

Ensure VR&E Logistical Needs are Met

What are logistical needs?

Logistical needs include, but are not limited to:

- New office space (either in a current building or different building)
- Minor construction of pre-existing office space
- Alternative work arrangements for staff members (such as the option to telecommute or work at home)
- Telecommunications connectivity (e.g., T1 lines [Tier 1 fiber optic internet lines], Virtual Protocol Network [VPN])
- Office Equipment (e.g., computers, printers, telephones, fax machines, scanners, copy machines, lockable file cabinet)
- Videoconferencing capability for areas where the travelling time or distance between program participants and the Veteran Affairs Regional Office (VARO) makes face-to-face meeting impractical
- Access to/security of building
- Furniture
- Special accommodations (special furniture or computer equipment) for staff members who require them
- General Services Administration (GSA) vehicles



How can you identify a logistical need?

Identification of a logistical need can come from several sources:

Source	<i>A workload analysis performed by the VREO or a VR&E staff member</i>	<i>A workload analysis performed by a program participant</i>	<i>A new or existing logistical change</i>
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An influx of service members in a particular area, such as a military Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) commission recommendation, generates the need for a new office • A military stop/loss policy is lifted, thereby generating more applications for vocational rehabilitation. As a result, there is a need for additional staff, office space, and equipment • After workload analysis, the VREO identified an increase in the number of program participants in a specific geographic area, thus generating the need for an additional VRC and an additional out-based office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A group of program participants have expressed difficulty with having to drive a long distance to the VARO. They request that an office be opened and staffed in their area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A VR&E Office's lease is ending and the re-negotiation has been unsuccessful, thus resulting in the need for new office space • A large number of new troops are coming into a military base and will require the office space that the VR&E was using. This results in the need for a new location • A VARO Service Center requires additional space, so the VR&E must reconfigure their space or obtain new space

Other logistical considerations

The program participant population density and geographic size of the VARO jurisdiction will affect the logistical needs of a particular office.

For example: A large geographic but sparsely populated program participant state, like Montana, may require multiple access sites but few staff work stations. A small geographic but densely populated program participant state, like Rhode Island, may require only one site but more staff workstations.

Steps to Ensure that VR&E Logistical Needs are Met

Step 1: Perform research to support identified logistical need

Perform the necessary research to support your rationale for a logistical need.* Examples include:

- A VREO analyzes national data for superior performance in the measure "Days to Notification." He contacts VREOs at offices that are performing well and determines that virtually all of these offices are conducting group orientation and testing. The VREO consequently asks his VARO Director for a conference room to hold group orientation and group testing, anticipating a reduction in the Days to Notification measure for his office.
- A VREO notices that the number of applications is increasing in some zip codes, prompting the need for additional office space. She researches the number of new program participants in a particular geographic area for the past five years. She also researches information in Corporate Waco, Indianapolis, Newark, Roanoke, and Seattle (CWINRS) and Central Office Information Network Target (COINTAR), as well as Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and other census data, to identify Veteran population trends. This comprehensive research supports the need for additional office space.



***Common Error:**
Make sure that you thoroughly research an issue related to a logistical need so that you do not make an uninformed request.

Step 2: Present research supporting logistical need to appropriate individuals

Meet with the VARO Director and the Support Services Chief to present the logistical need and supporting research.

- You may also consider meeting with the following other individuals, if they are available:
 - VARO Management Analyst
 - Assistant VREO
 - Assistant VARO Director
 - Union representative(s)
- In many cases, this research can be presented verbally and does not require formal preparation of slides or handouts.
- Keep in mind that the VREO is considered the expert on logistical needs for his or her division and, as such, is responsible for conveying the need to the VARO Director and Support Services Chief. However, the VARO Director and the Support Services Chief are responsible for seeking final approval of the logistical need and have the authority to disapprove any logistical need the VREO requests.
- If there appears to be preliminary approval of the logistical need from the VARO Director, you should immediately meet with the Union representatives (e.g., Union President, Union Steward) to apprise them of the proposed change(s) to the employee work environment.**



****Common Error:**
Always inform the Union early in the process and keep apprised when necessary throughout the process.

Step 3: Determine if the VA can meet the logistical need

Can the VA meet the logistical need?	
Yes	Go to Step 7
No	Continue to Step 4

Step 4: Find out if there are alternative resources to meet your logistical need.

These can include, but are not limited to:

- Finance Department
- Information Technology (IT) Department
- Administration Department

- Human Resources (HR) Department

Are there alternative resources to meet your logistical need?	
Yes	Continue to Step 5
No	End task

Step 5: Document alternative resource for approval, if needed

Does the alternative resource involve a cost?	
Yes	If the alternative resource involves a cost, the VREO should document the cost via email, memorandum, or VA Form(s), as applicable, and send to the VARO Director for approval.
No	If the alternative resource does not involve a cost, the VREO can inform (via email, phone, fax, etc.) Support Services (e.g., HR, administration, etc.) and/or IT for approval of alternative resource.

Step 6: Find out if approval can be obtained for alternative resources

Can approval be obtained for the alternative resource?	
Yes	Continue to Step 7
No	End task

Step 7: Consult with the appropriate individuals throughout the process of meeting logistical need

Continually monitor and report on the status of the project with the appropriate individuals. Examples of appropriate individuals are listed below:

If the logistical need...	Then meet with...
Deals with obtaining IT equipment	Information Resource Management (IRM) staff to ensure that they adequately meet the need.
Deals with obtaining additional or reconfigured office space	Support Services staff to ensure adequate completion of the project.
Concerns a VR&E staff member with disabilities who requires office accommodations	Human Resources and the VR&E staff member to negotiate and confirm mutually acceptable accommodations. <i>Note:</i> The Union Steward may need to be involved in this negotiation as well.

Step 8: Confirm that the logistical need has been met

Has the logistical need been met?	
Yes	End task
No	Continue to Step 9

Step 9: Inform Support Services that logistical need has not been met

Talk to the Support Services Chief to discuss the specifics of how the logistical needs were not adequately dealt with and wait for attempted resolution of need. When the need has been met, **end task**.

