The VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 was recently passed by Congress to provide assistance for unemployed Veterans. If you are an unemployed Veteran between the ages of 35 and 60 you might qualify. The Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) was part of the recently passed legislation. The program is a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Labor (DOL) joint effort to provide training to Veterans unable to find work.

VRAP will provide 12 months of training assistance equal to the monthly full-time payment rate under the Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty program (currently paying $1,473 per month). Participants must be enrolled in a program approved for VA benefits that is offered by a community college or technical school. The program must lead to an Associate Degree, Non-College Degree or a Certificate.

To qualify, a Veteran must:

- Be at least 35 but no more than 60 years old
- Be unemployed on the day of application
- Have an other than dishonorable discharge
- Not be eligible for any other VA education benefit program (e.g.: the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Assistance)
- Not be in receipt of VA compensation due to unemployability
- Not be enrolled in a federal or state job training program
- Pursue a program that leads to employment in a high demand occupation

The program is limited to 45,000 participants between July 1, 2012, and September 30, 2012, and an additional 54,000 participants from October 1, 2012, through March 31, 2014. DOL will provide employment assistance to every Veteran who participates upon completion of their program. Applications will be accepted May 15, 2012 through October 1, 2013.

VA will publish more details on the program as they become available at our VOW website.

If you have further questions please visit our Customer Help page where you can read our FAQs about the VRAP program or submit a question to our customer service staff.

Thank you for your interest and please feel free to pass this message on to another Veteran.

Sincerely,
Curtis L. Coy

Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

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