

July 6, 1993

1. Transmitted is a new Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration Manual M-12, "Readjustment Counseling Service Vet Centers," Part I, "Administrative Operations," Chapters 1 through 6.

2. Principal purpose for this part is to clarify the organizational structure and administrative operations of RCS. This part also transmits the policies and procedures as described herein that are implemented by Readjustment Counseling Service for administering the Vet Centers and the provision of readjustment counseling.

a. Chapter 1: Details the legislative authority for and the prescribed character of VA's (Department of Veterans Affairs's) readjustment counseling;

b. Chapter 2: Specifies the organizational structure and administrative responsibilities of Readjustment Counseling Service;

c. Chapter 3: Describes the operations related to strategic community siting and relocation of Vet Centers;

d. Chapter 4: Specifies the management requirements, tours of duty, and hours of operation for Vet Centers;

e. Chapter 5: Details the main components of the Readjustment Counseling Service Quality Management Program; and

f. Chapter 6: Describes the Vet Center operations related to special veteran populations, research, and continuing education.

3. Filing Instructions

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1-i through 6-3

4. RESCISSIONS: VHA Circulars 10-79-172; 10-80-106; 10-80-256; 10-82-101; 10-83-035, and 10-84-128.

John W. Holsinger, Jr., M.D.
Under Secretary for Health

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(Logo) Department of
Veterans Affairs

READJUSTMENT COUNSELING SERVICE VET CENTERS
Administrative Operations

July 6, 1993

Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Washington, DC 20420

The Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Health Administration Manual, M-12, "Readjustment Counseling Service Vet Centers," Part I, "Administrative Operations," Chapters 1 through 6 is published for the compliance of all concerned.

James W. Holsinger, Jr., M.D.
Under Secretary for Health

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RESCISSIONS

The following material is rescinded:

Circulars

10-79-172

10-80-256

10-82-101

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

1.01 INTRODUCTION

a. On the basis of extensive Congressional testimony and VA (Department of Veterans Affairs) consultation with experts on war-related readjustment difficulties, the character of readjustment counseling was initially established during a 10-year legislative history between 1969 and 1979.

b. As implemented by VA in 1979, readjustment counseling is provided through a nationwide system of community-based Vet Centers.

c. In 1981, VA initiated a new organizational element, Readjustment Counseling Service, to administer the Vet Centers and the provision of readjustment counseling.

d. In 1991, based upon 12 years clinical experience with Vietnam veterans, VA initiated legislative action to provide post-Vietnam era war veterans early access to readjustment counseling and to prevent possible development of delayed and chronic forms of war-related PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder).

1.02 POLICY

It is VA policy to:

a. Provide outreach, psychological counseling and supportive social services to assist Vietnam era veterans, and veterans of Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, and the Persian Gulf war;

b. Resolve war-related psychological difficulties; and

c. Help eligible veterans attain a well adjusted post-war work and family life.

1.03 AUTHORITY

In 1979, the Congress passed, and the President signed, Public Law 96-22, which added to 38 U.S.C. (United States Code) Section 1712A (formerly Section 612A) providing readjustment counseling to any eligible Vietnam era veteran. In April 1991, Congress amended 38 U.S.C. 1712A to authorize VA to furnish readjustment counseling to veterans of the Persian Gulf war and conflicts in Lebanon, Grenada, and Panama.

a. Section 1712A provides that:

(1) Readjustment Counseling shall be provided, on request, to any eligible:

(a) Vietnam era veteran,

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- (b) Veteran of the Persian Gulf war theater,
- (c) Veteran of conflict in Lebanon,
- (d) Veteran of conflict in Grenada, and

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(e) Veteran of conflict in Panama.

(2) This counseling shall include a general mental and psychological assessment to determine whether the veteran has mental or psychological problems associated with readjustment.

b. The law further authorizes:

(1) Referral of ineligible persons discharged from military duty to sources outside VA for assistance;

(2) Training of personnel to provide readjustment counseling services;

(3) Utilization of paraprofessionals, volunteers, and work-study students in initial intake and screening activities; and

(4) Contracting for services from private sector providers.

c. Further definition of eligible veterans by periods and locations of service is specified in subparagraph 4.05.

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