Appendix B – Telephone Script to Confirm Cognitive Interview Appointment

"Hello, my name is [**NAME**] from Westat. Can I please speak with [**RESPONDENT NAME**]?"

AFTER RESPONDENT IS ON THE PHONE OR IDENTITY IS CONFIRMED: "Thank you for expressing interest in the interview for the VR&E longitudinal study survey."

ASK IF THE RESPONDENT HAS ANY IMMEDIATE QUESTIONS: "Do you have any questions for me?"
ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS.

IF RESPONDENT HAS NO QUESTIONS: "Great, let me tell you more about the interview.

Westat is working with the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) to help make improvements to a draft survey about the Veteran Readiness & Employment (VR&E) program. As described in the invitation email you received, we are asking for you to provide feedback on questions that will be asked in the survey.

We invite you to participate in a 60 minute interview about your participation in the VR&E program, recent employment and education experiences, and any recent visits to medical facilities. In addition to having you answer the survey questions, we are especially interested in hearing what you think about the questions themselves, as well as the answer choices. You do not have to be currently participating in the VR&E program to participate. Your participation may help VA to improve the VR&E longitudinal survey and ensure the questions are clear and understandable. Once you complete the interview, we will email you a $50 electronic Amazon gift card.

Participation in this interview is voluntary and your responses will be kept private to the extent of the law. You can skip any question in the interview and stop at any time. Your decision to participate and any answers you provide will not impact any current or future benefits you may apply for. None of your personal information will ever be published in any reports or presentations. We will summarize the feedback we receive during the interviews we conduct with you and other respondents in a memo to the VA.

We will be conducting interviews by video conference using Microsoft Teams or Zoom. If you are interested in participating, but are not comfortable setting up video conferencing, a member of our team will contact you ahead of the interview to walk you through the process of using the video conference software. We will ask for your permission to record the interview, so we correctly capture what you tell us. If you do the interview by video conference and at any point you do not wish to be video-recorded, you may turn off your camera. If at any point you do not wish to be audio-recorded, the interviewer will stop the audio-recording. We will destroy the recording once we have finalized the survey questions.

Do you have any questions about the interview?" **ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS.**

IF RESPONDENT HAS NO QUESTIONS: "Are you interested in scheduling an interview?"

IF RESPONDENT IS NOT INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING: "Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today."

IF RESPONDENT IS INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING: "Are you comfortable participating using Microsoft Teams or Zoom software?"

- ☐ **YES**: "Great, let's schedule a date and time for the interview. We will send you the address and link to access to web conference at the scheduled date and time."
- ☐ **UNSURE**: "A member of our team can help walk you through the video conferencing software before the interview. Would that be helpful?"

  - ▪ IF YES, USE SCRIPT ABOVE TO SCHEDULE DATE AND TIME.
  - ▪ IF NO, USE SCRIPT BELOW TO END CONVERSATION.

- ☐ **NO**: "Unfortunately, we are only completing the interviews with video conferencing software. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today."

"We will send you a confirmation email that includes the date and time of your interview appointment and an attachment of the informed consent. This will provide information about your rights and responsibilities as a study participant."

"Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today and we look forward to talking with you soon!"