

§ 74.4 Who does CVE consider to control a veteran-owned small business?

(a) Control means both the day-to-day management and long-term decision-making authority for the VOSB. Many persons share control of a concern, including each of those occupying the following positions: officer, director, general partner, managing partner, managing member and manager. In addition, key employees who possess expertise or responsibilities related to the concern's primary economic activity may share significant control of the concern. CVE will consider the control potential of such key employees on a case-by-case basis.

(b) Control is not the same as ownership, although both may reside in the same person. CVE regards control as including both the strategic policy setting exercised by boards of directors and the day-to-day management and administration of business operations. An applicant or participant's management and daily business operations must be conducted by one or more veterans or service-disabled veterans. Individuals managing the concern must have managerial experience of the extent and complexity needed to run the concern. A veteran need not have the technical expertise or possess a required license to be found to control an applicant or participant if he or she can demonstrate that he or she has ultimate managerial and supervisory control over those who possess the required licenses or technical expertise. However, where a critical license is held by a non-veteran having an equity interest in the applicant or participant firm, the non-veteran may be found to control the firm.

(c)(1) An applicant or participant must be controlled by one or more veterans or service-disabled veterans who possess requisite management capabilities. Owners need not work full-time but must show sustained and significant time invested in the business.

(2) An eligible full-time manager must hold the highest officer position (usually President or Chief Executive Officer) in the applicant or participant.

(3) One or more veterans or service-disabled veterans who manage the applicant or participant must devote full-

time to the business during the normal working hours of firms in the same or similar line of business. Work in a wholly-owned subsidiary of the applicant or participant may be considered to meet the requirement of full-time devotion. This applies only to a subsidiary owned by the VOSB itself, and not to firms in which the veteran has a mere ownership interest.

(4) Except as provided in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, a veteran owner's unexercised right to cause a change in the management of the applicant concern does not in itself constitute veteran control, regardless of how quickly or easily the right could be exercised.

(d) In the case of a partnership, one or more veterans or service-disabled veterans must serve as general partners, with control over all partnership decisions. A partnership in which no veteran is a general partner will be ineligible for participation.

(e) In the case of a limited liability company, one or more veterans or service-disabled veterans must serve as management members, with control over all decisions of the limited liability company.

(f) One or more veterans or service-disabled veterans must control the board of directors of a corporate applicant or participant.

(1) CVE will deem veterans or service-disabled veterans to control the board of directors where:

(i) A single veteran owns 100 percent of all voting stock of an applicant or participant concern;

(ii) A single veteran owns at least 51 percent of all voting stock of an applicant or participant, the individual is on the board of directors and no supermajority voting requirements exist for shareholders to approve corporation actions. Where supermajority voting requirements are provided for in the concern's articles of incorporation, its by-laws, or by State law, the veteran must own at least the percent of the voting stock needed to overcome any such supermajority voting requirements; or

(iii) No single veteran owns 51 percent of all voting stock but multiple veterans in combination do own at least 51 percent of all voting stock,

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each such veteran is on the board of directors, no supermajority voting requirements exist, and the veteran shareholders can demonstrate that they have made enforceable arrangements to permit one of them to vote the stock of all as a block without a shareholder meeting. Where the concern has supermajority voting requirements, the veteran shareholders must own at least that percentage of voting stock needed to overcome any such supermajority ownership requirements.

(2) Where an applicant or participant does not meet the requirements set forth in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, the veteran(s) upon whom eligibility is based must control the board of directors through actual numbers of voting directors or, where permitted by state law, through weighted voting (e.g., in a concern having a two-person board of directors where one individual on the board is a veteran and one is not, the veteran vote must be weighted—worth more than one vote—in order for the concern to be eligible for VetBiz VIP Verification). Where a concern seeks to comply with this paragraph:

(i) Provisions for the establishment of a quorum cannot permit non-veteran directors to control the board of directors, directly or indirectly;

(ii) Any executive committee of the board of directors must be controlled by veteran directors unless the executive committee can only make recommendations to and cannot independently exercise the authority of the board of directors.

(3) Non-voting, advisory, or honorary directors may be appointed without affecting veterans' or service-disabled veterans' control of the board of directors.

(4) Arrangements regarding the structure and voting rights of the board of directors must comply with applicable state law.

(g) Non-veterans may be involved in the management of an applicant or participant, and may be stockholders, partners, limited liability members, officers, or directors of the applicant or participant. With the exception of a spouse or personal caregiver who represents a severely disabled veteran owner, no such non-veteran or immediate family member may:

(1) Exercise actual control or have the power to control the applicant or participant;

(2) Be a former employer or a principal of a former employer of any affiliated business of the applicant or participant, unless it is determined by the CVE that the relationship between the former employer or principal and the eligible individual or applicant concern does not give the former employer actual control or the potential to control the applicant or participant and such relationship is in the best interests of the participant firm; or

(3) Receive compensation from the applicant or participant in any form as directors, officers or employees, including dividends, that exceeds the compensation to be received by the highest officer (usually chief executive officer or president). The highest ranking officer may elect to take a lower salary than a non-veteran only upon demonstrating that it helps the applicant or participant.

(h) Non-veterans who transfer majority stock ownership or control of the firm to an immediate family member within 2 years prior to the application and remain involved in the firm as a stockholder, officer, director, or key employee of the firm are presumed to control the firm. The presumption may be rebutted by showing that the transferee has independent management experience necessary to control the operation of the firm, and indeed is participating in the management of the firm.

(i) Non-veterans or entities may be found to control or have the power to control in any of the following circumstances, which are illustrative only and not all inclusive:

(1) Non-veterans control the board of directors of the applicant or participant, either directly through majority voting membership, or indirectly, where the by-laws allow non-veterans effectively to prevent a quorum or block actions proposed by the veterans or service-disabled veterans.

(2) A non-veteran or entity, having an equity interest in the applicant or participant, provides critical financial or bonding support or a critical license to the applicant or participant which directly or indirectly allows the non-

veteran significantly to influence business decisions of the participant, unless an exception is authorized by the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization.

(3) A non-veteran or entity controls the applicant or participant or an individual veteran owner through loan arrangements. Providing a loan guaranty on commercially reasonable terms does not, by itself, give a non-veteran or entity the power to control a firm.

(4) Business relationships exist with non-veterans or entities which cause such dependence that the applicant or participant cannot exercise independent business judgment without great economic risk.

§ 74.5 How does CVE determine affiliation?

The Center for Veterans Enterprise applies the affiliation rules established by the Small Business Administration in 13 CFR 121.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

§ 74.10 Where must an application be filed?

An application for VetBiz VIP Verification status must be electronically filed in the Vendor Information Pages database located in the Center for Veterans Enterprise's Web portal, <http://www.VetBiz.gov>. Guidelines and forms are located on the Web portal. Upon receipt of the applicant's electronic submission, an acknowledgment message will be dispatched to the concern, containing estimated processing time and other information. Address information for the CVE is also contained on the Web portal. Correspondence may be dispatched to: Director, Center for Veterans Enterprise (00VE), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420.

(The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection provisions in this section under control number 2900-0675.)

§ 74.11 How does CVE process applications for VetBiz VIP Verification?

(a) The Director, Center for Veterans Enterprise, is authorized to approve or deny applications for VetBiz VIP

Verification. The CVE will receive, review and evaluate all VetBiz VIP Verification applications. CVE will advise each applicant within 30 days after the receipt of an application whether the application is complete and suitable for evaluation and, if not, what additional information or clarification is required to complete the application. CVE will process an application for VetBiz VIP Verification status within 60 days of receipt of a complete application package. Incomplete application packages will not be processed.

(b) CVE, in its sole discretion, may request clarification of information contained in the application at any time in the eligibility determination process. CVE will take into account any clarifications made by an applicant in response to a request for such by CVE.

(c) An applicant's eligibility will be based on circumstances existing on the date of application, except where clarification is made pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section or as provided in paragraph (d) of this section.

(d) Changed circumstances for an applicant occurring subsequent to its application and which adversely affect eligibility will be considered and may constitute grounds for denial of the application. The applicant must inform CVE of any changed circumstances that could adversely affect its eligibility for the program (*i.e.*, ownership or control changes) during its application review. Failure to inform CVE of any such changed circumstances constitutes good cause for which CVE may withdraw verified status for the participant if non-compliance is discovered after a participant has been verified.

(e) The decision of the Director, CVE, to approve or deny an application will be in writing. A decision to deny verification status will state the specific reasons for denial, and will inform the applicant of any appeal rights.

(f) If the Director, CVE, approves the application, the date of the approval letter is the date of participant