

From: VAVBAWAS/CO/OFO

Sent: Tuesday, January 15, 2013 9:58 AM

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VAVBAWIN/RO/DIR; VAVBAWRJ/RO/DIR

Cc: VBACO_Area_Leads; Good, Krystle, VBAVACO; Bantug, Albert, VBAVACO; Davis, Dene M., VBAVACO; Penn, Amanda, VBAVACO; Price, Wilson, VBAVACO; Eastin, C. Alexis

Subject: VSR Skills Certification Test - February 12,2013

January 15, 2013

Director (00):

All VBA Regional Offices and Centers

SUBJECT: FY 2013 VSR Skills Certification

Purpose

This letter provides guidance to regional office managers and employees regarding the Veterans Service Representative (VSR) Skills Certification testing scheduled for **February 12, 2013.**

Background

VBA developed a skills certification process for the VSR position. Skills certification offers employees the opportunity for advancement in this career ladder. Additional information about certification is available in OFO letter 20F-08-08. The tests will be administered on-line.

The Skills Certification Readiness Guide and Test Administration Manual have been updated, to include slides and audio from the February 2012 refresher training. Both are located at the following website:

http://cptraining.vba.va.gov/C&P_Training/Skills_Cert/VSR.htm

Test Dates

This is the first VSR Skills Certification scheduled for FY 2013. Please note that the test will be offered on three days to accommodate the high number of participants.

Eligibility

Eligibility requirements are outlined below for any person that volunteers to participate in this skills certification test:

1. VSRs hired under the full performance GS 11 level and meeting the requirements for promotion under Article 23 must sit for the certification test. The VSRs will be given three consecutive attempts to pass the test. The three consecutive attempts will begin within one (1) year of achieving the GS 10 grade or August 2012, whichever date is later. VSRs will be promoted to the GS 11 grade upon passing the VSR Skills Certification.
2. VSRs hired under the full performance GS 11 standard must be meeting the local performance standards to be eligible to receive the promotion, if successful.
3. VSRs are expected to attempt certification within one(1) year of becoming eligible.
4. VSRs who are unable to pass certification after three consecutive attempts will also be reassigned into a full performance level GS-10 VSR position.
5. Employees who are reassigned due to declination or three consecutive failures are required to take the test each time offered until certification is achieved.
6. To pass the test, VSR candidates must meet an overall score. VSRs who are successful also need to achieve time-in-grade prior to advancement to the GS-11 level.
7. VSRs who do not pass certification after the first attempt are required to take the next scheduled test. They may no longer elect to skip the next scheduled test.
8. Current non-certified permanent GS-11 Senior VSRs or Senior VCEs are not required to take the test at this time. A test is being developed for GS 11 and GS 12 VSRs.
9. Should non-certified GS-11 Senior VSRs or Senior VCEs (Authorizer) pass certification, then prior to being under the National VSR Performance standards, these GS-11s will be fully trained on all aspects of the VSR job requirements, including all computer applications for which they have not previously received

training. These VSRs will be provided a copy of their new position description and performance standards.

10. There is no limit to the number of employees who can take the certification test at any one time unless adequate space is an issue. In cases where adequate space is not available, another test will be offered at the earliest available opportunity, usually within seven calendar days.
11. VSRs will be provided with instructor-led test preparation classes in the test environment. The TMS number for the preparation class is **VA 3770184**. In addition, VSRs will be allowed self-study excluded time not to exceed three hours. The TMS number for the self study is **VA 3770186**.
12. Dual monitors in the testing environment are not allowed at this time. They will be used for the test when they are available in all testing environments nationwide.