

Individual Unemployability

Individual Unemployability is a part of VA's disability compensation program that allows VA to pay certain veterans compensation at the 100% rate, even though VA has not rated their service-connected disabilities at the total level. To be eligible, a veteran must be unable to maintain substantially gainful employment as a result of his/her service-connected disabilities. Additionally, a veteran must have one service-connected disability ratable at 60 percent or more, or two or more service-connected disabilities, at least one disability ratable at 40 percent or more with a combined rating of 70 percent or more.

Veterans who are in receipt of Individual Unemployability benefits may work as long as it is not considered substantially gainful employment. The employment must be considered marginal employment. Substantially gainful employment is defined as employment at which non-disabled individuals earn their livelihood with earnings comparable to the particular occupation in the community where the veteran resides. Marginal employment is generally deemed to exist when a veteran's earned income does not exceed the amount established by the U.S. Census Bureau as the poverty level for the veteran only.

Special consideration will be given for veterans when the veteran is considered unemployable due to a service-connected disability(ies) but fails to meet the minimum percentage standards, or there is evidence of *exceptional* or *unusual* circumstances to impairment of earning capacity due to disabilities (for example, interference with employment or frequent periods of hospitalization). Veterans may have to complete an employment questionnaire once a year in order for VA to determine continued eligibility.

Our office can assist you with the application for Individual Unemployability benefits.

Contact Joe Wright if you would like to receive veteran's information by email. There are many state and federal benefits and programs available to veterans and their dependents.

To find out if you are eligible for any of these benefits, visit or call our office. We can and will assist you in completing all required application forms. You can get information on the Web from the Kings County Veterans Service Office website at www.countyofkings.com.

Joe Wright, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the Veterans Service Officer for Kings County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd, Hanford, CA 93230; call 582-3211, ext. 2669; or e-mail joe.wright@co.kings.ca.us.

113-11