

Pre-Separation Brief

Effective 2027

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DISCLAIMER:

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All websites and URLs in this guide were active at the date of publication. However, web content is subject to change without notice. Users of this guide are advised to confirm information is current.

Pre-Separation Brief Introduction

On behalf of the Department of War (DoW) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS), THANK YOU for your service to the nation. As a result of your dedication and commitment, you have earned valuable benefits and access to numerous programs and services which are outlined in this Guide.

Included in this guide is information on resources and benefits for Armed Forces members to include the Reserve Components (RC) and their families. Some benefits are limited to the Active Component and may not be available to the Reserve Component. Coast Guard members generally have access to a variety of DoW programs, especially those related to travel, recreation, and civilian job transition. However, some programs may have specific eligibility criteria or be limited to DoW Services. It is important to check the criteria for any benefit or program to determine your eligibility.

Effects of Career Change

Whether you are retiring or separating from the military or leaving active-duty status, this is a major change in your life. Just like any major change, it will be exciting as well as present challenges. Transitioning can be stressful and may seem like you are losing a part of your identity, but it also opens a whole range of new possibilities.

By approaching your transition as an opportunity for personal and professional growth, you will take a giant step toward re-framing your identity and moving forward with a positive transition experience.

You started the transition process by completing a self-assessment and attending Individualized Initial Counseling. Now it's time to begin thinking about what lies ahead and make plans for possible changes like obtaining employment, finding a place to live, covering the financial gap between military and civilian paychecks, and understanding non-TRICARE insurance.



The Pre-Separation Brief provides information on the many benefits, services, resources, and programs available during and after transition and provides you with the basic information and web links to begin researching programs that may be beneficial to you as you transition. Knowing about these benefits and programs is key to making informed decisions when you transition, retire, or are released from active duty.

The guide is divided into eight topic-specific steps:

- STEP 1: Build Your Transition Team and Resources
- STEP 2: Plan for Your Transition
- STEP 3: Manage Your VA Benefits
- STEP 4: Plan for Healthcare, Mental Healthcare, and Health Insurance
- STEP 5: Conduct Career Exploration and Plan for Employment
- STEP 6: Plan for Further Education
- STEP 7: Consider Starting a Business
- STEP 8: Explore Additional Information and Benefits

Step 1: Build Your Transition Team and Resources

When serving on active duty, you had a support team. Similarly, during your transition, you need a team and resources for guidance, support, and networking to help find employment, start a business, go to school, or pursue your unique transition goal. Your Military Department, commander, unit leadership, and TAP/Transition counselors are committed to providing you with individualized transition information, resources, support, and services that best prepare you to achieve your post-transition goals.

Who to include on your team is a personal choice, but the following are some individuals to consider:

TAP/Transition Staff and Counselors

TAP/Transition staff and counselors lead the list with their extensive knowledge in the transition space. These professionals are available prior to beginning the transition process and until the day you separate or retire, and even beyond, in some cases.

Service TAP/Transition Offices

- Army – Transition Assistance Program Center
- Navy – Fleet and Family Support Centers
- Air Force – Military and Family Readiness Centers
- Marine Corps – Transition Readiness Program Office
- Coast Guard – Workforce and Family Services
- Space Force – Military and Family Readiness Centers

Service-Specific Reserve/Guard Transition Staff

- Army – Transition Services Manager/TAP Counselor/Mobilization/Demobilization Support Staff
- Navy – Command Career Counselor
- Air Force – Military and Family Readiness Program Manager
- Marine Corps – Transition Readiness Program Advisor/Unit Transition Coordinator
- Coast Guard – TAP Counselor
- Space Force – Military and Family Readiness Program Manager

VA Benefits Advisor

Many installations have VA Benefits Advisors available to provide information and guidance on all VA-related benefits and services. While advisors may be in the Transition/TAP Office, that is not the case on all installations. It is recommended you identify, locate, and connect with an advisor on your installation early in your transition process or call 1-800-827-1000 for assistance.

Installation Resources

On-installation resources include professional staff, programs, and services to assist you and your family members with employment, career and education counseling, resume writing, job training opportunities, apprenticeship opportunities, interviewing practice, job search assistance, and other transition-related topics.

Staff and services vary from installation to installation, so check with your TAP/Transition office to see what is offered. Below are some of the places and professional staff members most commonly available:

- Military and Family Life Counselors
- Chaplains
- Medical professionals
- Behavioral Health Teams
- Education Office (for assessment and college credit information)
- Financial Counselors - During your Individual Counseling (IC) session, conducted before the Pre-Separation Brief, you were given the option to elect individual financial counseling.

Off-Installation Resources

In addition to the many resources available on your installation, there are numerous organizations online and off installation that stand ready to support you during your transition.

Military OneSource is a DoW program providing comprehensive information, resources, and assistance on every aspect of military life at no cost to you or your family. Transitioning Service members and their families can access Military OneSource up to 365 days post separation or retirement. Trained consultants and counselors provide support for a wide range of topics. Free and confidential expert help is available 24/7 at Military OneSource.

- Call toll-free at 800-342-9647, use the chat option, at www.MilitaryOneSource.mil, or download the My Military One Source app.
- International calling options are available online at www.MilitaryOneSource.mil

National Resource Directory (NRD) is a searchable database of resources to include Military and Veteran Service organizations (MSO/VSO). Resources are vetted for Service members, veterans, family members, and caregivers.

NRD: https://www.nrd.gov

Military and Veteran Service Organizations (MSO/VSO) provide advocacy, education, and other support for the unique issues facing Service members and veterans. Many have their own job referral and registration services, sponsor job fairs, and provide mentor and networking opportunities. These organizations also offer a wide variety of services, including scholarships for dependents of military personnel, and other support functions.

VA VSO: https://www.va.gov/get-help-from-accredited-representative/

Personal Support Sources

Additional support is available through your personal network.

- **Family Members** are an integral part of your transition team. Be aware that your family is also transitioning into a new life, and therefore, may have similar experiences to you. A family can be a source of comfort, encouragement, and support during this time.
- **Military Colleagues** can provide support during the transition the process. Be aware of those who may talk about the transition process, bad or good, but have never been through it.
- **Veterans and Mentors** are valuable resources for transition. Those who have been through the transition process will have a lot of wisdom to share and can assist you by providing guidance and real experiences.
- **Social Network** includes various groups of friends and relatives. This group has far-reaching employment potential due to unknown contacts and opportunities. Utilization of this vast system of contacts requires all individuals to be aware of your transition from the military and know that you are seeking employment.

Online DoW & VA Benefits/Resources—Post-Transition Access

Resources offered through DoW and VA may require you to create a secure account by registering an account name and password. While on active duty, you can use a Common Access Card (CAC) to access these sites. Before you turn in your CAC, it is highly recommended you create the following accounts to maintain access to DoW and VA websites and access your benefits. When you create your accounts, be sure to record all log in account information required to access the accounts in the future such as log in name, password, verification image, email address, and personal key.

- myAuth
- Login.gov
- ID.me

myAuth: A new digital login replaced **DS Logon**. With myAuth, you use your CAC or username/password plus a secure multi-factor authentication method to access multiple DoW websites with just one login.

- To create your myAuth account:
  - CAC holders: You can create your myAuth account directly using your CAC (no DS Logon required).

- Non-CAC users: You will be prompted to use or create a DS Logon account for identity verification or a third party identification such as ID.me.

IMPORTANT: For CAC holders, make sure to create myAuth account before separation is complete, CAC verification is preferred and easy.

- During setup, download the Okta Verify application on your smart phone and set up passwordless authentication for a more secure and sign-in experience.
- After setting up myAuth, you have the option to use your Common Access Card (CAC) to log in if desired.

Websites requiring myAuth:

- MilConnect
- IDCO
- DFAS
- MHS Genesis Patient Portal

NOTE: DS Logon remains active, but it is no longer supported as a login method for the sites listed above.

Login.gov: Uses strong multi-factor authentication (MFA) and identity verification to protect you and your benefits. It is easier to create this login when you have a CAC.

Websites requiring Login.gov:

- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA.gov)
- Social Security Administration (ssa.gov)
- U.S. Small Business Administration (sba.gov)
- USAJobs (usajobs.gov)
- Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) (benefeds.gov)

ID.me: A secure non-government digital identity network that provides identity verification services for individuals and organizations. It allows users to prove their identity online, primarily for accessing government services, like VA.gov and myAuth. ID.me uses a combination of document verification, facial recognition, and other methods to establish and verify a user's identity.

NOTE: ID.me is offered as a resource for accessing VA.gov; however, Login.gov is the recommended account for accessing VA.gov.

Websites offering the use of ID.me:

- VA.gov

Begin the ID.me sign-in process by accessing VA.gov or https://ID.me.

Artificial Intelligence as a Resource

As you prepare to transition from the military, it's important to recognize the growing role Artificial Intelligence (AI) plays in all aspects of life. This includes how it can help you translate your unique military experience into a purposeful and rewarding civilian career. Throughout your TAP courses, you will be utilizing AI as a tool to support and enhance your learning. As we integrate these powerful technologies, it is essential that you use AI in an ethical and responsible manner. Best practices for using AI include:

Do	Do Not
• Fact check and apply solid judgement • Ensure sensitive information is anonymized or protected • Use to assist in data analysis and information synthesis • Use to increase administrative efficiency • Be transparent—disclose when AI was used	• Assume AI is always accurate • Input confidential or personally identifiable information • Use for plagiarism, cheating, or academic dishonesty • Rely on AI for complex decision-making • Give credit to AI as an author

To gain practical, hands-on experience as it relates to the TAP process, let's start by navigating to an open-source AI website and entering one of the following prompts:

1. How can AI help me translate military skills to civilian job qualifications?
2. In what ways can AI act as my resume builder and career counselor, and what information do you need from me to get started?
3. How can AI support my well-being during transition?
4. What are the most effective ways to leverage AI to summarize, compare, and explain complex VA benefits and entitlement policies?
5. How can I effectively use AI tools to build a monthly budget and develop a long-term financial plan?

AI will offer several suggestions including follow-on questions for more thorough support and guidance.

Please be aware that AI doesn't always generate accurate information; therefore, you must critically evaluate and verify any information generated by it. Being an informed user, ethical practitioner, and a constant learner of AI is important to your transition. To get the best results from AI during your transition, write highly specific, context-rich prompts that clearly define your role, target industry, and goals—but always substitute your Personally Identifiable Information (PII) like SSNs, phone numbers, and addresses with generic placeholders.

STEP 1: Build Your Transition Team Checklist

- ☐ Create a contact list of people to support you during transition.
- ☐ Identify your TAP/Transition counselor and obtain contact information.
- ☐ Explore installation and off-installation resources.
- ☐ Create myAuth, Login.gov, and/or ID.me accounts to maintain access to DoW and VA websites.

Step 2: Plan for Your Transition

Today's TAP is far different from the program of ten, five, or even three years ago. Whether this is your first transition or you have been here before, we encourage you to actively engage in your transition mission and apply the same energy, attention to detail, dedication, and importance to your transition that you displayed while supporting operational missions throughout your active-duty Service.

Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Overview

TAP is a congressionally mandated, outcome-based program administered by the Military Services. In 2011, Congress enacted legislation to ensure that transition assistance was provided consistently to all transitioning Service members. Over time, those laws were reviewed and adapted to ensure relevancy in content, process, and program.

Interagency Partners

TAP is a collaborative effort between seven federal partners to include the Departments of War, Labor, Veterans Affairs, and Education; Homeland Security; the Small Business Administration; and the Office of Personnel Management. Each agency has a primary area of responsibility and focus and directly supports TAP to ensure you receive relevant information, resources, support, and services at the right time to support your post-transition goals.

Current TAP Legislation and Policy Documents

- Title 10, U.S.C, Sections 1142, 1143, and 1144
- National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) Fiscal Year (FY) 19 – John S. McCain – Section 552 – Improvements to TAP
- NDAA FY20 – Sections, 570c, 570f
- Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1332.35 – Transition Assistance Program (TAP) for Military Personnel

DoW TAP

DoW TAP is comprised of the DoW TAP lead agency, the Military-Civilian Transition Office (MCTO), and the Military Services. DoW TAP provides guidance and policy to the Services who implement the program. DoW also develops the curriculum for DoW Transition Day and the Education Track and supports the TAP Events website. This website provides a schedule of all available TAP classes worldwide, houses the participant guides for all TAP courses, and includes the Transition Online Learning (TOL) portal for online self-paced TAP courses.

DoWTAP: https://www.DoWtap.mil/DoWtap/app/home

TAP Events: www.TAPevents.mil

Department of Labor (DOL Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS))

DOL VETS helps prepare America's veterans, Service members, and their spouses for meaningful careers. DOL provides the Employment Fundamentals for Career Transition, (EFCT), Employment Workshop (DOLEW), and Career and Credential Exploration (C2E) courses during TAP.

From the DOL VETS website, you can:

- Find employment-related information, tools, and training for transitioning Service members, spouses, and veterans. Learn about employment services, labor laws, and apprenticeships
- Access employment resources for military spouses

DOL VETS: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

VA develops and delivers the VA Benefits and Services course and maintains the VA website. From the main page of the VA website, you can access information on VA benefits, to include but not limited to the following:

- Healthcare—location of VA health care facilities
- Disability—how to file a claim, list of accredited VSOs to assist
- Education— accessing your GI Bill benefits, Veteran Readiness and Employment
- Records—accessing your VA records

VA TAP Course Catalog : https://discover.va.gov/transition-programs/transition-assistance-program/

Small Business Administration (SBA) Office of Veterans Business Development (OVBD)

The SBA OVBD provides veterans, Service members, National Guard and Reserve members, military spouses, and family members with programs and services to start, grow and expand their small business. OVBD offers several programs and services to assist aspiring and existing veteran entrepreneurs including:

- Training Programs
- Funding
- Federal contracting programs
- Veterans in manufacturing
- Expert advice

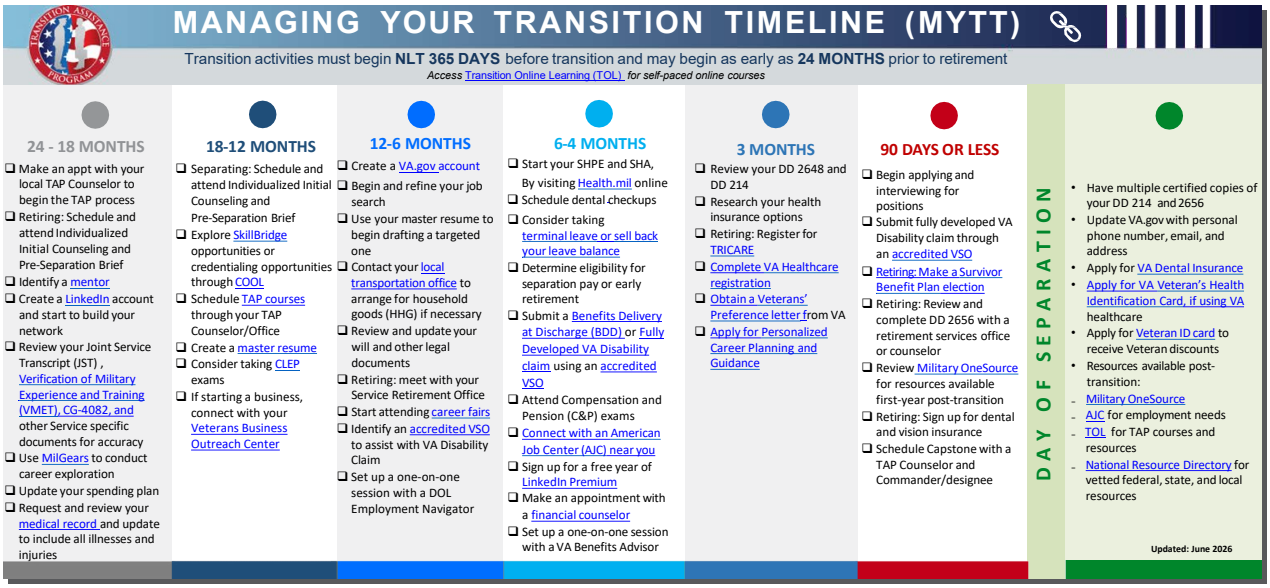
SBA OVBD:
https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba-locations/headquarters-offices/office-veterans-business-development

TAP Supporting Documents and Resources

Managing Your (MY) Transition Timeline (MYTT)

To assist you in planning your transition, the Military Services and interagency partners collaborated on the development of a comprehensive, interactive transition timeline. The timeline suggests actions to be taken starting at 18-24 months prior to separation or retirement. Web links for each action provide easy access to additional information.

MYTT: https://TAPevents.mil/Assets/ResourceContent/TAP/MYT_Timeline.pdf



TAP Interagency Website Guide (TIWG)

The TAP Interagency Website Guide (TIWG) compiles all the websites used during TAP courses into a searchable document organized by topic. Download the guide by using the link below.

TIWG: www.TAPevents.mil/resources

Transition Online Learning (TOL)

While in-person is the preferred method for completing TAP requirements, online courses are available at Transition Online Learning (TOL). Anyone can access TAP courses, participant guides, and resources without a CAC. However, you must use your Common Access Card (CAC) to access the courses if you need a certificate of completion for TAP.

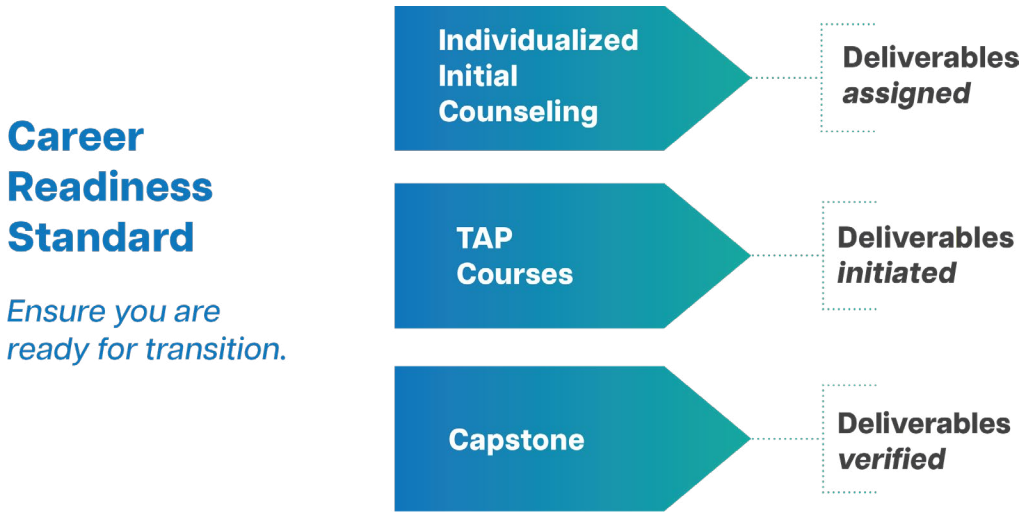
In addition to offering TAP courses, TOL also provides Military Life Cycle (MLC) courses for Service members (active duty and Reserve), veterans, families, caregivers, and survivors. MLC courses are intended to be taken throughout a Service member's career and after transition and cover important topics such as employment, education benefits, home loans, and life insurance.

TAP: https://TAPevents.mil/courses

Participant Guides: https://www.TAPevents.mil/resources

Career Readiness Standards (CRS)

CRS are the deliverables, developed by the TAP interagency partners, which demonstrate you are prepared to transition effectively. Some CRS are completed by attending a TAP course while others require you to complete an activity or a document.

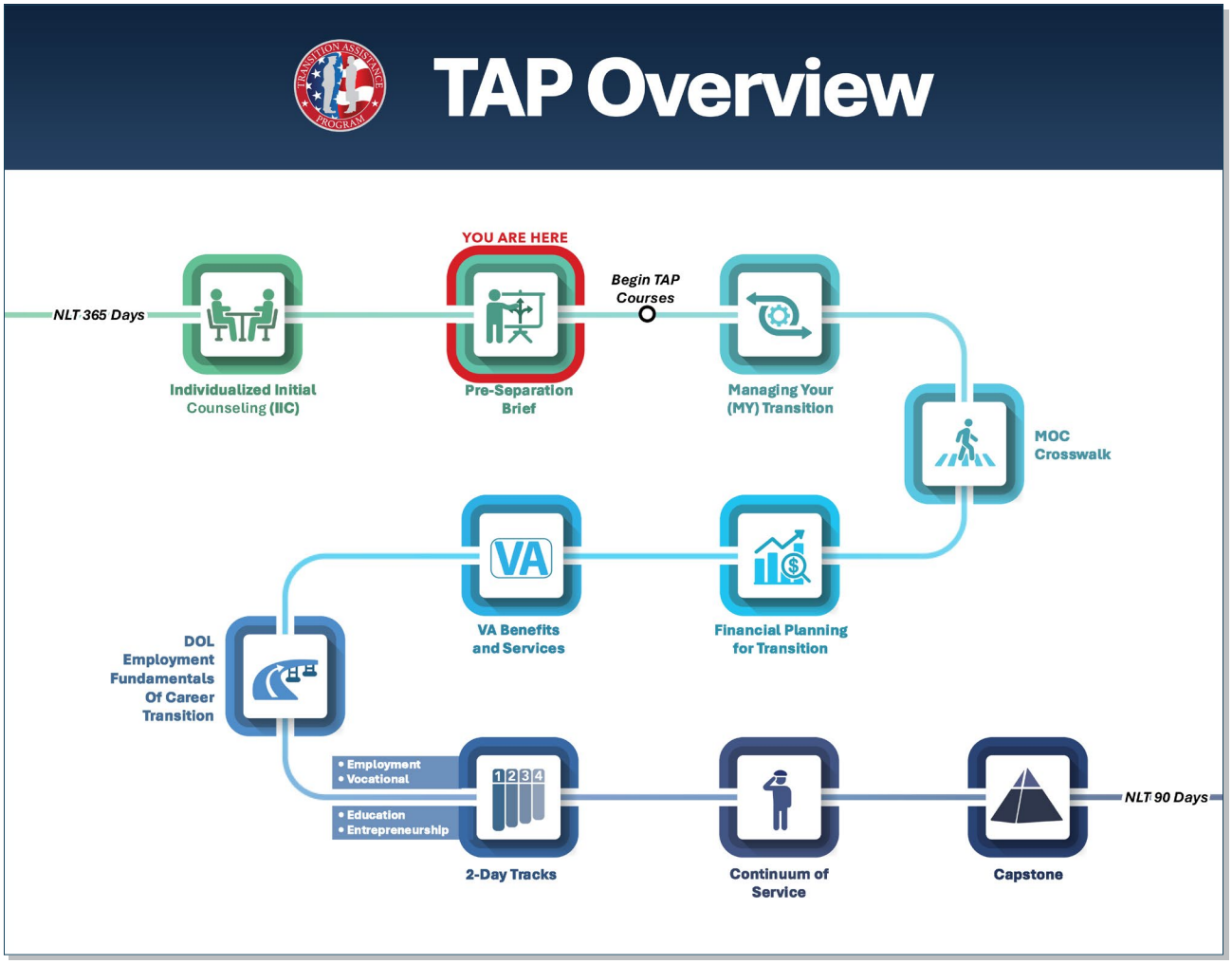


The TAP process starts with two requirements:

- Individualized Initial Counseling
- Pre-Separation Brief

Active-duty Service members are mandated to complete both requirements ***no later than 365 days prior to transition***. Those members who are unable to meet the NLT 365-day timeline (Reserve Component and active-duty Service members with unanticipated separations) should begin as soon as possible.

TAP Components and Courses



TAP is an outcome-based, multi-part curriculum with standardized learning objectives that prepares you to transition to the Reserves, National Guard, and/or civilian life by providing support as you work to meet the required Career Readiness Standards (CRS).

Individualized Initial Counseling (IC)

During the individualized one-on-one counseling session, you and your TAP/Transition counselor should have taken the following actions:

1. Completed a personal self-assessment and started developing your Individual Transition Plan (ITP).
2. Initiated the "Service Member Pre-Separation/Transition Counseling and Career Readiness Standards e-Form for Service Members Separating, Retiring, Released from Active Duty (REFRAD)," more commonly referred to as the DD Form 2648.
3. Determined a tier level.

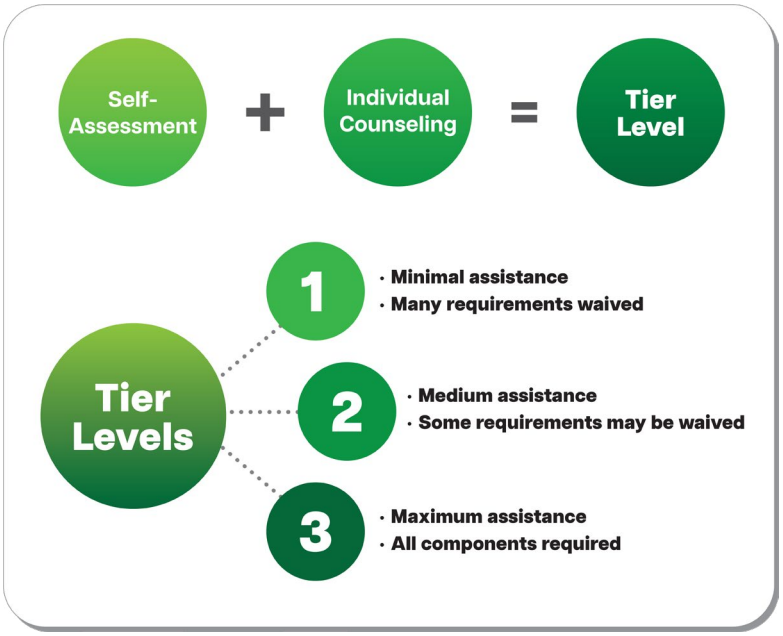
Self-Assessment and Individual Transition Plan (ITP)

The self-assessment helps identify beneficial topics and services needed for a smoother transition. The ITP includes the steps required to complete the TAP process. This document is a roadmap to guide you through your transition process. Due to the differences in the culture between the Military Services, each branch has a Service-specific ITP based on standard mandated requirements.

It is beneficial to review your ITP frequently throughout the transition process to be sure you are on track to complete all the required elements.

Tier-Level Assignment

Based on the results of your self-assessment and IC session, the TAP/Transition counselor identifies the amount of support you need and assigns you a tier level which defines the transition assistance you require and which TAP components, courses, and Career Readiness Standards (CRS) are mandatory for you to complete.



Tier Level 1—minimal assistance

Example: Service members who have already secured housing and employment or admission to college

Tier Level 2—medium assistance

Example: Service members who plan to return to their homes of record to stay with family but have not obtained employment

Tier Level 3—maximum assistance

Example: Service members who are leaving the military unexpectedly or have not considered their transition and have not made any post-transition plans

Pre-Separation Brief

The second task, which requires completion 365 days prior to transition (or as soon as possible for Reserve Component members and Service members with unanticipated separations), is to complete the Pre-Separation Brief (PSB). This course provides an overview of programs, benefits, entitlements, services, resources, and assistance available pre- and post-transition with a focus on time-sensitive benefits.

At the end of PSB, you are required to sign the DD Form 2648, in either print or electronic form. You will sign it again at Capstone—the final TAP component—after completing all TAP requirements.

After completing PSB, you begin executing your transition plan by completing core courses and the associated CRS. Five core courses are mandatory for all transitioning Service members regardless of tier level. They include the following:

	Courses	Description	CRS
Core Courses	Managing Your (MY) Transition (MYT)	MANDATORY FOR ALL SERVICE MEMBERS Introduces topics important for transition and associated resources.	No CRS.
	Military Occupational Code Crosswalk (MOC)	MANDATORY FOR ALL SERVICE MEMBERS Assists with identifying and translating skills, training, and education into civilian credentialing appropriate for civilian jobs.	Complete a Gap Analysis.
	Financial Planning for Transition (FP)	MANDATORY FOR ALL SERVICE MEMBERS Builds on the financial training provided during the Military Life Cycle (MLC) and helps Service members understand how transition will impact financial situations.	Prepare a criterion-based financial spending plan.
	VA Benefits and Services (VA BAS)	MANDATORY FOR ALL SERVICE MEMBERS Provides information about VA benefits, services, and tools and how to find support during transition.	Register on VA.gov by creating a Login.gov or ID.me account at https://www.va.gov/sign-in/
	DOL Employment Fundamentals of Career Transition (EFCT)	MANDATORY FOR ALL SERVICE MEMBERS (with specific exemptions) EFCT lays the foundation for a successful job search by providing the essential tools and resources to identify a career path, create a resume, and transition from military to civilian employment.	No CRS.

Along with the core courses, TAP includes four, two-day tracks to provide focused information aligned with specific post-transition goals. You must elect a track during IC based on your individual post-transition goals, but you are strongly encouraged to attend any additional track(s) that may provide valuable information for your transition. This can be especially helpful if you attend a track and learn it is not the best path for achieving your post-transition goals.

Below are the descriptions of the available tracks:

	Courses	Description	CRS
Two-Day Tracks	DOL Employment Track—Employment Workshop (DOLEW)	Includes expanded training on interviewing techniques, building effective resumes, conducting salary negotiations, and using technology to network and search for employment.	Complete a draft resume.
	DOL Vocational Track—Career and Credential Exploration (C2E)	Offers guidance as participants identify what they want to do in their career and create a specific plan to accomplish it. Participants are guided through a variety of career considerations including self-assessments, labor market projections, education, certifications, apprenticeships, and licensure requirements.	Complete a comparison of technical training institutions.
	DoW Education Track—Managing Your (MY) Education (MYE)	Assists with identifying the education requirements that support personal career goals and provides information and resources to support success in higher education. Topics include vocabulary and culture of higher education, choosing a major, choosing an institution, and funding options.	Complete a comparison of higher education institutions.
	Small Business Administration (SBA) Entrepreneurship Track—Boots to Business (B2B)	Provides an introductory understanding of business ownership.	No CRS.

Continuum of Military Service Opportunity (Active Component Only)

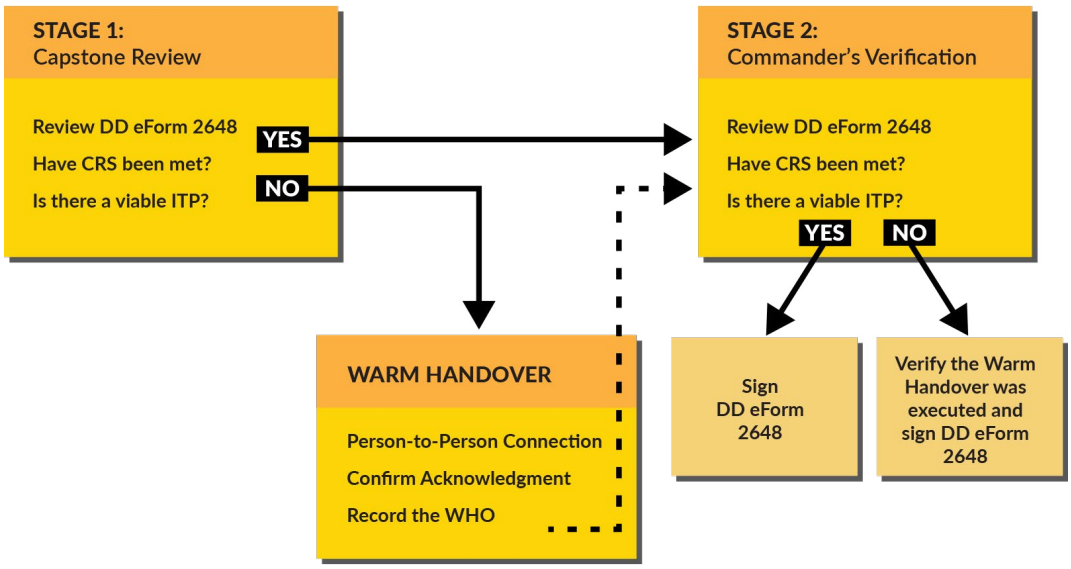
Every person who enters military service by enlistment or appointment incurs a Military Service Obligation (MSO) of 8 years from that entry date. If you did not complete your MSO while on active duty, you can fulfill the remainder of your MSO in the Reserve Component, in either the Selected Reserves (SELRES) or Individual Ready Reserves (IRR). TAP provides you the opportunity to learn about both reserve options through this mandatory counseling.

As you transition, be sure to explore the Reserve and Guard options in the geographic area where you plan to reside. It is possible to live in one location and be part of a Reserve/Guard unit in another. Continuing Military Service is also available for those who have served 8 years or more of active duty and have completed their military service obligation. As a separating or retiring Service member, you may continue to serve in the National Guard or Reserve, depending on your situation.

For more information, contact a prior service or Reserve recruiter on your installation.

Capstone and Warm Handovers

After completing all required components of the ITP, you are required to attend a Capstone event which occurs **no later than 90 days before transition or as soon as possible for Reserve Component members and Service members with unanticipated separations.** During Capstone, the commander or a designee determines if you are prepared for transition. This is the final component of TAP and consists of two stages:



Stage One: Capstone Review—Conducted by TAP Staff

The TAP staff performs an in-depth review of your ITP and CRS using the DD Form 2648. If you have not met your CRS or if you feel you need additional assistance, a Warm Handover (WHO) is provided to the appropriate agency.

- Employment Assistance – Employment Navigators and American Job Centers
- Housing Assistance – VA Benefits Advisors and Transitioning Service Member Resource Connection
- Peer Support/Community Reintegration Assistance – Military OneSource

Receiving a Warm Handover (WHO)

A WHO to an interagency or local resource is required if there are indicators during Capstone Review that you require additional assistance. Your responsibilities when receiving a WHO include:

1. Write down the name and number of the contact person
2. Initiate contact or respond to contact initiated by the interagency or local resource

Stage Two: Commander's Verification—Conducted by the Commander or Designee:

The commander or designee reviews your DD Form 2648 and determines if you have a viable ITP and have met the required CRS, and if not, have received a WHO. The final step is for the commander or designee to sign the DD Form 2648 verifying completion of all transition requirements.

STEP 2: Plan for Your Transition Checklist

- ☐ Confirm your Tier Level assignment.
- ☐ Identify required TAP courses and CRS.
- ☐ Sign the DD Form 2648 to acknowledge completion of Individualized Initial Counseling (IC) and Pre-Separation Brief.

Step 3: Manage Your VA Benefits

When you leave active duty Service, many of your benefits will change, and you may qualify for VA benefits earned as part of your military Service. As described in STEP 2, the VA conducts the VA Benefits and Services course as part of TAP. This course is facilitated by a VA Benefits advisor, which covers important topics like disability compensation, life insurance, housing, education, VA health care benefits, and community integration resources with time allotted for questions. It is important for you to connect with your local VA Benefits Advisors for a one-on-one session to learn about the benefits, services, and resources that are available to you throughout your transition and beyond.

IMPORTANT: VA BENEFITS ADVISOR

Connect with a VA Benefits Advisor

Learn about the benefits, services, and available resources available to you through your service.

Find your advisor

Scan the QR code

In addition to connecting with a VA Benefits Advisor, download the "Know Before You Go" workbook. This critical tool guides your transition with a structured timeline and clear, actionable steps to access your VA benefits.

KBYG

Scan the QR code

"Know Before You Go" Workbook

Guides your transition with a structured timeline and actionable steps to access your VA benefits

If you have questions about any of your VA benefits, you can locate your VA Benefits Advisor at https://discover.va.gov/transition-programs/va-transition-assistance-program-tap-benefits-advisors/ or by calling the VA at 1-800-827-1000.

VA Benefits and Services Online Course/Participant Guide: www.TAPevents.mil/courses

Petitioning VA due to Less than Honorable Discharge

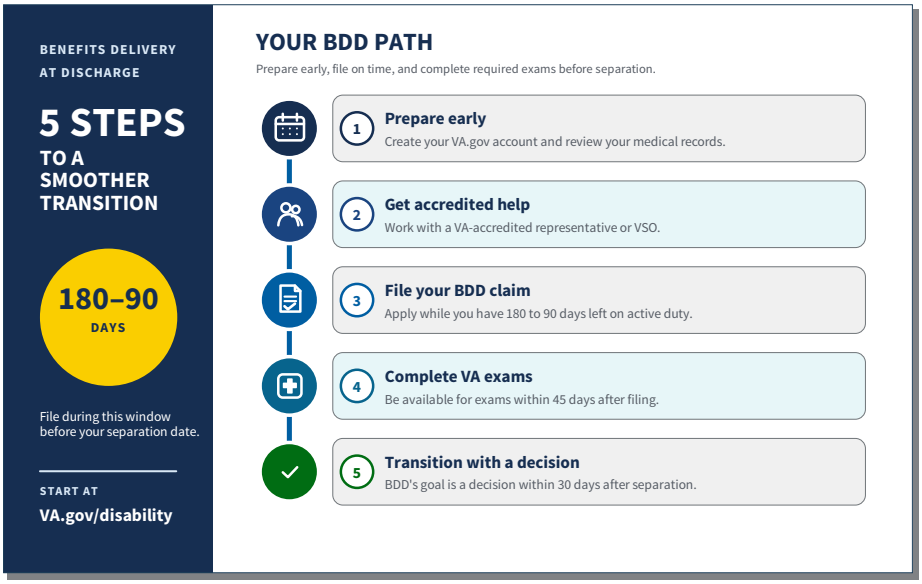
Eligibility for some VA benefits may be based on the type of discharge you receive when you leave active duty. If your character of discharge does not allow for full utilization of VA Benefits, you can apply at VA.gov for a discharge upgrade or corrections. If you anticipate a less than honorable characterization, make an appointment to discuss this with a VA Benefits Advisor.

NOTE: DoW makes the final decision for discharge upgrades.

VA Discharge Upgrade/Correction: https://www.va.gov/discharge-upgrade-instructions/introduction/

Department of Veterans Affairs Disability Compensation

Transition to civilian life the smart way by filing a Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) claim at VA.gov while you're still on active duty. If you have a medical condition connected to your military service - regardless of severity, big or small - you can file a claim before you leave the military through VA's BDD program.
To qualify, you must file between 180 and 90 days before your separation date. After you submit your claim,



VA will schedule and complete your medical exams while you're still in the military. This allows VA to provide you with a rating decision and if your claim is approved, begin your tax-free disability compensation payments within 30 to 60 days after you separate.

Step 1: Prepare early

Follow the QR code to see your filing window.

Start preparing as soon as possible, ideally 12–6 months before you leave active duty.

- Create your VA.gov account now so you can manage your benefits online.
- Secure a copy of your Service Treatment Records (STRs), ideally around 7 months before separation, so they're ready when you need them.
- Review your medical records to make sure they are accurate, complete and reflect every injury or illness you incurred or aggravated during active duty.

Step 2: Get expert help

Around the 8 to 6-month mark before separation, schedule an appointment with a VA accredited representative to help you review your STRs and prepare your BDD claim to be submitted at the 180-day mark.

- An accredited representative can help you gather evidence, file your claim, and communicate with VA on your behalf.

- These services are always free for your initial VA benefit claim.
- Find a VA accredited representative or VSO at va.gov/get-help-from-accredited-representative/find-rep.

Note: if someone isn't recognized by VA, they can't represent you before VA or file a VA benefit claim on your behalf.

Step 3: Submit your BDD claim.

File online at VA.gov, or work with a VA accredited representative to submit your claim.

- The BDD application window opens 180 days before your separation date and closes 90 days before it.
- A complete BDD claim includes your application, your completed Separation Health Assessment (SHA) - Part A, and your STRs.
- Download the SHA at https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/docs/SHA_DBQ_Part_A_Self-Assessment.pdf

Step 4: Attend your VA exam

VA will schedule a Compensation and Pension (C&P) exam within 45 days of your claim submission if more information is needed to decide your case. The exam helps VA:

- Determine whether your condition is service-connected.
- Rate the severity of your disability, if one is found.

Step 5: Get your results

Receive a fast decision on your disability compensation claim, plus confirmed eligibility for federal, state, and other benefits tied to your VA rating—like tax-free monthly compensation starting at 10%, health care, and employment training.

VA Education and Training Benefits

Your type and length of Service and type of discharge determine your benefits for education and training. Depending on your GI Bill program and benefit level, you may be eligible for career counseling, tuition for training and education, housing allowance, and a book stipend. Below is an overview of education benefits you may be eligible to receive.

VA Education and Training: https://www.va.gov/education/

Personalized Career Planning and Guidance (PCPG)

Personalized Career Planning and Guidance (PCPG) offers free educational and career guidance, planning, and resources to veterans and their dependents who are eligible for a VA education benefit. These services may be available to the Service member/veteran or family member 6 months prior to separation and up to one-year post-separation.

PCPG: https://www.va.gov/careers-employment/education-and-career-counseling/

Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E)

VR&E assists veterans with 10% or more service-connected disability with exploring employment options and addressing training needs. The education benefits provided through VR&E are in addition to the GI Bill. Speak with a VR&E counselor if you think you may qualify.

VR&E: https://www.va.gov/careers-employment/vocational-rehabilitation/

Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty (MGIB-AD) (Chapter 30)

Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty or MGIB-AD program can be used for a variety of trainings such as college degrees and certificate programs, technical or vocational courses, licensing, and certificate tests, and much more. The MGIB can be converted to the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

If you have 2 or more qualifying periods of active duty, you may qualify for up to 48 months of entitlement. You must be eligible for benefits through both the Post-9/11 Bill and the Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty (MGIB-AD).

MGIB-AD: https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/montgomery-active-duty/

Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) (Chapter 1606)

If you're a member of the Reserves, Army National Guard, or Air National Guard, you may be able to get up to 36 months of education and training benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) program. You can use these benefits for a variety of training, such as college degrees and certificate programs, technical or vocational courses, licensing, and certificate tests, and much more.

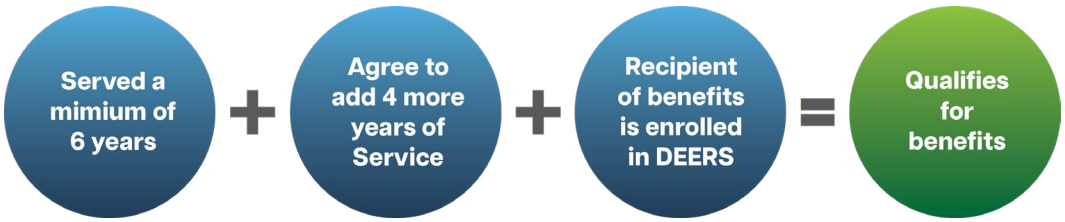
MGIB-SR: https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/montgomery-selected-reserve/

Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33)

Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits are available to active duty Service members, National Guard, Reservists, veterans, and family members. Under the Post-9/11 GI Bill, there are various types of training and assistance available including institutions of higher learning undergraduate and graduate degrees, flight training, vocational/technical training, and more. The Post-9/11 GI Bill will be covered in the VA Benefits and Services course.

Transferring Your Post-9/11 GI Bill Benefits

If you are eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill, you may have transferred your unused education benefits to your spouse or children. Transferring education benefits requires the Service member to serve an additional 4 years after making the transfer.



DoW determines the eligibility requirements to transfer GI Bill benefits to eligible dependents. Criteria for transfer of education benefits includes the following:

- Be on active duty – transfer of benefits CANNOT happen after separation or retirement
- Have served a minimum of 6 years
- Agree to an additional 4 years of Service
- Previously elected to change benefits from the MGIB to the Post-9/11 GI Bill
- Person receiving the benefits is enrolled in DEERS

When transferring benefits to family members, all Service members MUST acknowledge the following statement:

> **"I understand and agree to remain in the Armed Forces for the period required. I understand that failure to complete that service may lead to an overpayment by the Department of Veterans Affairs for any payment made."**
>
> **(Service documentation will remain on file with the service.)**

If you transferred your educational benefit, you are strongly advised to log into MilConnect and ensure completion of the required obligated Service before separating or retiring. The Obligation End Date is reflected at the top of the page under "Sponsor" and on the "Approval Form."

Failure to complete ANY of the Service obligation results in your transferred benefits being revoked and results in a required repayment of used portions of the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Transferred GI Bill Benefits: https://www.va.gov/education/transfer-post-9-11-gi-bill-benefits/

VA Whole Health

VA's whole health approach is a comprehensive, patient-centered approach to help veterans achieve their greatest well-being. Veterans can receive coverage for most care and services, but only some will qualify for added benefits like dental care. Each veteran's medical benefits package is unique.

To receive medical care from the VA, you need to enroll in VA Healthcare. During the VA Benefits and Services course, you begin the process by pre-enrolling for VA Healthcare. The process cannot be completed until you have your DD-214. Pre-enrolling allows the VA the ability to contact you as you get close to your separation or retirement date to assist with the final steps. You may access some VA mental health services without being enrolled in VA health care.

To ensure continuity of mental health services throughout transition, the VA Liaison and Post-9/11 Military2VA Case Management Program provides this connection. These programs connect you to VA, community resources, and case management when needed to support you as you navigate transition.

VA Liaison and Post-9/11 Military2VA Case Management: https://www.va.gov/post911veterans/

You are encouraged to attend the VA Benefits and Services one-day course early in your transition preparation and ask questions. If applicable and space allows, spouses and caregivers are encouraged to attend as well. The following topics are covered in detail:

VA Health Care: https://www.va.gov/health-care/

VA Mental Health: https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/

Women's Health Care Services: https://www.va.gov/health-care/health-needs-conditions/womens-health-needs/

VA Dental Care: https://www.va.gov/health-care/about-va-health-benefits/dental-care/

VA Solid Start

The VA Solid Start program provides early and consistent contact to newly separated veterans. During your first year as a veteran, VA Solid Start will reach out three times, around 90, 180, and 365 days after separation. VA Solid Start representatives provide assistance with VA benefits and services, filing claims, obtaining status updates on benefits applications, and locating additional resources from federal and community partners.

VA Life Insurance

VA has many different types of life insurance to assist separating Service members and their families. During the VA Benefits and Services course, the VA Benefits Advisor provides information on the following:

- Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI)
- Traumatic Injury Protection under Service members' Group Life Insurance (TSGLI)
- SGLI Disability Extension (SGLI-DE)
- Veterans' Affairs Life Insurance (VALife)
- Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI)

VA Life Insurance: https://www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/

State VA Offices

State VA offices assist veterans with state benefits related to education, employment, finance, health care, housing, legal assistance, recreation, taxes, and more. Each state manages its own state VA Office and benefit programs, and services may vary between states.

State VA Offices: https://discover.va.gov/external-resources/?_resource_type=state-veterans-affairs-office

VA Vet Centers

Vet Centers are community-based centers that offer individual, group, marriage and family counseling, community engagement, and referral services for veterans, Service members, and their families. These are small, intimate facilities located off base within your community. Services are free for life, and do not require enrollment in the VA Healthcare System or a service-connected disability rating.

VA Vet Centers: https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/ or call 877-927-8387

VA Home Loan

The VA home loan guaranty is an earned benefit that can assist eligible Service members, veterans, and certain surviving spouses to become homeowners. This benefit ensures you can purchase a home with little to no down payment by guaranteeing a portion of the loan, enabling the lender to provide you with more favorable terms.

VA Home Loans: https://benefits.va.gov/homeloans/

Homelessness

Homelessness means an individual or family does not have a permanent place to live. If you are not sure where you will live after separation and are concerned or have any thoughts about the possibility of experiencing homelessness, schedule a one-on-one assistance session with a VA Benefits Advisor or express this concern to your commander or TAP counselor during the Capstone event.

If you are homeless after leaving the military or at risk of homelessness, contact the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at (877) 4AID-VET (877-424-3838) for assistance, or visit https://www.va.gov/homeless/. If access to a phone or the Internet is not available, visit the closest VA medical center.

Office of Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)

The HUD-VASH program combines HUD's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance for homeless veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the VA. VA provides these services for participating veterans at VA medical centers, community-based outreach clinics, through VA contractors, and through other VA designated entities.

HUD-VASH: https://www.hud.gov/helping-americans/housing-choice-vouchers-homeless-veterans

STEP 3: Manage Your VA Benefits Checklist

- [ ] Connect with your installation or local VA Benefits Advisor.
- [ ] If you transferred your GI Bill benefits, confirm your Service obligation has been met in full or will be met prior to your separation/retirement.
- [ ] Visit VA.gov and gather information on topics of interest, e.g., VA Disability, Benefits Delivery at Discharge, VA Mental/Health Care, VA Life Insurance, VA Home Loans, etc.
- [ ] Complete your pre-enrollment in VA Healthcare during the VA Benefits and Services course.

Step 4:
Plan for Healthcare, Mental Healthcare, and Health Insurance

Understanding and finding mental health resources, quality healthcare, and health insurance can be one of the most challenging tasks during transition. While in the military, you received comprehensive healthcare at little or no cost to you or your family. After transition, this will change; you may be able to continue to use military health care or you may need to find your own doctors and obtain health insurance. Regardless of your options, understanding the requirements for healthcare as you transition and what is available post-transition is important.

DoW Separation History and Physical Examination (SHPE)/VA Separation Health Assessment (SHA)

The purpose of the Separation History and Physical Examination (SHPE) or Separation Health Assessment (SHA) is to ensure that medical conditions you developed during your Service that require ongoing care or that may require care in the future are identified and documented in your military medical file or Service Treatment Record (STR).

All Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard members (if they served a minimum of 180 days on active duty or 30 days in a contingency operation) must complete a SHPE prior to separation, retirement, or release from active duty. Additionally, Reserve Component Service members who deployed within two years may request a SHPE to document duty-related health conditions that may not have been captured during other physical exams. If applying for VA disability, VA will require a SHA.



To reduce the burden on the Service member, the DoW will accept the SHA conducted by the VA provider in lieu of the SHPE.

The SHPE and SHA facilitate:

- Documentation of the health status of separating Service members
- Transfer of care from the DoW to the VA
- Support for the evaluation of VA disability claims

Additional information on the SHPE and SHA is included in the VA Benefits and Services course.

Mental Health Assessment (MHA)

The Mental Health Assessment (MHA) DD Form 2978 is an online mental health assessment which is required to be completed prior to the SHPE or SHA. The results of this online self-assessment will be addressed during the SHPE or SHA. The assessment can be accessed through the MHS GENESIS Patient Portal.

Medical History

The Medical History DD Form 2807-1 is used during medical examinations for multiple purposes which include separation, retirement, or release from active duty. Failure to fully complete the form according to the instructions will delay the medical clearance. The form will be provided to you to complete prior to your SHPE or SHA.

Service Treatment Record (STR)

It is essential that your Service Treatment Record (STR) is up to date prior to any medical exam. The STR is a chronological record documenting the medical and dental care and treatment you received while in the Service. If you file a claim for benefits, a copy of the STR, along with any other medical documentation, is provided to VA.

Access to your medical records is available through the MHS GENESIS Patient Portal. The system contains all documents, including scanned copies of the paper STR. Additionally, the Portal has a Service Separation page with instructions, forms, and links to VA sites to help prepare for the SHPE or SHA.

As part of your preparation, you are strongly encouraged to review the "Problem List" within the STR to ensure that important conditions are listed. Also, you must review the "Documents" section to ensure that health care documentation from other health care systems are included in the STR. The Primary Care Manager (PCM) or Military Treatment Facility (MTF) can assist with missing information.

MHS GENESIS Patient Portal: https://myaccess.dmdc.osd.mil/identitymanagement/app/login

DoW inTransition

DoW's inTransition is a free and confidential program that provides specialized coaching and resources to Service members transitioning between mental/ behavioral health care providers or systems. It also assists those seeking mental health care for the first time. inTransition coaches help Service members find treatment options, secure appointments, and access transition-related resources. Service members who received mental/ behavioral health care or treatment for moderate to severe traumatic brain injuries within the past 12 months are automatically enrolled but may opt-out at any time.

DoW inTransition: https://www.health.mil/intransition

Veterans and Military Crisis Line

The Veterans and Military Crisis Line, text-messaging service, and online chat provide free support for all Service members, veterans and their family members.

- Call **988 and Press 1**
- Chat online at https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat
- Send a text message to **838255**

The Veterans and Military Crisis Line is staffed by caring, qualified responders from VA. Many are veterans themselves. They understand what Service members have been through and the challenges members of the military and their loved ones face.

Calling from overseas

Calling from Overseas?

NORTHCOM: Dial 988 then Press 1	**PACOM:** Call +1 844-702-5493 (off base) or DSN 988 (on base)	**EUCOM:** Call +1 844-702-5495 (off base) or DSN 988 (on base)
CENTCOM: Call +1 855-422-7719 (off base) or DSN 988 (on base)	**AFRICOM:** Call +1 888-482-6054 (off base) or DSN 988 (on base)	**SOUTHCOM:** Call +1 866-989-9599 (off base) or DSN 988 (on base)

Each of these numbers is assigned to a different DoW Area of Responsibility. If you have trouble reaching the Veterans and Military Crisis Line with the assigned number for the region you are calling from, try one of the other numbers.

If calling does not work, try chatting online at: https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help-now/chat/

In case of an emergency, dial 911 or your local emergency number immediately.

If you, or anyone you know, are experiencing thoughts of suicide, reach out for help immediately.

Call 988 and press 1 or send a text message to 838255.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO)

The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) serves as the single point of authority, accountability, and oversight of the DoW Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) program. The Department's programmatic approach is prevention-focused with an uncompromising commitment to victim assistance.

If you have been a victim of sexual assault and need assistance, information, or resources, you may contact one of the following:

- Unit or installation Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) or SAPR Victim Advocate (SAPR VA)
- Local SARC and other sources of help by texting your Zip code or installation/base name to 55-247 (in the U.S.) or 202-470-5546 (outside the U.S.), or search at https://safehelpline.org/nearme
- DoW Safe Helpline: 1-877-995-5247 or https://safehelpline.org/
- Military Sexual Trauma (MST): https://www.va.gov/health-care/health-needs-conditions/military-sexual-trauma/

TRICARE

When you leave the military, you and your family may no longer be eligible for TRICARE and will need to obtain healthcare insurance through an employer or on your own. However, TRICARE may be an option if you retired from the military or separated but meet specific eligibility criteria. Start your research by visiting the TRICARE website and using the Plan Finder to determine your eligibility for TRICARE and get information on the various plan options.

TRICARE: https://www.tricare.mil/

TRICARE Plan Finder: https://www.tricare.mil/Plans/PlanFinder

TRICARE Enrollment and Changes to Your Healthcare Plan

Changes to a healthcare plan can only be made during the annual open enrollment period. However, you qualify to start or change a healthcare plan outside the open enrollment period as transitioning out of the military is considered a Qualifying Life Event (QLE). ***Changes to your healthcare plan must occur within 90 days after a QLE.***

TRICARE provides many different types of insurance plans which vary in their coverage of mental health, substance abuse, dental, and medical services.

TRICARE Mental Health Care

Active-duty family members may seek mental health care if needed during transition. Referrals and preauthorization are not required if the family member seeks care within the network from a mental health provider. If mental health treatment needs to continue after transition, it is necessary to make other provisions to continue care as TRICARE medical insurance may no longer be an option.

TRICARE Prime and Select (for Retirees until age 65)

If you are retiring from military Service, it's crucial to schedule an appointment with a TRICARE representative to learn more about your eligibility, plan options, and costs. Failure to enroll in TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select will result in losing all TRICARE coverage and default to space-available direct care at military hospitals or clinics.

If you plan to use a Military Treatment Facility (MTF) after retirement, it is important to note that not all MTFs have space available to accommodate and provide healthcare for retirees and family members. Check directly with TRICARE and the MTF to find out what services are available in the area where you plan to live.

TRICARE Prime or Select coverage requires a beneficiary to enroll and pay applicable enrollment fees or premiums, cost-shares or copays, and annual deductible. This option is available to retirees who have retired from the military but have not yet reached 65 years of age. If living overseas, TRICARE Select for Retirees is the only option available.

TRICARE for Life (TFL) and Medicare (after age 65)

Retirees 65 and above are no longer eligible for TRICARE for Retirees. After age 65, Medicare/TFL becomes their primary healthcare insurance. Retirees must enroll in Medicare Part A & B to be eligible for TFL as supplemental coverage beyond Medicare. Medicare and TFL together provide comprehensive health care coverage, to include prescription coverage through TFL under the TRICARE Pharmacy Program.

When Medicare Part A and B coverage begins, the change from TRICARE for Retirees to TFL occurs automatically, with no enrollment required.

TRICARE Reserve Select

TRICARE Reserve Select is a premium-based health plan for qualified Selected Reserve members and their family members.

TRICARE Retired Reserve

TRICARE Retired Reserve may be the right healthcare plan for retired reservists who qualify (i.e., those not eligible for or enrolled in a Federal Employees Health Benefit plan and are under age 60). The plan provides comprehensive health care coverage under TRICARE Select.

Dental and Vision Coverage for Retirees

After retirement, dental and vision are no longer available from TRICARE. However, retired uniformed Service members, their eligible family members, and survivors are eligible for dental and vision insurance through the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). If eligible, the enrollment requests can be made 31 days prior to or within 60 days following the retirement date to prevent a gap in dental coverage.

FEDVIP: 1-877-888-FEDS (1-877-888-3337) or https://www.benefeds.gov/login

Temporary Health Care Coverage

You may be able to obtain temporary healthcare coverage if you meet the eligibility requirements. Two available programs are listed below:

Continued Health Care Benefits Program (CHCBP)

The Continued Health Care Benefits Program or CHCBP is a premium-based plan that:

- Provides temporary health coverage for 18 to 36 months when you lose eligibility for TRICARE
- Acts as a bridge between military health benefits and your new civilian health plan
- Provides the same coverage as TRICARE Select, including prescriptions
- Gives you the minimum essential coverage required by the Affordable Care Act

To obtain CHCBP, an applicant must submit a request to enroll within 60 days after loss of eligibility for military health care, (i.e., TRICARE Prime/Select or TAMP) and pay quarterly premiums. In addition to premiums, there are additional copays and cost-shares for some covered services.

CHCBP Eligibility: https://www.tricare.mil/CHCBP

Transitional Assistance Management Program (TAMP)

If eligible, TAMP begins the day after separation from active service and provides 180 days of premium-free TRICARE transitional health care coverage to the Service member and eligible family members. TAMP eligibility is not automatic; a Service member may be eligible for TAMP if the member is:

1. Involuntarily separated from active duty under honorable conditions.
2. A Reserve Component member separated from active duty after serving at least 30 days on active-duty orders under 10 U.S.C. § 12304b or in a contingency operation as defined in 10 U.S.C. § 101(a)(13). This includes members who voluntarily served on active duty under 10 U.S.C. § 12301(d). **Important:** A Service member does not need to demonstrate that the period of service was substantively connected to a war, contingency operation, or national emergency.
3. Separated from active duty after being involuntarily retained on active duty in support of a contingency operation.

4. Separated from active duty following a voluntary agreement to remain on active duty for less than one year in support of a contingency operation.
5. A member who receives a sole survivorship discharge.
6. Separated from active duty and agrees to become a member of the Selected Reserve or the Ready Reserve of a Reserve Component on the day immediately following the last day of active duty.
7. A National Guard member separated from active duty after serving more than 30 consecutive days on 32 U.S.C. § 502(f) orders authorized by the President or Secretary of War to respond to a federally funded national emergency declared by Congress or the President.

TAMP: https://www.tricare.mil/TAMP

Dental Coverage During TAMP

During TAMP, the Service member is covered under the Active Duty Dental Program and may be seen in military dental treatment facilities on a space-available basis. Family members are still eligible for the TRICARE Dental plan during TAMP and must continue to pay premiums.

Health Insurance Marketplace

Veterans and their family members who are not enrolled in VA benefits or other veteran's healthcare coverage can get coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace. More information on obtaining healthcare insurance through the Marketplace is provided during the TAP Financial Planning for Transition course.

Health Insurance Marketplace for Veterans: https://www.healthcare.gov/veterans

Additional information on obtaining healthcare is provided during the Financial Planning for Transition course.

STEP 4: Plan for Healthcare, Mental Healthcare, and Health Insurance Checklist

- ☐ Schedule the Separation History and Physical Examination (SHPE) prior to transition or the Separation Health Assessment (SHA) if applying for VA disability compensation.
- ☐ Review your Service Treatment Record available through the MHS Genesis Patient Portal.
- ☐ Explore healthcare insurance options to use after leaving the military.

Step 5: Conduct Career Exploration and Plan for Employment

Transitioning from Service is the ultimate career change. For many, finding a new career path and employment are the first and most important areas of concern. DOL and DoW partner to assist transitioning Service members and their spouses by providing programs and information on career exploration, apprenticeships, employment, vocational training, certifications, licensure, and various other avenues for conducting career research and seeking employment.

Career Exploration

DOL Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS)

DOL provides access to the tools and best practices that help in the transition from military Service to a civilian career. The CareerOneStop Veteran and Military Transition Center is a comprehensive website for employment, training, and financial help after military Service. Additionally, DOL American Job Centers (AJC), available in most communities, provide a full array of employment and training resources to include information about Unemployment Compensation (UCX) eligibility.

All DOL resources are explored fully during the DOL Employment Fundamentals of Career Transition (EFCT) and the DOL Employment Track: Employment Workshop (DOLEW).

CareerOneStop: https://www.careeronestop.org/veterans/

Employment Navigator and Partnership Program (ENPP)

DOL's Employment Navigator and Partnership Program provides one-on-one career assistance and connects transitioning service members and their spouses with partners that can provide employment services and resources. These personalized services are available both in-person or virtually at **select installations**. Employment Navigators can help you explore the job market, discover high-paying, high-demand occupations, and identify any needed skills or credentials.

ENPP: www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/programs/tap/employment-navigator-partnership

Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL)

Another online resource to assist with industry certifications and licensure is the Services' COOL websites. The COOL websites consolidate information from numerous sources at the federal, state, and local levels on certifications, licenses, apprenticeships, and growth opportunities that correspond with each military occupation, several collateral duties, and leadership/management roles. Armed with that information, COOL provides the information for a Service member to learn about and obtain civilian licenses and certifications that are closely aligned with current or former military occupations, academic degrees, or civilian jobs for Reservists. The COOL website can help you with the following:

- Locate background information about civilian certifications and licensure
- Identify certifications and licenses relevant to military MOS, AFSC, or Rating
- Learn how to fill gaps between military training and experience and civilian credentialing requirements associated with MOS, AFSC, or Rating
- Learn about resources available to help gain civilian job credentials

COOL Websites

- Dept. of War Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (DoW COOL)
- Army Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (Army COOL)
- Marine Corps Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (Marine Corps COOL)
- Navy Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (Navy COOL)
- Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (AF and Space Force COOL)
- Coast Guard Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (Coast Guard COOL)

MilGears

MilGears is a platform powered by COOL and designed to support professional development. MilGears combines education, training, and professional experience to create a personalized pathway toward career development for those entering the military, active-duty and transitioning Service members, veterans, and family members.

The MilGears suite of tools provides custom results and documentation to help you plan and achieve your goals by highlighting career possibilities and helping you visualize how to reach those goals. During TAP, the MOC Crosswalk course uses the MilGears Interest Profiler to support you in a career-exploration activity.

MilGears: https://milgears.osd.mil/

Gaining Experience

Having experience in your chosen career area is an important part of obtaining employment. There are multiple ways to gain experience including job training, apprenticeships, and volunteering. The following programs are available to transitioning Service members.

Job Training—DoW SkillBridge

DoW SkillBridge is a job skills training program that offers opportunities in civilian on-the-job training (OJT), employment skills training, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, or internships that provide a pathway to post-Service employment.

Program guidelines require the Service member to be within 180 days of separation and have gained approval from their first field-grade level Commander. In addition, each Service has individual guidelines and requirements for participation. Local transition or education offices have more information about the SkillBridge program. Currently, more than 7,000 programs are offered via SkillBridge, with more being added each year.

SkillBridge: https://skillbridge.mil/

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are industry-driven career pathways where employers can develop and prepare future employees by providing paid work experience, classroom instruction, and a nationally recognized portable credential.

Apprenticeships are available in hundreds of occupations such as IT, cybersecurity, healthcare, energy, transportation, hospitality, financial services, high-paying skilled trades, and many others. Gaining experience in these high-growth and emerging industries can lead to meaningful employment.

Get an overview about apprenticeships by taking the Military Life Cycle (MLC) course Apprenticeship:

https://tapevents.mil/courses/289

Or visit the following websites:

Apprenticeships: https://www.apprenticeship.gov/

GI Bill-Apprenticeships:
https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/how-to-use-benefits/on-the-job-training-apprenticeships/

Volunteering

Volunteering can be valuable for transition into civilian life. Volunteering has proven to assist with finding employment prospects, learning new skills, and becoming engaged in local communities. Research shows that volunteering increases a person's likelihood of finding a job by 27% nationwide, and volunteers in rural communities have a 55% higher chance of finding a job. Volunteering also helps with building a resume, by providing experience and job networking which can lead to employment opportunities.

Choose a volunteer opportunity based on skills, experience, and employment objectives. Volunteering can provide experience or network connections when seeking employment opportunities in a new field. Find volunteer opportunities in the local community through the state's Service Commission or through local organizations.

VolunteerMatch: https://www.idealist.org/volunteermatch

AmeriCorps

Veterans are a proven force multiplier for national service programs nationally and serving with Ameri Corps is an effective way to tap the talent and leadership skills you've gained in the military to solve problems at home. More than 13,000 veterans serve in AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Seniors programs each year, applying the leadership and skills they acquired in the military to continue service by giving back to their communities.

AmeriCorps service provides specific benefits to military Service members transitioning to civilian life—camaraderie, teamwork, and help address community needs, which allows you to re-connect with communities. AmeriCorps has thousands of roles for Americans of any age to help communities tackle their toughest challenges. From mentoring students to higher academic achievement, being the first to respond when disaster strikes, helping families facing hunger, restoring public lands, or even rehabilitating affordable housing, you can make a difference.

AmeriCorps: https://www.americorps.gov/

Peace Corps

In more than 60 countries, Peace Corps Volunteers are putting their purpose, passion, and skills to work in partnership with welcoming host countries. Volunteers live and work side by side with community members on locally prioritized projects. Peace Corps volunteers receive transportation, housing, a living stipend, paid leave, student loan benefits, and medical/dental care. Upon completion of two years of service, the Peace Corps provides each volunteer with more than $10,000 to help with the transition to life back home.

The Peace Corps provides rigorous technical training and in-depth intercultural and language instruction as well as opportunities to develop other skills. As you take your next career steps after service, you will have access to an active and diverse Peace Corps alumni network and community of over 240,000 people with

whom you can connect. Graduate schools also recognize the valuable experience of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCV) and many states, universities, and colleges offer RPCVs reduced tuition, assistantships, and stipends.

Peace Corps: https://www.peacecorps.gov/

Federal Employment Resources

Many who transition from the military choose to seek employment in federal, state, or local government. Finding employment in the federal government can be a time-consuming process. Fortunately, there are multiple resources available to assist you.

- **DOL Employment Track: Employment Workshop (DOLEW)—**This two-day course includes an extensive section on federal hiring and is offered in-person and online. Topics related to federal employment include identifying preferences and executive orders for veterans, recognizing differences between federal and standard resumes, and finding federal jobs.
- **Office of Personnel Management (OPM)—**The agency who oversees federal employment offers an online course—Transitioning to Federal Employment—and provides additional information about federal employment.

  Transitioning to Federal Employment: https://www.TAPevents.mil/courses

  Office of Personnel Management: https://www.opm.gov
- **USA JOBS—**This is the official job site of the U.S. Federal Government and provides the best path to search for federal jobs. The website includes instructions on how to create a federal resume and apply for federal jobs.

  USA JOBS Help Center: https://help.usajobs.gov/how-to
- **Feds Hire Vets—**When searching for federal employment, Feds Hire Vets is the primary website for federal employment information for veterans, transitioning military service members, their families, and federal hiring officials. This site lists 24 federal agencies that are interested in hiring veterans and provides a directory of their Veteran Employment Program Office (VEPO) representatives. For agencies not listed on the Feds Hire Vets website, locate the human resources office within the agency as an alternate source of information on veteran hiring.

  Feds Hire Vets: https://www.opm.gov/fedshirevets/
- **Federal Employment Events—**Check with your local installation for federal hiring and federal resume writing courses.

Defense Industrial Base (DIB) Opportunities

Following the Secretary of War Memorandum on, "Enhancing Workforce Development Through the Department of War Project Patriot Pipeline," published June 3, 2026, the Department will strengthen national security by shaping a highly skilled workforce prepared to meet the evolving challenges facing our Nation by supporting the defense industrial base (DIB).

Project Patriot Pipeline (P3) initiative

As part of the Department's Project Patriot Pipeline (P3) initiative, Service members in the last 180 days of their service who request SkillBridge participation within the DIB will be approved by the Military Departments. This is an exception to policy (ETP) to Service-specific rank restrictions. The DIB includes companies and organizations that design, build, maintain, and secure the systems, technologies, and infrastructure that support America's military and national security.

PROJECT PATRIOT PIPELINE
DEPARTMENT OF WAR

Through DoW SkillBridge, Service members can gain hands-on experience leveraging opportunities with over 2K approved DIB industry partners while still serving. These opportunities allow participants to apply military skills in civilian workplaces, develop new capabilities, expand professional networks, and prepare for critical national security to continue their service supporting that Nation post-military.

DIB opportunities may be found across critical workforce areas including:



- Aerospace & Aviation
- Cybersecurity and Information Technology
- Engineering and Systems Development
- Electronic & Microelectronics
- Manufacturing & Skilled Trades
- Shipbuilding & Maritime Systems
- Weapons, Munitions & Missile Defense
- Trucking & Transit

Opportunities identified with the DIB mission icon have been designated as critical and meet the Service member P3 ETP for participation up to the maximum of 180-days as a workforce priority. To find DIB opportunities, filter the mission by DIB on the SkillBridge Locations page or search using keywords such as Manufacturing, Aviation, Cybersecurity, Engineering, Skilled Trades, or Shipbuilding. Explore available opportunities and discover how your military experience can support both your future career goals and the Nation's defense mission.

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) is a federal law. It protects eligible military Service members and veterans from employment discrimination based on their service. It allows them to regain their civilian jobs following a period of uniformed service.

USERRA provides the following and more:

- Protects civilian job rights and benefits for eligible Service members of the Active and Reserve components of the U.S. Armed Forces.
- Provides protection for Service members injured during a period of service upon returning to a position, requiring employers to make reasonable efforts to accommodate the disability.
- Requires employers to restore a Service member as if they had never left in the first place, this includes seniority, rate of pay, promotions, bonuses etc.
- Requires employers to reinstate eligible Service members back to their job even if the Service member resigned before leaving for military service.

For more information and to determine whether your USERRA rights have been violated, access the USERRA Advisor https://webapps.dol.gov/elaws/vets/userra/.

All the details on your rights, including How to File a complaint, are on the USERRA VETS website http://www.dol.gov/agencies/VETS/programs/USERRA.

For an informal mediation process on handling your USERRA case, you can contact ESGR and open a support request on this website: https://esgr.mil/USERRA/USERRA-Contact

Post-Military Service Federal Employment Counseling and Restrictions

Military components are required to provide counseling on relevant federal and DoW government service employment restrictions to military members who are leaving active-duty Service. The guidance provides information on restrictions for employment after leaving the military and the bans that occur if restrictions are violated.

Service members who retire from the military are required to complete a 180-day waiting period before being appointed to a DoW civilian position. This ONLY applies to civilian employment in the DoW, not civilian employment in other government agencies. Reservists and Guardsmen who retire but are not yet receiving retirement pay are excluded from the 180-day rule.

Declining this mandatory counseling is not permitted. Contact the installation legal office to ensure receipt of the post-military employment restriction briefing or counseling from an ethics official.

DoW Mentoring

Mentoring provides employees with resources and guidance for improving professional performance, personal growth, and career decision making. Mentors share their skills, knowledge, and experience with others to help them achieve their goals. Mentors can help mentees in various ways to include increasing self-awareness, encouraging growth beyond expectations, providing constructive feedback, improving technical competence, and expanding professional networks. Formal mentoring programs typically last six months to a year, but mentoring relationships can continue indefinitely.

DoW Mentoring:
https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/learning/civilianleaderdevelopmentbroadeningother/mentoringportal

Foreign Government Employment

Under the Emoluments Clause to the U.S. Constitution and federal law, all former Service members must receive advance approval from their Service Secretary and the Secretary of State before accepting employment, compensation, or gifts from foreign governments or their state-controlled entities. These mandates prevent conflicts of interest and safeguard national security. Failure to obtain prior authorization can lead to forfeiture of retirement pay and benefits, loss of security clearances, and financial penalties. Contact your installation legal office for more information or to submit a formal application.

DoW Standards of Conduct Office:
https://dodsoco.ogc.osd.mil/ETHICS-TOPICS/Post-Government-Employment-and-Procurement-Integrity

Transition Employment Assistance for Military Spouses and Caregivers (TEAMS)

TEAMS is a series of employment-training workshops, offered at no cost, that help military spouses and caregivers find success in their job search. TEAMS workshops are focused on empowering military spouses to tackle their unemployment and underemployment, frequent moves, lack of experience, and licensure and credential portability. These two-hour courses focus on topics important to the spouses of active duty or transitioning Service members and spouses of veterans. TEAMS workshops are stand-alone training modules, offered on-installation and instructor-led virtually. Participants can take as many workshops as they would like to prepare for their employment goals.

TEAMS: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/programs/tap/teams-workshops

STEP 5: Conduct Career Exploration and Plan for Employment Checklist

- ☐ Register for the DOL Vocational Track: Career and Credentialing Exploration course to explore civilian careers and credentials.
- ☐ Register for the DOL Employment Track: Employment Workshop.
- ☐ Explore DoW SkillBridge for opportunities.
- ☐ Check with your local installation for a federal hiring course.

Step 6: Plan for Further Education

One of the reasons many join the military is to earn education benefits. As you prepare to return to the civilian sector, you may choose to use those benefits to earn a degree or attain the credentials required for your chosen civilian career. There are a vast number of resources available for veterans to help you prepare for success in higher education to include federal programs like the Veterans Upward Bound Program. Depending on where you choose to live after transition, there may also be education benefits and services available at the state and local level.

One way to explore all aspects of funding and earning a degree is by attending the **DoW Education Track: Managing Your (MY) Education** course described in STEP 2. The topics below are covered in more detail during the course.

Education Assistance Resources

Each Military Service has Education Services Specialists (ESS), Education Services Officers (ESO), or professional counselors who can provide Service members with information on the educational opportunities available and guidance on how to access them.

Topics that may be addressed include the following:

- Academic counseling for military and civilian education
- Veteran education benefits
- Financial aid
- College-level testing

Speaking to an ESS/ESO about an educational path is an important part of preparing to transition from active military Service. Take advantage of the subject matter expertise and knowledge at the base education office while still on active duty.

Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES)

DANTES provides no-cost education and career-planning programs for all active-duty Service members and members of the National Guard and Reserve Components. During every step of a Service member's military career, education programs and services help foster personal and professional growth through learning.

DANTES programs include the following:

Kuder Journey for Career & Education Planning

By taking a few assessments, Kuder will identify your skills, interests, and aptitude for different career areas. This program identifies career areas that fit with your areas of interest and recommends an education and/or career path to achieve them.

College Credit-by-Examination: CLEP and DSST

College Credit-by-Examination includes the College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP) and the Prometric DSST Exam Series. Both offer the opportunity to earn college credit for prior knowledge gained through military training and experiences outside of a traditional classroom.

DANTES: https://www.dantes.mil/

Military Transcripts

Joint Services Transcript (JST)

The JST includes a detailed list of military education and training completed by you and provides credit recommendations, course hours, and descriptions. If you used Tuition Assistance (TA) for off-duty education, the school is required to provide information on courses and grades to the Military Service who forwards the information to be included on the JST.

If you completed college courses prior to the military or paid out of pocket for college courses while serving, have your transcripts sent to JST to be recorded.

JST: https://jst.DoWed.mil/jst/

Community College of the Air Force (CCAF)

CCAF is a regionally accredited college, sharing in Air University's accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools – Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

CCAF: https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/CCAF/

Federal Student Aid Programs

Federal Student Aid Programs are administered by the U.S. Department of Education and include grants, loans, and work-study programs. These federally- funded programs help provide money for college through the student's post-secondary institution and can be used in addition to the GI Bill. To determine your eligibility for aid, it is important to plan early and complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) before the deadline.

Federal Student Aid: https://studentaid.gov/

STEP 6: Plan for Further Education Checklist

- [ ] Register to attend the in person DoW Education Track: Managing Your (MY) Education course if planning to go to college.
- [ ] Apply for Federal Student Aid by completing the FAFSA.
- [ ] Explore receiving college credit for prior knowledge through CLEP, DSST, and transfer credits.
- [ ] Access your JST or CCAF transcript and review for accuracy.

Step 7: Consider Starting a Business

Starting or running your own business may be your post-transition plan. To understand how to begin this process, the Small Business Administration (SBA), VA, and DoW all offer resources and programs to support veterans as they explore entrepreneurship.

To begin your research, it is recommended you complete the two-day **SBA Entrepreneurship Track: Boots to Business (B2B)** course (described in STEP 2) which presents the benefits and challenges of entrepreneurship, identifies the optimal business skills required to operate a business, and provides access to the numerous tools and resources available to launch and maintain a successful business. In addition to B2B, SBA provides follow on services and online courses offered by entrepreneurship professors and practitioners.

SBA: https://www.sba.gov/

B2B Classes: https://sba.my.site.com/s/

Local Assistance: https://www.sba.gov/local-assistance

SBA Learning Platform: https://www.sba.gov/sba-learning-platform

SBA Veterans Federal Procurement Opportunities and Assistance

The Small Business Development Act sets an annual government-wide goal that 5% of all prime contracts/subcontracts should be awarded to small businesses owned and controlled by Service-disabled veterans. Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned small businesses may be awarded government contracts through a sole-source or a set-aside award. Before the award of a contract, the veteran-owned company must be registered in SAM.

System for Award Management (SAM): https://www.sam.gov/

FIND ASSISTANCE!

Find counseling, assistance, and protection for small and veteran businesses on sba.gov

VA Small and Veteran Business Programs

VA Small and Veteran Business Programs implement the requirements to aid, counsel, assist, and protect the interests of small and veteran business concerns. When acquiring products and services, the federal government must award these businesses a fair proportion of total VA property and services purchases, contracts, and subcontracts.

VA Small and Veteran Businesses: https://www.va.gov/osdbu/

APEX Accelerators

APEX Accelerators (formerly known as Procurement Technical Assistance Centers or PTAC) provide technical assistance to businesses interested in selling products or services to federal, state, and local governments. Additionally, APEX Accelerators can:

- Determine if you're ready for federal contracting
- Help you register in the proper places
- See if you're eligible for small business certifications
- Assist you in researching past contract opportunities

Find an APEX accelerator: https://www.apexaccelerators.us/#/

STEP 7: Consider Starting a Business Checklist

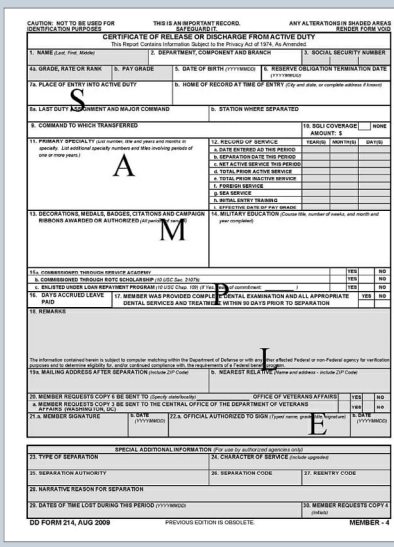
- [ ] Register for the Entrepreneurship Track: Boots to Business course.
- [ ] Explore programs offered by SBA, VA, and DoW that provide resources and support to veterans establishing new businesses.

Step 8: Explore Additional Information and Benefits

There are many more benefits and resources available which are not covered during the Pre-Separation Brief but could assist with your career change. Some topics may be covered by your Service component. Take time to explore those topics which are of interest to you and applicable to your situation.

DD Form 214 (DD 214) Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty

The DD Form 214 is the document that verifies your military Service for benefits, retirement, employment, and membership in veterans' organizations and is issued by the DoW. It is critical to review the dates and location of Service on your DD 214 carefully before leaving and have any mistakes corrected. Incorrect information may affect you receiving benefits you are entitled to from the DoW and VA.


CERTIFICATE OF RELEASE OR DISCHARGE FROM ACTIVE DUTY

DD FORM 214, AUG 2009 PREVIOUS EDITION IS OBSOLETE. MEMBER - 4

DD-214 Example

Extremism Post-Transition

When beginning military Service, you took an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. You have been trained to avoid and report extremist groups and activities that go against the fundamental principles of that oath. As you leave military Service, guard against attempts to be radicalized, continue to take a stand against extremist organizations, and report suspicious activities to the proper authorities.

Reporting Methods

- For an emergency that requires an immediate law enforcement response, call 911 or your local Police Department or Sheriff's Department
- **FBI-Tips Electronic Tip Form:** https://tips.fbi.gov/
- **Local FBI offices:** https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices

Immigration Status

The DD eForm 2648 allows a Service member to opt in to request additional information regarding immigration status and expedited naturalization. If using the printed form, the option must annotate an "opt in" election in Section XI - REMARKS, item 48. This indicates the Service member would like to receive additional resources on immigration and expedited naturalization.

- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service: https://www.uscis.gov/
- Installation legal office

Information Sharing with State Veteran Agencies

During IC, you were invited to select the state or states from which you would like to receive state based information. The states you chose will receive your email address and will send you transition and relocation resources tailored to those locations. Information provided by the states will focus on opportunities, benefits, and resources specific to those states.

Information may include, but is not limited to:

- Employment opportunities (state job boards, résumé assistance)
- Educational opportunities (state education grants, scholarships, training programs)
- Housing information (cost of living, home loan programs)
- State specific veteran benefits (discounts, tax exemptions, state programs)

If you did not select any states, or if you would like information from a different location, consider updating your preferences to include the state(s) where you currently live or are considering relocating.

State Veteran Benefits: https://www.va.gov/statedva.htm.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Supplemental Food Programs

While in the military, some individuals and families receive food assistance from one of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) 16 supplemental food programs. These include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, known as WIC.

FNS programs aim to ensure you and your family have access to nutritious food during challenging times, even after you leave the military. If purchasing nutritious food becomes a challenge, you and your family may be eligible for assistance.

Additional resources are provided during the VA Benefits and Services course.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service: https://www.fns.usda.gov/military-veteran.

Travel and Transportation Allowances

The move accompanying separation/retirement is different from the other moves in the military.

Separating Service members are authorized travel and transportation allowances from their last duty station to their home of record (HOR) or the place where they entered active duty (PLEAD).

For retirees, travel and transportation allowances are authorized from the last duty station to a home of

selection (HOS) anywhere in the United States, to a home of record, or to the place they entered active duty outside the United States.

Eligible retirees and certain involuntary separatees (e.g., those with separation pay and at least 8 years of continuous active duty) are authorized for storage and shipment of household goods for up to three years. Household goods may be shipped to:

- Any destination within the United States
- HOR (place of residence when entering the military) outside the United States
- Location outside the United States where they were initially called to active duty

All other separatees are authorized storage and shipment of household goods for up to 6 months. Items may be shipped to the location where they collected separation travel pay.

There are additional guidelines on transportation and allowances. For more information, contact the Personal Property or Transportation Office to schedule a personalized appointment.

Permissive Temporary Duty (PTDY) and Excess Leave (EL)

Permissive Temporary Duty (PTDY) or Excess Leave (EL) may be authorized for the purpose of job search and house hunting activities related to transition to civilian life, but authorization is dependent on the separation program designator (SPD) code. It is possible to request EL or PTDY/Temporary Additional Duty (TAD), but not both. Receipt of either is subject to mission requirements and approval of the Unit Commander.

Individuals who are eligible for PTDY include:

- Members who involuntarily separated under honorable conditions
- Members retiring from active duty
- Members voluntarily separating through a military department force reduction or force shaping program
- Members who are being discharged for medical reasons, under certain conditions

Service members voluntarily separating at the end of a normal term of Service or involuntarily separating under conditions of other than honorable are NOT eligible for PTDY.

Contact the personnel office for additional information regarding PTDY/EL and the Unit Commander who provides approval.

Voting Assistance

While on active duty, Service members are covered by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA).

After transition back to civilian life, coverage by UOCAVA is no longer applicable. Notify the local election official of the change in voter registration status and update your information to vote locally.

When staying in the same voting residence after transition:

- Notify election official of change in status. This can be done by locating the local online voter registration and making the necessary changes.

When moving to a new state or county after transition:

- Notify the current voting locale election official of the change in status and ask to be removed from voter registration for the current jurisdiction.
- Complete a National Voter Registration Form to register as a civilian. https://www.eac.gov/voters/national-mail-voter-registration-form

Additional information about registering locally can be found on the state/territory election websites at www.fvap.gov/links.

If you remain or move abroad after separation from the military, coverage by UOCAVA will be provided as an overseas citizen. Find additional information on voting assistance for service members, their families, and overseas citizens at www.fvap.gov/military-voter/transition.

Commissary, Exchange, and Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Benefits

Use of the commissary, exchange, and MWR facilities is an essential benefit for those serving in the military. Upon separation, those receiving an honorable discharge may be eligible for access to some or all these services post-transition.

Commissary and Exchange Privileges for Veterans:
https://www.va.gov/resources/commissary-and-exchange-privileges-for-veterans/

MWR Programs: https://www.militaryonesource.mil/resources/millife-guides/mwr-programs/

MWR Travel: www.AmericanForcesTravel.com

Veterans Military Exchange Online Shopping Benefit

All honorably discharged veterans have lifelong online access to military exchange shopping benefits. Use VetVerify.org to verify eligibility and establish an online account before visiting the following sites:

- **ShopMyExchange.com:** https://www.shopmyexchange.com/
- **mynavyexchange.com:** https://www.mynavyexchange.com/
- **mymcx.com:** https://www.mymcx.com/
- **shopcgx.com:** https://shopcgx.com/

STEP 8: Explore Additional Information and Benefits Checklist

- [ ] Review your DD 214 and submit corrections if necessary.
- [ ] Research state veteran benefits.
- [ ] Identify and explore topics and benefits that apply to you.