1) the outreach services program authorized by this chapter is for the purpose of ensuring that all veterans (especially those who have been recently discharged or released from active military, naval, air, or space service, or from a reserve component, and those who are eligible for readjustment or other benefits and services under laws administered by the Department) are provided timely and appropriate assistance to aid and encourage them in applying for and obtaining such benefits and services in order that they may achieve a rapid social and economic readjustment to civilian life and obtain a higher standard of living for themselves and their dependents; and

(2) the outreach services program authorized by this chapter is for the purpose of charging the Department with the affirmative duty of seeking out eligible veterans and eligible dependents and providing them with such services.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this chapter—

(1) the term “outreach” means the act or process of reaching out in a systematic manner to proactively provide information, services, and benefits counseling to veterans, and to the spouses, children, and parents of veterans who may be eligible to receive benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary, to ensure that such individuals are fully informed about, and receive assistance in applying for, such benefits;

(2) the term “other governmental programs” includes all programs under State or local laws as well as all programs under Federal law other than those authorized by this title; and

(3) the term “eligible dependent” means a spouse, surviving spouse, child, or dependent parent of a person who served in the active military, naval, air, or space service.

(Added Pub. L. 109-233, title IV, §402(a), June 15, 2006, 120 Stat. 407; amended Pub. L. 110-181, div. A, title XVII, §1710, Jan. 28, 2008, 122 Stat. 494; Pub. L. 116-283, div. A, title IX, §926(a)(58), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 3830.)

Editorial Notes

PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 7721 of this title prior to repeal by Pub. L. 109-233.

AMENDMENTS

2021—Subsecs. (a)(1), (b)(3). Pub. L. 116-283 “air, or space service” for “or air service”.

2008—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 110-181, §1710(a), inserted “, or from a reserve component,” after “active military, naval, or air service”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 110-181, §1710(b), added par. (1) and redesignated former pars. (1) and (2) as (2) and (3), respectively.

§ 6302. Biennial plan

(a) BIENNIAL PLAN REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall, during the first nine months of every odd-numbered year, prepare a biennial plan for the outreach activities of the Department for the two-fiscal-year period beginning on October 1 of that year.

(b) ELEMENTS.—Each biennial plan under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) Plans for efforts to identify eligible veterans and eligible dependents who are not enrolled or registered with the Department for benefits or services under the programs administered by the Secretary.

(2) Plans for informing eligible veterans and eligible dependents of modifications of the benefits and services under the programs administered by the Secretary, including eligibility for medical and nursing care and services.

(c) COORDINATION IN DEVELOPMENT.—In developing the biennial plan under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with the following:

(1) Directors or other appropriate officials of organizations approved by the Secretary under section 5902 of this title.

(2) Directors or other appropriate officials of State and local education and training programs.

(3) Representatives of nongovernmental organizations that carry out veterans outreach programs.

(4) Representatives of State and local veterans employment organizations.

(5) Other individuals and organizations that the Secretary considers appropriate.

(Added Pub. L. 109-233, title IV, §402(a), June 15, 2006, 120 Stat. 408.)

§ 6303. Outreach services

(a) REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE SERVICES.—In carrying out the purposes of this chapter, the Secretary shall provide the outreach services specified in subsections (b) through (d). In areas where a significant number of eligible veterans and eligible dependents speak a language other than English as their principal language, such services shall, to the maximum feasible extent, be provided in the principal language of such persons.

(b) INDIVIDUAL NOTICE TO NEW VETERANS.—The Secretary shall by letter advise each veteran at the time of the veteran's discharge or release from active military, naval, air, or space service (or as soon as possible after such discharge or release) of all benefits and services under laws administered by the Department for which the veteran may be eligible. In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall ensure, through the use of veteran-student services under section 3485 of this title, that contact, in person or by telephone, is made with those veterans who, on the basis of their military service records, do not have a high school education or equivalent at the time of discharge or release.

(c) DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION.—(1) The Secretary—

(A) shall distribute full information to eligible veterans and eligible dependents regarding all benefits and services to which they may be entitled under laws administered by the Secretary; and

(B) may, to the extent feasible, distribute information on other governmental programs (including manpower and training programs) which the Secretary determines would be beneficial to veterans.