

**VETERANS' SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY OF
THE WIA GOLD STANDARD EVALUATION**

Local DVOP/LVER Staff Discussion Guide

American Job Center Location: _____

Respondent Name/Position: _____

Interview Date/Time: _____

Interviewer: _____

A. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Hi, my name is [xxx] from Mathematica Policy Research/Social Policy Research. Thanks for agreeing to participate in this discussion.

As you know [local area] has been participating in the National WIA Evaluation. As part of that study, we are exploring how the workforce system identifies and provides services to the area's veterans. Your input will be really useful.

Just a couple of things before we start...

I would like you to know that the project team has received approval from the Office of Management and Budget to conduct this study (OMB Control Number xxxx-xxxx). We could not conduct this session without that approval. Your responses are completely voluntary and will be used for research purposes only.

We will not share your comments today with anyone outside the immediate study team at Mathematica. Our report will describe the experiences and viewpoints expressed, but comments will not be attributed to specific individuals.

I would like to record our discussion so I can listen to it later when I write up my notes. No one outside the immediate team will listen to the tape. If you want to say anything that you do not want taped, please let me know and I will be glad to pause the tape recorder. Do you have any objections to being part of this interview or to my taping our discussion?

This discussion will last about 60 minutes. Once again, thank you for participating. Do you have any questions before we get started?

B. INDIVIDUAL BACKGROUND

I'd like to start by briefly talking about your job and your overall responsibilities.

1. Please tell me a little about your work experience. How long have you worked as a DVOP/LVER? Have you held other positions within the American Job Center? What kind of work did you do before?
2. Do you work full- or part-time as a DVOP/LVER? Has this always been the case?

(If there has been a shift in the organization between full- and part-time, probe for the reasons for this shift, how the staff feel about it, how it has changed work flow, and the impacts it has on how many veterans are getting what kinds of services.)
3. What are your major responsibilities in this position?

(*Site visitor:* If interviewee is DVOP and you know LVER is also located on site, ask about any differentiation in their responsibilities/tasks)
4. I'm interested in learning how you spend your time. What percentage of your time would you say you devote to [*Site visitor: tailor list based on response to #3*]:
 - One-on-one meetings with veterans
 - Coordinating work or services with WIA staff?
 - Coordinating work or services with other partners?
 - Conducting outreach/informational activities
 - Completing paperwork (including case notes and other computerized "paperwork")
5. Are you located only at this center? If not, please describe your other locations and your schedule. Do you think this is the arrangement that best serves veterans? Why or why not?

C. INITIAL STEPS FOR A VETERAN VISITING THE CENTER

I'm interested in learning about the steps that occur when a veteran walks into the center for the first time.

6. When would a customer walking in the center for the first time be identified as a veteran? Who is responsible for making this determination?
7. Once identified as a veteran, what are the next steps for that customer? How does this differ from the process for a non-veteran customer?

Probes:

- Is the customer informed about POS? If so, when and by whom?
- Does the veteran meet with a different sequence of staff than a non-veteran customer? If so, please explain.

8. What about eligible spouses? How and when are they typically identified and certified, and what are their next steps?
9. Do veterans receive an orientation to the services available to them? If so, please describe. If not, how do veterans learn of the available services?
10. What information/documents are required to certify the customer as a veteran? For POS?

Probe:

- Does verification/certification of veteran status depend on the services the customer is requesting? Please explain.

11. Do veterans and eligible spouses typically come to the American Job Center with some familiarity with services available to veterans, including POS? If so, from where/whom do they tend to receive the information?

Probes:

- To what extent do they receive information from their military base (for those recently discharged), veterans' service organizations [VSOs], the internet, and/or friends?
- Please tell me about any outreach you do (out-stationing, brochures, and so on).
- Do other staff at the American Job Center conduct any outreach? Please describe.

12. Under what circumstances would you (as DVOP/LVER) first meet with the customer? How is it determined if the customer will meet with the DVOP, LVER, or a WIA counselor?

Probes:

- Is the determination based on availability?
- Is the determination based on the client's needs or request for particular services? Please explain.
- Can they be working with both a DVOP/LVER and a WIA counselor?

D. PROVISION OF SERVICES

I'm now interested in learning how veterans receive services at the center, and how it may or may not differ from how other customers receive services.

13. Once enrolled, do veterans work with an assigned case manager or specific types of staff? How are these assignments made? How does this differ from the process for other American Job Center customers?

14. How is POS implemented in practice? Please explain how a veteran receives priority of service when he/she is first in contact with the workforce system. (This could be at a center, at home on a computer, or by some other means.)

Probes:

- How is the intake and flow different for veterans than for non-veteran customers?
- What is your role in POS?
- Do veterans have priority for job openings that are posted? If so, please describe how this works. Are veterans' resumes flagged in the system? Do employers see an indicator of any kind that the person is a veteran?
- If a veteran requests training services, how are they served? What occurs if the LWIA/center has a waiting list?

15. To what extent do you (as LVER/DVOP) collaborate with others also providing services to veterans? To what extent do you work with the WIA and ES staff to meet the needs of your veteran customers? With other partners?

Probes:

- To what extent do customers on your caseload overlap with customers on WIA counselors' caseloads? On the ES caseload?
- Do you communicate about individual veterans? About what? How often?

16. What services do you as a LVER/DVOP most often provide to veterans? How, if at all, does this differ by the type of veteran customer? (This can include things like working with employers who are then interested in hiring veterans.)

Probes:

- What differences, if any, by age of veteran, or time since on active duty?
- What differences, if any, by gender?

17. How do you help veterans translate their military experiences, training, and jobs to civilian opportunities? Do you use specific tools? What are they? How do you find out about these tools?

18. How do you or the American Job Center track services provided to veterans and POS eligibles and the services they receive? What information is tracked? Who has access to this information?

Probe:

- Are veteran services tracked separately for ES, Veterans' State Grants, and WIA?
- Is information about veterans reported in separate systems for ES, WIA, and Veterans' State Grants? If so, are there any links between systems?
- Are staff from various programs able to see each other's case notes?

19. To what extent do you think you are providing services to veterans using unique or innovative strategies? Please explain. Have these strategies been developed at the local level or state? Please explain.

20. What have been the challenges to working with veterans?
21. How do you know if you are successful with your veteran customers? What is the process for following-up with them?

E. CLOSING

Thank you again for taking the time to speak with me. I appreciate and value your input.

22. Do you have anything you would like to tell me or questions you would like to ask me?