

Highlights of [GAO-07-594](#), a report to congressional committees

# VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE

## Labor Could Improve Information on Reemployment Services, Outcomes, and Program Impact

### Why GAO Did This Study

In 2002, Congress enacted the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA), which modified two Department of Labor (Labor) programs that specifically target veteran job seekers: the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) and the Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) program. However, questions have been raised about the adequacy of performance information on services to veterans by these and other employment programs. In this report, GAO examined (1) the extent to which DVOP and LVER performance information reflects services and outcomes for veterans; (2) the extent to which performance information on veterans paints a clear picture of their use of one-stop services; and (3) what Labor is doing to improve the quality of performance data and better understand program impact and outcomes for veterans.

### What GAO Recommends

GAO is making a number of recommendations to improve the performance measurement system for the DVOP and LVER programs and to better understand services and their impact for job seekers in the one-stop system, including veterans.

Labor generally agreed with the report's findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-594](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-594).

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Sigurd Nilsen at (202) 512-7215 or [nilsens@gao.gov](mailto:nilsens@gao.gov).

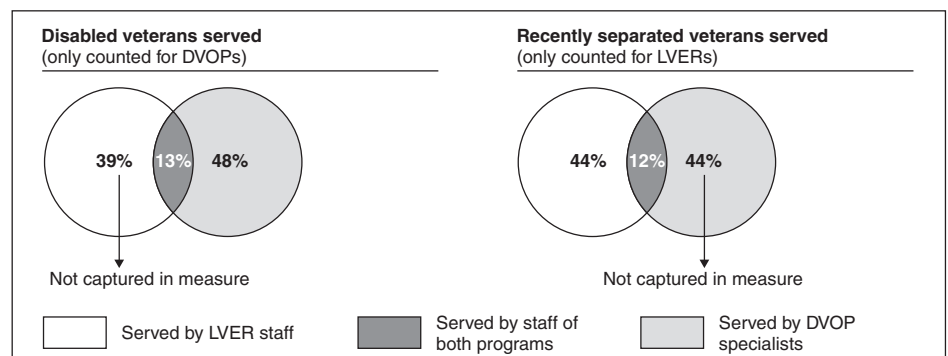
### What GAO Found

Performance information for the DVOP and LVER programs provides some sense of services and outcomes for veterans, but is weakened by several factors. In July 2005, Labor adopted new performance measures for the programs, but not all have been fully implemented. For example, states are held accountable for helping veterans get and keep jobs, but are not yet held accountable for their average earnings once employed, as they are for other programs. Additionally, having separate performance measures for the DVOP and LVER programs fails to acknowledge the similarity of the populations they serve and duties they perform. Furthermore, it is difficult to assess outcomes over time or across states because of frequent changes in reporting requirements that prevent establishing reliable trend data.

Labor's data on veteran job seekers paint an unclear picture of their use of other employment and training services in the one-stop system, despite the use of common performance measures across programs. Although many veterans use services other than those provided by the DVOP and LVER programs, key employment programs vary in how well their data on veteran job seekers are shared across programs, making it difficult to know how many veterans are served. In addition, statutory differences in the definitions of veterans hinder efforts to standardize data across employment programs. Moreover, Labor has no means of assessing whether priority of service for veterans has been implemented in various employment programs.

Labor has taken some steps to improve the quality of performance data and better understand outcomes for veterans. For example, Labor requires states to validate key performance data. Labor has also planned an integrated data reporting system that would track individual veterans' progress through the one-stop system. However, states have raised concerns about the timelines and its current implementation date is unclear. Furthermore, while outcome information on veterans is helpful, it cannot measure whether the outcomes are due to the program or other factors. While Labor has sponsored research on services to veterans, it has not yet conducted the impact evaluation required by law to assess the effectiveness of one-stop services.

**Percentage of Disabled and Recently Separated Veterans Served by the DVOP and LVER Programs, Program Year 2005**



Source: GAO analysis of Labor information.