

# The Veteran Labor Force in the Recovery

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U.S. Department of Labor

## THE VETERAN LABOR FORCE IN THE RECOVER

Veterans are an honored part of the United States labor market. In this report, veterans are defined as men and women who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces and were civilians at the time of their participation in the Current Population Survey (CPS).<sup>1</sup> In 2010, there were 11.8 million veterans working or looking for work, accounting for 7.7 percent of the U.S. labor force. Veterans are a broad population spanning from those who served in World War II (WWII) to recent veterans who were on active duty during the post-9/11 period known as Gulf War-era II.<sup>2</sup> Although most veterans are men, women are a growing part of the veteran population, accounting for 8.1 percent of all veterans in 2010.<sup>3</sup>

As with the nation at large, younger veterans are more racially and ethnically diverse than older veterans. Among living veterans in 2010, racial minorities accounted for over one in five veterans who served during the Gulf War-era, compared to only one in ten among older veterans who served during WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam era.<sup>4</sup> Hispanic veterans are also more prevalent among recent service members than among those from previous wars. In 2010, Hispanics accounted for 11.1 percent of all Gulf War-era II veterans, versus only 3.9 percent of veterans who served during WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam era.<sup>5</sup>

This report examines employment and unemployment information about veterans and shows how they have been faring in the economic recovery. The Looking Forward section at the end of the report highlights various ways in which Department of Labor programs help the men and women that serve our country.

## CURRENT OVERVIEW

As illustrated in Table 1, veterans as a group tend to be older than the nonveteran group. This is largely because half of all veterans served in WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam era. As a result, the median age range of veteran men is 55 to 64 years, while the median age range of nonveteran men is 35 to 45 years. Partly reflecting the age of veteran men, with many having reached retirement age, only 48.0 percent of male veterans were employed in 2010, compared to 69.6 percent of nonveteran men. Veteran men are also slightly more likely to work part time than nonveteran men, 13.5 percent to 12.6 percent respectively, in part because of the difference in ages between these two groups. Among employed men aged 25 and over, 29.9 percent of veterans had at least a college education in 2010 while 35.6 percent of nonveterans had earned a degree. A higher proportion of veteran men work in the public sector (21.1 percent) than do nonveteran men (11.3 percent). About equal proportions of each group are self-employed, 8.7 percent of veterans and 8.2 percent of nonveterans.

The median age range of women regardless of veteran status is 45 to 54 years. In 2010, a greater proportion of veteran women than nonveteran women were working, 57.2 percent compared to 54.9 percent. Fewer veteran women work part time, 18.6 percent, than do nonveteran women, 26.0 percent. Among the employed, veteran women and nonveteran women have about the same proportion of college graduates, 38.2 percent and 37.8 percent respectively. As is the case with male veterans, female veterans tend to work in the public sector at greater percentages than female nonveterans. However, fewer veteran women are self-employed (3.7 percent) than either their nonveteran women counterparts (5.6 percent) or men regardless of veteran status.

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1 The CPS is a monthly survey of about 60,000 households and is the official source of employment and unemployment data in the United States. [www.bls.gov/cps](http://www.bls.gov/cps)

2 Gulf War-era II veterans served anywhere on active duty since September 2001. Gulf War-era I veterans served anywhere between August 1990 and August 2001. Vietnam era veterans served between August 1964 and April 1975. Korean War veterans served between July 1950 and January 1955. World War II veterans served between December 1941 and December 1946.

3 Population refers to the civilian noninstitutional population, 18 years and older.

4 Racial minorities refer to blacks or African Americans, Asians and Other Races (which include American Indians and Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders, and people of two or more races).

5 Persons of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity can be of any race and are included in a separate ethnic category.

According to the Census Bureau's 2010 American Community Survey, the median income for male veterans (\$35,725) was higher than for male nonveterans (\$30,822). The median income for female veterans (\$30,540) was also higher than for female nonveterans (\$20,634).

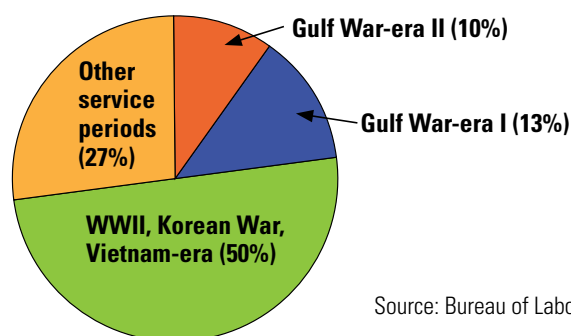
In 2010, the unemployment rate of veteran men (8.8 percent) was lower than for nonveteran men (10.5 percent). The unemployment rates of women veterans and nonveterans were similar at around 8 percent. Veteran men in 2010 had a median duration of unemployment of about 24 weeks compared to nearly 23 weeks for nonveteran men. Both veteran and nonveteran women had a median duration of unemployment of about 21 weeks in 2010. Among the unemployed, over 40 percent of veterans and nonveterans of either sex have been jobless for 27 weeks or longer.

<b>Table 1: Employment, unemployment, and income by veteran status and sex, 2010 annual averages</b>				
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Veteran men</b>	<b>Nonveteran men</b>	<b>Veteran women</b>	<b>Nonveteran women</b>
<b>Characteristics of the civilian noninstitutional population</b>				
Median age range	55 to 64	35 to 44	45 to 54	45 to 54
% Employed (employment -population ratio among those 16 and older)	48.0	69.6	57.2	54.9
% Usually working part time	13.5	12.6	18.6	26.0
% College graduates (age 25 and over)	29.9	35.6	38.2	37.8
% Working in the private sector (wage and salary workers)	70.2	80.5	66.5	76.1
% Working in the public sector	21.1	11.3	29.7	18.2
% Self-employed (unincorporated)	8.7	8.2	3.7	5.6
<b>Median income in the past 12 months (In 2010 inflation-adjusted dollars)</b>				
Total	\$35,725	\$30,822	\$30,540	\$20,634
<b>Characteristics of the unemployed</b>				
Unemployment rate	8.8	10.5	7.9	8.4
White, unemployment rate	8.1	9.5	7.4	7.5
Black, unemployment rate	13.0	18.9	10.8	13.5
Asian, unemployment rate	4.9	7.8	--	7.0
Hispanic, Unemployment rate	9.6	12.5	6.5	12.0
Median duration of unemployment in weeks	24.1	22.7	21.4	21.2
% Long-term unemployed (27 weeks or more)	47.2	45.2	42.5	42.7
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey. Income data are from the Census Bureau, American Community Survey. -- Indicates that data does not meet publication criteria. Note: Unless otherwise noted, data include people age 18 and over.				

Another important way to analyze the employment and unemployment situation of veterans is to look at when they last served on active duty. Chart 1 illustrates that of the 22 million veterans in the population during 2010, half of them had last served in the Armed Forces during WW II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam era. About one in ten veterans served on active duty sometime since September 2001 (Gulf War-era II).

As illustrated in Table 2, the median age of veterans differ by period of service. Veterans who last served during WWII, the Korean War, and Vietnam era have a median age range of 65 and over, while recent veterans from the Gulf War-era II (September 2001 to present) are much younger and have a median age range of 25 to 34.

**Chart 1: Distribution of Veterans by their Period of Service, 2010 Annual Averages**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Over the years, more women have joined the military so a greater number of women served during the most recent period of service Gulf War-era II (17.0 percent) than in earlier periods such as WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam era (3.3 percent).

Nearly 80 percent of Gulf War-era I veterans (August 1990 to August 2001) had a job in 2010, which is the highest percentage of any period of service group. In comparison, over 61 percent of nonveterans held a job that same year. A greater percentage of recent veterans tend to work full time compared to older veterans. About 21 percent of WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam era veterans usually worked part time in 2010, while the percentage of recent veterans that worked part time was about half that number.

**Table 2: Employment and unemployment of veterans by period of service, 2010 annual averages**

Characteristic	Gulf War-era II	Gulf War-era I	WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam era	Other Service Periods
Characteristics of the civilian noninstitutional population				
% Men	83.0	84.6	96.7	89.9
% Women	17.0	15.4	3.3	10.1
Median age range	25 to 34	35 to 44	65 and over	45 to 54
Characteristics of the employed				
% Employed (employment-population ratio among those age 18 and older)	72.7	79.9	33.3	53.5
% Usually working part time	10.1	6.8	21.1	13.1
% Women (age 18 and over)	14.5	13.9	2.9	11.4
% College graduates (age 25 and over)	31.3	31.8	33.2	26.7
% Working in the private sector (nonagricultural industries, wage and salary workers)	67.2	70.5	68.1	70.2
% Working in the public sector	30.4	25.1	17.6	20.2
% Self-employed (unincorporated)	2.1	3.8	10.9	7.7
Characteristics of the unemployed				
Unemployment rate	11.5	7.7	8.3	8.4
Share of women among unemployed veterans (age 18 and over)	15.1	11.9	1.8	9.3
Median duration of unemployment in weeks	17.8	23.3	31.0	24.5
% Long-term unemployed (27 weeks or more)	36.1	46.9	53.2	47.2
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey. Note: Unless otherwise noted, data include people age 18 and over.				

Among employed veterans aged 25 and over, veterans of “other service” periods (those who last served between wars) had a smaller proportion of college graduates (26.7 percent) than did veterans who last served during war, such as WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam era (33.2 percent), Gulf War-era I (31.8 percent), or Gulf War-era II (31.3 percent). In comparison, 36.4 percent of employed nonveterans were college graduates in 2010.

In 2010, about 30 percent of employed Gulf War-era II veterans worked in the public sector (federal, state or local government), which was higher than any other period of service group. In the same year, a much smaller proportion of employed nonveterans, nearly 15 percent, worked in the public sector. Self-employment (unincorporated) is more common among veterans of WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam era than it is for veterans of either Gulf War-era.

Unemployment rates in 2010 varied from a high of 11.5 percent for Gulf War-era II veterans to a low of 7.7 percent for Gulf War-era I veterans. However, unemployed Gulf War-era II veterans were less likely to be unemployed long term than were veterans who served during other periods.

## UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment rates for veterans have increased since the beginning of the recession in 2007 and continued to rise through 2010. During that period, the unemployment rate of veterans rose from 3.8 percent in 2007 to 8.7 percent in 2010. At the same time, nonveterans were also experiencing higher unemployment. In 2007, the nonveteran unemployment rate was 4.4 percent, rising to 9.4 percent in 2010.

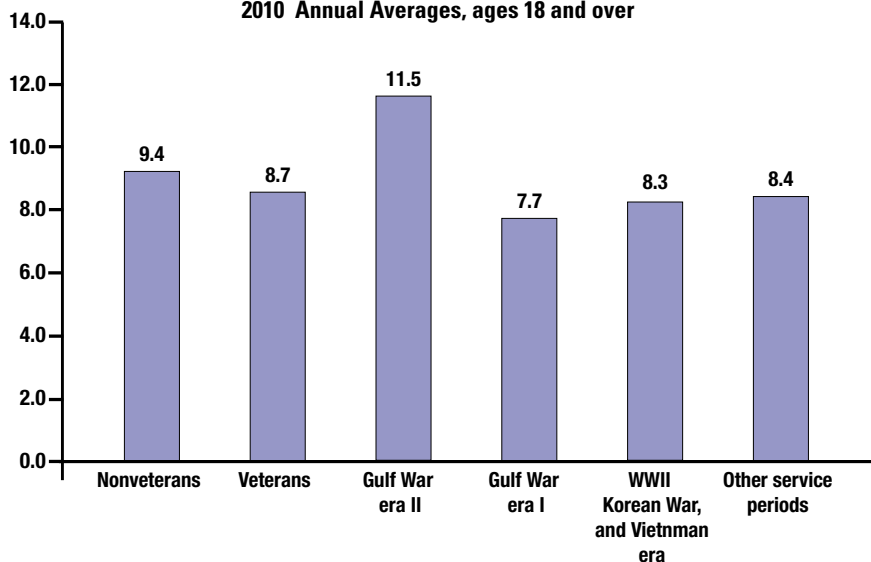
Looking at unemployment rates for veteran status shows that veterans have lower unemployment rates than nonveterans. However, the aggregate measurement veils the wide variations within the highly diverse group of veterans.

Since the beginning of the recession in 2007, Gulf War-era II veterans have had high jobless rates; the unemployment rate for this group was 6.1 percent in 2007, rising to 10.2 percent in 2009 at the end of the recession, and 11.5 percent in 2010. Gulf War-era II veterans had higher unemployment rates than other veterans due in part to the fact that recent veterans as a group are younger than veterans of other period of service groups.

Typically, young people, regardless of veteran status, have higher unemployment rates than do older people. The unemployment rate in 2010 for veterans ages 18-24 (those who have recently separated from the military during our current conflict period) was 20.9 percent, up from a pre-recession rate of 11.7 percent in 2007. As with the general population, young veterans experienced higher rates of unemployment than veterans ages 25-34 (12.6 percent). Young male veterans had an unemployment rate of 21.9 percent, not statistically different from the jobless rate of young female veterans (15.3 percent).

However, the median duration of unemployment for Gulf War-era II veterans is shorter (17.8 weeks) than it is for WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam era veterans (31 weeks). This is due in part to the fact that older workers as a group experience longer spells of unemployment. In 2010, over one-third of recent veterans had been unemployed 27 weeks or longer, while about half of unemployed veterans from other periods had been unemployed that long.

**Chart 2: Unemployment Rates by Periods of Services, 2010 Annual Averages, ages 18 and over**

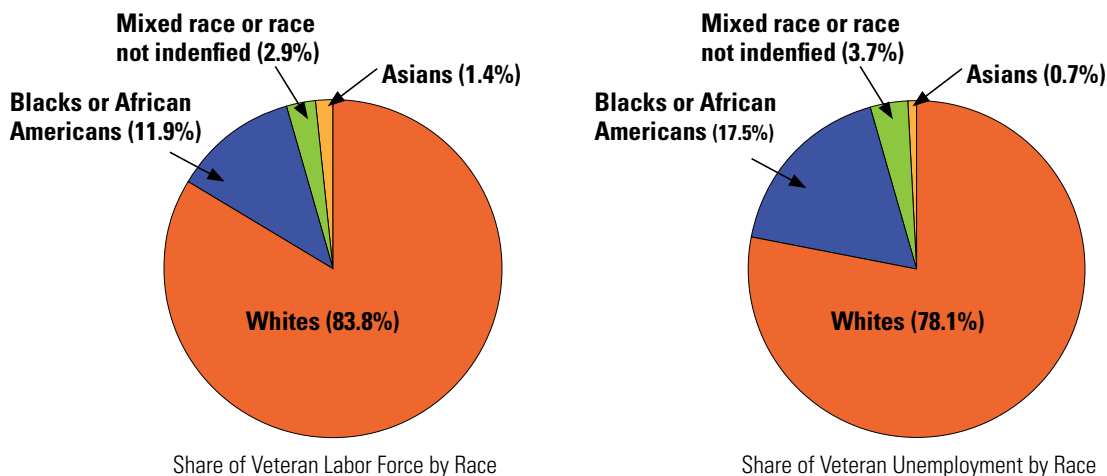


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

It is also very important to remember veterans with a service-connected disability and their pursuit of a job. The most recent data available are from July 2010, it shows there are about 2.8 million veterans, or 13 percent of the total, who reported having a service-connected disability. While the unemployment rates of veterans with a service-connected disability and those without a disability are about the same, a smaller proportion of veterans with a service-connected disability are in the labor force, 51.0 percent, compared to 53.2 percent without a disability. The unemployment rate of veterans with a service connected disability was 9.1 percent in July 2010; about the same as the rate for veterans with no disability (8.7 percent).

Chart 3 shows the racial diversity of veterans by employment status in 2010. Among unemployed veterans in 2010, white veterans accounted for the bulk of the unemployed (78.1 percent), followed by Blacks or African-Americans (17.5 percent), though they represent 11.9 percent of the veteran labor force, and other races (3.7 percent) though they represent 2.9 percent of the veteran labor force, and Asians (0.7 percent) who represent 1.4 percent of the veteran labor force.<sup>6</sup> Hispanic or Latino veterans were 7.5 percent of all unemployed veterans in 2010. Although composing a small share of the total veteran labor force, the prevalence of African-American veterans among unemployed veterans is particularly striking.

**Chart 3: Distribution of Veteran Unemployment and Labor Force by Race, 2010 Annual Averages**

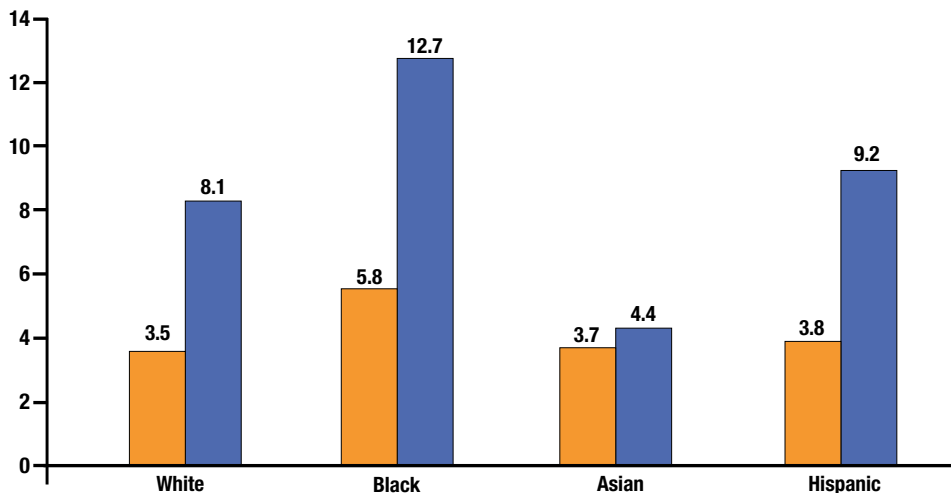


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

As illustrated in Chart 4, from 2007 through 2010, the unemployment rates for African-American veterans increased by nearly 7 percentage points, for whites by nearly 5 percentage points, and for Asians by less than 1 percentage point. For persons of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, the unemployment rate rose by over 5 percentage points.

Chart 5 illustrates unemployment rates of whites and non-whites by

**Chart 4: Unemployment Rates by Race and Ethnicity 2007 and 2010 Annual Averages**

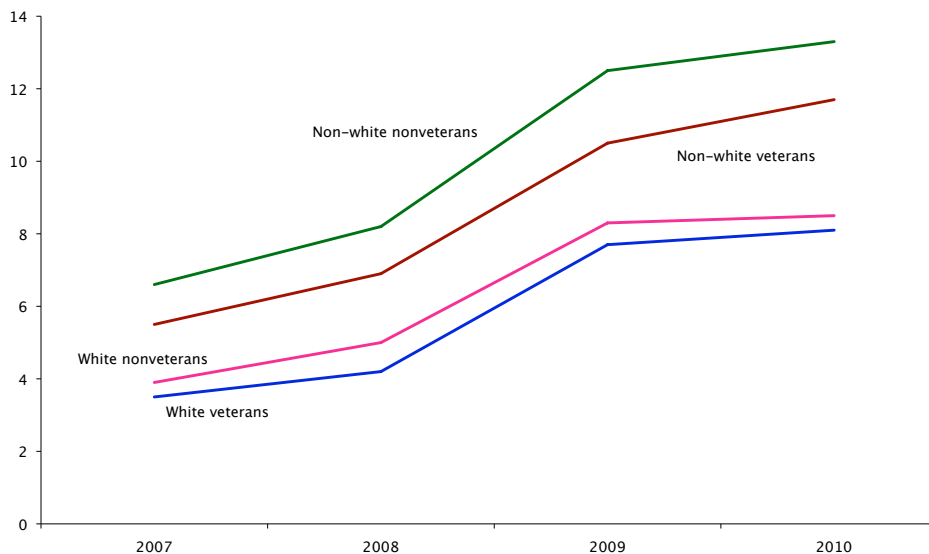


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

<sup>6</sup> Other races include American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders, and people of two or more races. Data for each individual group are not available separately, thus they are included here as a combined group

veteran status from 2007 through 2010, reflecting the depths of the recession. The unemployment rate of non-whites regardless of veteran status was higher than the unemployment rate of white veterans and nonveterans throughout this period. For instance, the unemployment rate of non-white veterans rose from 5.5 percent in 2007 to 11.7 percent in 2010. The unemployment rate of non-white nonveterans was 6.6 percent in 2007 and was 13.3 percent in 2010. During that same period, the white veteran unemployment rate rose from 3.5 percent to 8.1 percent, compared with white nonveterans who had an unemployment rate of 3.9 percent in 2007 and 8.5 percent in 2010.

**Chart 5: Unemployment Rate by Race and Veterans status. Ages 18 and over, Annual Averages 2007–2010**

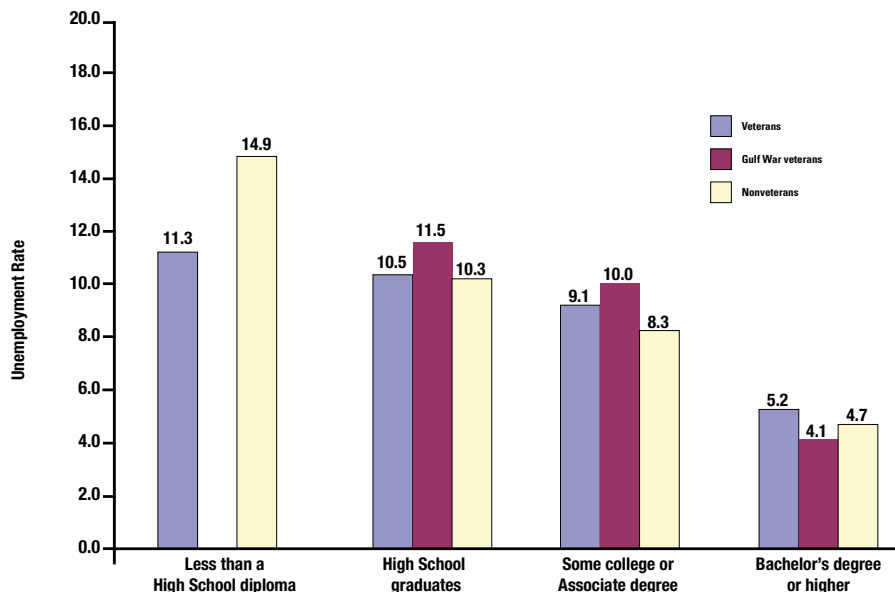


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

It is interesting to note that the difference in unemployment rates between veterans and nonveterans is much bigger for non-whites, and that non-white nonveterans suffered a bigger increase in their unemployment rate than their veteran counterparts.

People with more education tend to have lower unemployment rates than do those with less education. This is true for veterans, too, but the difference in the unemployment rates between the more and less educated is even bigger among Gulf War-era veterans. As illustrated in Chart 6, unemployment rates are lower for people who have a bachelor's degree or higher. In 2010, Gulf War-era veterans (the combined group of Gulf War-era I and Gulf War-era II veterans) aged 25 and over with a college degree had an unemployment rate of 4.1 percent, much lower than for those with some college or an Associate degree (10.0 percent) or high school graduates (11.5 percent).

**Chart 6: Unemployment Rate by Race and Veterans status, Period of Services, and Educational Attainment, 2010 Annual Averages (Persons 25 years and older)**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

Note: No data is available for Gulf-War-era veterans with less than a high school diploma

## EMPLOYMENT

During the recessionary period from 2007 to 2009, the proportion of veterans employed in the private sector declined by 1.2 percentage points with notable losses in manufacturing, construction, financial activities, wholesale trade and retail trade. Likewise, the proportion of unincorporated self-employed veterans declined by 0.9 percentage point from 2007 to 2009. On the other hand, veterans experienced job gains in education and health services and in government during the recent recession. In fact, the proportion of veterans employed in government increased by 2.2 percentage points from 2007 to 2009. In 2010, the number of veterans employed in construction continued to decline while job losses either stabilized or slightly recovered in nearly all other major industries.

As Table 3 shows, the professional, scientific and technical service industry is expected to grow the fastest (3.0 percent annually) and 2.7 million additional jobs are projected for 2018 compared to 2008. In 2010, 13.5 percent of jobs in this high-growth industry went to male veterans, in line with their overall 13.1 percent representation in the labor force. Male veterans are also well represented in educational services, health care and social assistance, and construction. On the other hand, female veterans make up only about 1.6 percent of women in the labor force and are underrepresented in educational services and in construction. This fact will likely limit them from benefiting from the faster rate of employment growth projected in these industries through the end of this decade.

**Table 3: Industries with largest expected employment growth and representation of veterans in those industries, BLS Employment Projections 2008-2018 and Current Population Survey, 2010 annual averages**

Industry	Annual average rate of change 2008-2018 <sup>1</sup>	Male veterans as a percent of total employment in the industry in 2010 <sup>2</sup>	Female veterans as a percent of total employment in the industry in 2010 <sup>2</sup>
Professional, scientific, and technical services	3.0%	13.5%	1.6%
Education services	2.4%	10.0%	0.9%
Health and social services	2.3%	15.5%	1.6%
Construction	1.7%	9.5%	0.4%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

<sup>1</sup>Employment Projections presented here are based on Current Employment Statistics data.

Projections by industry are found at [http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep\\_table\\_207.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_207.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>Private wage and salary workers, Current Population Survey, 2010 Annual Averages.

The top four industries that employed male and female veterans in 2010 are shown in Table 4. Government employed the greatest percentage of male veterans (21.1 percent) and female veterans (29.6 percent) in 2010. The second largest employer of male veterans was the manufacturing industry (13.6 percent), while the education and health services industry was the second highest employer of female veterans. The third and fourth top employers of male veterans and female veterans were both the same industries: professional and business services and retail trade.

**Table 4: Top 4 Industries that employed male and female veterans, 2010 annual averages**

Industry	Percent of Male Veterans	Industry	Percent of Female Veterans
1. Government	21.1%	1. Government	29.6%
2. Manufacturing	13.6%	2. Education and health services	22.5%
3. Professional and business services	10.1%	3. Professional and business services	8.8%
4. Retail trade	8.0%	4. Retail trade	7.5%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

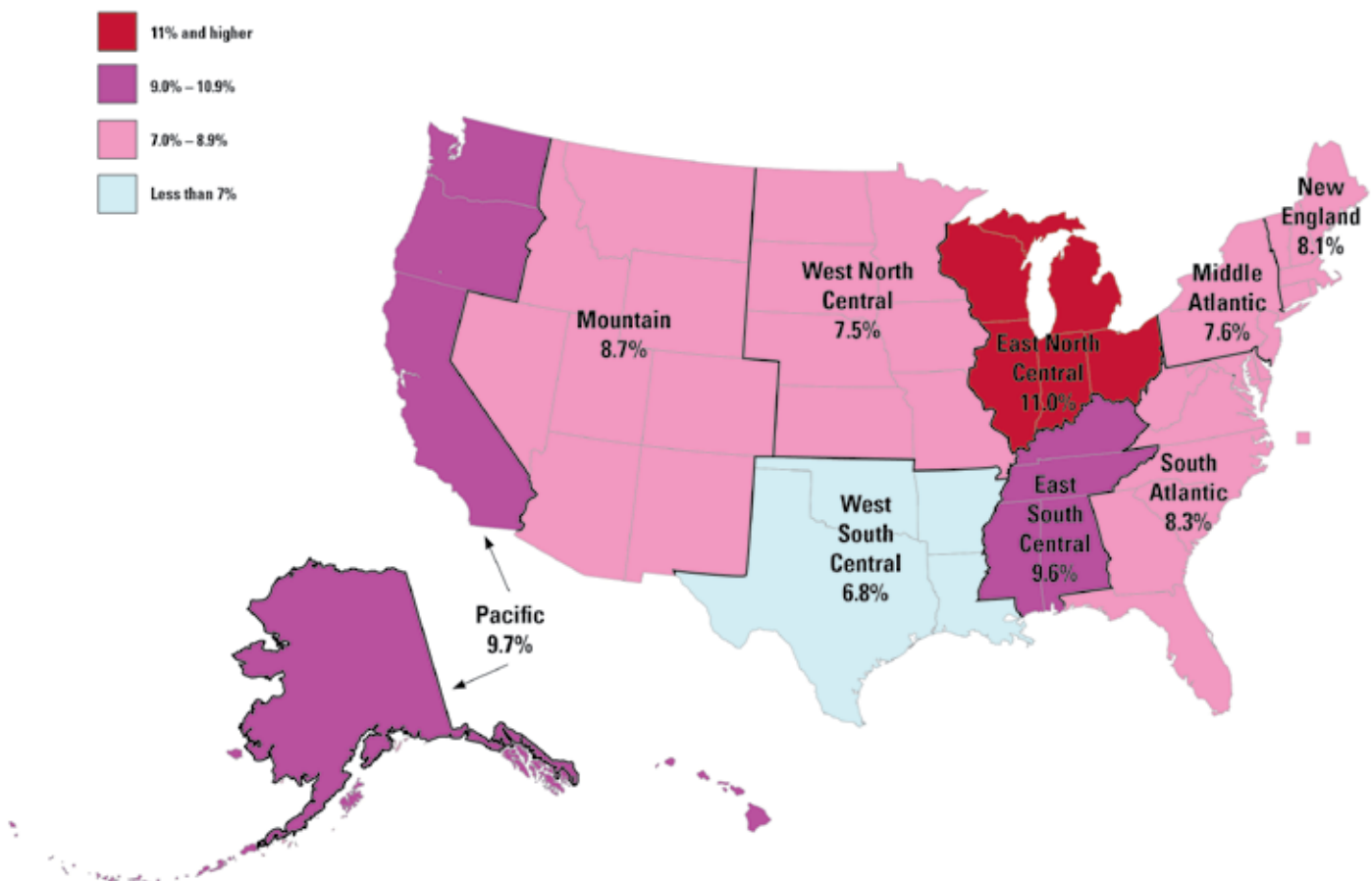


## UNEMPLOYMENT BY AREA

Unemployment varies across the United States and the unemployment rate of veterans, like that of other groups, differs depending on the area in which veterans reside. The map at the end of this report highlights the Census divisions with the highest unemployment rates for veterans. As illustrated below, the East North Central division (which includes the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin) had the highest veteran unemployment rate at 11.0 percent in 2010, compared to 10.0 percent for nonveterans. Nearly 20 percent of unemployed veterans lived in one of those five states.

The lowest veteran unemployment rate at 6.8 percent, compared to 7.9 percent for nonveterans, was in the West South Central area (which includes Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas). Nearly 10 percent of unemployed veterans lived there. Although the South Atlantic has an unemployment rate of 8.3 percent for veterans, compared to 9.8 percent for nonveterans, this area (which includes the District of Columbia, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia) is where 22 percent of jobless veterans lived in 2010.

### Unemployment Rates of Veterans by Census Division (2010 Annual Averages)



Source: Special tabulation of the Current Population Survey by the Chief Economists Office at Department of Labor.

Note: The areas in the map are Census Bureau divisions defined as: *New England division*: CT, ME, MA, NH, RI and VT; *Middle Atlantic division*: NJ, NY, and PA; *East North Central division*: IL, IN, MI, OH, and WI; *West North Central division*: MN, IA, MO, ND, SD, KS, and NE; *South Atlantic division*: DE, DC, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, and WV; *East South Central division*: AL, KY, MS, and TN; *West South Central division*: AR, LA, OK, and TX; *Mountain division*: AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, and WY; and the *Pacific division*: AK, CA, HI, OR, and WA.

## LOOKING FORWARD

The U.S. military services transition approximately 160,000 active duty service members and demobilize approximately 110,000 Reserve and National Guard service members annually. Transition assistance and employment services for veterans are essential to help our service men and women reintegrate into the civilian labor force.

The Department of Labor (DOL) is working to ensure that the needs of veterans and their families are fully addressed. DOL's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) proudly serves veterans and transitioning service members by providing resources and expertise to assist and prepare them to obtain meaningful careers, maximize their employment opportunities and protect their employment rights.

The following activities and programs demonstrate a strong commitment by the Department of Labor to increasing employment opportunities and improving working conditions for veterans and their families.

- **Reaching Veterans:** Department of Labor Secretary Hilda L. Solis has met personally with veterans across the country, helping to launch the federal hiring initiative, "A New Day for Civil Service." Secretary Solis also spoke to veterans in green jobs training programs in Tucson and participated in a veterans' town hall in Los Angeles to discuss challenges to employment. Secretary Solis has also spoken to employers nationwide about hiring veterans, including at the National Chamber Foundation's 2nd Annual "Business Steps Up: Hiring Our Heroes" event.
- **Working Together – Interagency Initiatives to Reach Veterans:** By establishing and guiding collaborative efforts among the Department of Labor, the Department of Justice, the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Office of Personnel Management, the Obama Administration is leading the effort to ensure the needs of veterans and their families are addressed.
  - **Veterans Employment Initiative:** In November 2009, President Barack Obama signed an Executive Order on the Employment of Veterans in the Federal Government, which created the Interagency Council on Veterans Employment. Secretary Solis co-chairs the council with Secretary Shinseki of the Department of Veterans Affairs. This initiative and its council seek to increase the number of veterans in the federal workforce. Agencies are now required to establish a Veterans' Employment Program office with full-time responsibility for its Veterans' Employment Program.
  - **A New Day for Civil Service:** In Spring 2010, the Office of Personnel Management and DOL's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) co-led a hiring event for persons with disabilities eligible for Schedule A and 30 percent disabled veterans hiring authorities. President Obama announced this event as an initiative during National Disability Employment Awareness Month in 2009. By increasing the diversity of the federal workforce and tapping into the talent of people with disabilities, the government will provide better services for the American people.
  - **United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH):** As Vice Chair of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Secretary Solis is committed to addressing the issues that lead to increasing rates of homelessness among veterans. The Secretary has made it a priority to directly engage stakeholders, including states and cities, advocacy and service organizations, and individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Over the past year, Secretary Solis has hosted a number of meetings and conferences to highlight the challenges faced by veterans as they return from service.
  - **REALifelines:** The REALifelines initiative is a VETS project conducted in collaboration with the Department of Defense and the military service branches. Its purpose is to create a seamless, personalized assistance network to ensure that seriously wounded and injured service members are offered opportunities to be trained for and employed in rewarding careers in the civilian labor force. More than 9,000 service members, spouses or veterans have been assisted in some way since the beginning of the program.

- o **Joining Forces:** Joining Forces is a comprehensive national initiative to mobilize all sectors of society to give our service members and their families the opportunities and support they have earned. DOL is working through this initiative to help highlight the workforce potential of veterans and military spouses, whose moves from one community to another make it difficult for these spouses to continue their careers or find similar jobs in new locations. This initiative will help to expand employment and career development opportunities and help employers create military family-friendly workplaces.
- **Meeting the Employment and Training Needs of Veterans:** The Department serves veterans and transitioning service members by providing resources and expertise to assist and prepare them to obtain meaningful careers, maximize their employment opportunities and protect their employment rights. The Department recognizes that the skills obtained during an individual's military service can meet or exceed the requirements of the civilian workforce, and Secretary Solis strongly supports the smooth transition of service members into civilian careers.
- o **Transition Assistance for Service Members:** The Department's Veterans' Employment and Training Service hosts Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Workshops to provide transitioning service members with knowledge and tools to assist in their successful transition into the civilian workforce. Over 132,000 transitioning service members participate in these workshops annually. The law creating TAP established a partnership among the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, and Transportation and the Department of Labor's VETS, to give employment and training information to armed forces members within 180 days of separation or retirement. TAP consists of comprehensive three-day workshops at selected military installations nationwide. Workshop attendees learn about job searches, career decision-making, current occupational and labor market conditions, and resume and cover letter preparation and interviewing techniques.

Earlier this year, VETS redesigned TAP to update and improve the complete TAP Employment Workshop with a particular emphasis on accelerating separating service members' transition into meaningful civilian careers. This redesign encompassed the entire curriculum, delivery methods, and student materials. Several aspects of the redesign will improve the process for transitioning service members looking for licensing and credentialing based on their military skills and training. TAP will provide predictive assessments, which include online and/or written assessment tools to appraise and provide participants with information about their individual strengths and professions for which they are best suited and, based on data, have the highest chances of success. The redesigned TAP includes tools to enable transitioning service members to identify the appropriate certification program that meets their career goals. Additionally, the TAP redesign is helping transitioning service members better understand the Verification of Military Experience and Training (VMET) document. The Defense Department provides this document to certify job skills and experience acquired while on active duty that may apply to licensing and certification for employment in the civilian sector.

- o **Veterans Workforce Investment Program (VWIP):** VETS funded a total of 22 Veterans' Workforce Investment Program grants in 19 states intended to assist over 5,000 reintegrating veterans into meaningful employment within the labor force and to stimulate the development of effective service delivery systems that will address the complex employability problems facing veterans. Total funding this year was over \$9 million.
- o **Jobs for Veterans State grants (JVSG):** VETS has distributed over \$162 million to states in Fiscal Year 2011. These formula grants enable states to provide nearly 2,000 state employment specialists to provide intensive services to veterans and outreach to employers through One-Stop Career Centers and other locations.
- o **Priority of Service:** Recipients (and sub-recipients) of DOL funding for job training programs are subject to priority of service regulations, and are required by law to provide priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses. This requirement extends to all Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Wagner-Peyser funded activities, including technology-assisted activities; the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP); Indian and Native American Programs (INAP); Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs (TAA); job training programs funded through the Women's Bureau, and any other current or future DOL-funded employment and training program.

Additionally, all recipients are required to ensure that priority of service is applied by all sub-recipients of DOL funds. All program activities issued or executed by qualified employment and training program operators, regardless of how they are procured, must be administered in compliance with priority of service requirements.

- o **Employment in the Clean Energy Economy:** Training veterans to succeed in a clean energy economy is critical to ensuring that opportunities are available in industries that are growing and have good jobs. The Department invested in programs so that 5,000 veterans in 18 states can receive training on and participate in the growing renewable energy economy. Training for veterans was also funded through the Department's "Pathways Out of Poverty" grants.
- o **Homeless Female Veterans:** VETS awarded \$5.3 million in grants to support partnerships that ensure that homeless women veterans have career and training opportunities. Twenty six grants were awarded in 14 states and the District of Columbia for job training, counseling and placement services (including job readiness, and literacy and skills training) to expedite the reintegration of approximately 2,000 homeless female veterans and veterans with families into the labor force.
- o **Jobs for Homeless Veterans:** To assist homeless veterans with reintegration into America's workforce, the Department annually invests over \$25 million in programs to help approximately 14,000 homeless veterans across the country find meaningful employment. Homeless veterans will receive occupational, classroom and on-the-job training, as well as job search and placement assistance, including follow-up services. The Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program is the only federal program that focuses exclusively on employment of veterans who are homeless.
- o **Incarcerated Veterans Training Program (IVTP):** VETS awarded 16 grants to assist 1,400 formerly incarcerated veterans transition. These grants are intended to provide referral and counseling services to assist in reintegrating and/or transitioning formerly incarcerated veterans who are "at risk" of becoming homeless into meaningful employment within the labor force, and to stimulate the development of effective service delivery systems that will address the complex problems facing these veterans.
- o **Registered Apprenticeship:** Apprenticeship programs registered with the Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship or State Apprenticeship Agencies provide opportunities for veterans to work and earn a paycheck – while learning skills and earning industry recognized credentials. Eligible veterans can often use their GI Bill benefits for Registered Apprenticeships. In addition, some of the nearly 25,000 sponsors representing more than 200,000 employers that are involved in apprenticeship, providing employment and training opportunities for veterans, such as Helmets to Hard Hats and Veterans in Piping.
- o **United Services Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP):** The United Services Military Apprenticeship Program is a formal military training program that provides active duty Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy service members the opportunity to improve their job skills and to complete their civilian apprenticeship requirements while they are on active duty. DOL provides the nationally recognized "Certificate of Completion" upon program completion. This assists service members in earning an apprenticeship credential while on active duty that can be leveraged toward civilian employment when they separate from the branch where they served.
- o **Guard Apprenticeship Program Initiative (GAPI):** To help soldiers improve their job skills and establish a lifetime career, the Army National Guard has established the Guard Apprenticeship Program Initiative (GAPI) – a partnership with the DOL in coordination with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offices. The GAPI is an "earn while you learn" experience where soldiers learn new concepts and skills and also obtain national certification in one of over 100 trades while earning wages. These trades are mapped to over 200 military occupational specialties and eligible soldiers receive VA educational benefits while they pursue an apprenticeship program.

- o **Job Corps:** Eligible veterans and their spouses receive priority enrollment into the Job Corps program. With 125 centers in 48 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia, Job Corps provides economically disadvantaged young adults with the academic, career technical and employability skills to enter the workforce or enroll in post-secondary education. The Employment and Training Administration's (ETA's) Office of Job Corps (OJC) and VETS developed a 1-year partnership to train Transitioning Service Members (TSMs) in need of additional education and training at one of three specific Job Corps centers. As a result of both offices' efforts to reach out to this population, 341 veterans enrolled in the program, which was an increase of 204 from the previous program year. Though the project has ended, OJC and VETS have developed best practices, targeted outreach materials, and strengthened partnerships with the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs that will assist Job Corps in providing services to veterans.
  - o **Reintegration of Ex-Offenders-Adult (RExO-Adult):** The RExO-Adult program is an employment-centered re-entry initiative that serves offenders being released into urban communities after incarceration. RExO-Adult grantees are faith- and community-based organizations across the country that provide workforce preparation, supportive services, and mentoring to ex-offenders in order to support employment and retention outcomes. As of June 30, 2011, RExO-Adult grants have served 1,991 eligible veterans. This data covers a five-year period and includes data from four generations of competitively awarded grants.
  - o **America's Heroes at Work:** VETS and the Office of Disability Employment Policy are jointly focusing on the employment challenges of returning service members living with Traumatic Brain Injury and/or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. By equipping employers and the workforce development system with the tools they need to help those affected, America's Heroes at Work can help veterans succeed in the workplace.
- **Ensuring Veterans Maintain Employment Protections During Periods of Service and When They Transition Into Civilian Life:** Increasing numbers of veterans are returning from duty in Iraq, Afghanistan and other places around the world only to face substantial obstacles in finding employment. The Department of Labor, through all its enforcement agencies and regulatory authority, is committed to ensuring veterans have equal access to good jobs.
- o **Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA):** USERRA protects civilian job rights and benefits for veterans and members of reserve components and VETS provides assistance to all persons having claims under USERRA. Among its many provisions, USERRA provides that returning service members are reemployed in the job that they would have attained had they not been absent for military service, with the same seniority, status and pay, as well as other rights and benefits determined by seniority. USERRA also requires that reasonable efforts (such as training or retraining) be made to enable returning service members to refresh or upgrade their skills to help them qualify for reemployment. USERRA also provides protection for disabled veterans, requiring employers to make reasonable efforts to accommodate the disability. Service members convalescing from injuries received during service or training may have up to two years from the date of completion of service to return to their jobs or apply for reemployment.
  - o **Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act (VEVRAA):** In the spirit of ensuring that all Americans have equal access to good jobs and that America's workplaces are equitable, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) recently published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) asking for comments on a proposal for strengthening affirmative action requirements of federal contractors and subcontractors for veterans protected under VEVRAA. Veterans protected under VEVRAA include those with disabilities and those recently discharged as well as those who served during a war.
  - o **Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA):** In recognition of the sacrifices made by those serving in the Armed Forces, Congress enacted laws to prevent veterans seeking federal employment from being penalized because of time spent in military service. The Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA) of 1998 provides that a veteran or other preference-eligible person who believes that his or her preference

rights have been violated may file a written complaint with the VETS. By law, veterans who are disabled or who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during certain specified periods or in military campaigns are generally entitled to preference over non-veterans both in federal hiring practices and in retention during reductions in force. Additionally, veterans who have been separated from the armed forces under honorable conditions after 3 years or more of active service may not be denied the opportunity to compete for vacant positions for which the agency making the announcement will accept applications from individuals outside its own workforce under merit promotion procedures.

- **Supporting Veterans and their Families:** The Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division is drafting regulations to implement amendments to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) that will enable qualifying family members to take leave from work to care for recent veterans who have serious injuries or illnesses that were incurred or aggravated during service and that manifested before or after service. The FMLA amendments expand upon existing requirements that allow a parent, spouse, child, or other next of kin to take up to 26 workweeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a single 12-month period to care for a current active duty service member who incurs a serious injury or illness in the line of duty on active duty. The amended provisions will provide similar protections for family members who take leave to care for veterans within five years of the veteran’s discharge from active duty.
- **Supporting Female Veterans and their Families:** More women are serving in our nation’s military than ever before. The Department’s Women’s Bureau (WB) has hosted a series of listening sessions with homeless female veterans and service providers across the country to gain further insight into reintegration challenges specific to women. The Women’s Bureau has developed resources to better equip service providers with a deeper understanding of the unique experiences and needs of female veterans.
  - **Stand Downs:** The WB hosted four women-to-women Stand Down events in the following cities: Kansas City, MO; Long Beach, CA; San Antonio, TX; and Tampa, FL. The Stand Downs bring together women veterans, government agencies and nongovernmental organizations that can provide assistance to women veterans and access to resources, such as employment, health and legal services, financial literacy education, and mental health counseling.
  - **“Trauma Guide”:** A recent publication by the Women’s Bureau, Trauma-Informed Care for Women Veterans Experiencing Homelessness: A Guide for Service Providers, also known as the “Trauma Guide,” was created to address the psychological and mental health needs of women veterans. The guide is also a compilation of best practices aimed at improving effectiveness in engaging female veterans. Written for service providers, the guide offers observational knowledge and concrete guidelines for modifying practices with the goal of increasing re-entry outcomes. The guide includes a User’s Guide, Organizational Self-Assessment for Providers Serving Female Veterans and a Resource List. The Trauma Guide can be found at: <http://www.dol.gov/wb/trauma/traumaguide.htm>
- **American Jobs Act (AJA):** The President recently released his plan, called the American Jobs Act, to get workers, including veterans back to work. President Obama believes we have an obligation to make sure our veterans are able to navigate this difficult labor market and succeed in the civilian workforce, and that is why he is proposing a plan to lower veteran unemployment and ensure that service members leave the military career-ready:
  - A new **Returning Heroes Tax Credit** of up to \$5,600 for veterans who have been unemployed six months or longer, and a **Wounded Warriors Tax Credit** of up to \$9,600 that will increase the existing tax credit for firms that hire veterans with service-connected disabilities who have been unemployed six months or longer.
  - Forming a Department of Defense-led task force to maximize the career-readiness of all service members, and enhancing job search services through the Department of Labor for recently transitioning veterans.

For more information about the Department’s Veterans’ Employment and Training Service, please visit <http://www.dol.gov/vets/>

To unlock your career potential, visit your local One-Stop Career Center.



U.S. Department of Defense  
U.S. Department of Labor

UNLOCK  
YOUR  
CAREER  
POTENTIAL

**THANK YOU**  
FOR YOUR SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY



**V**eterans are valuable and needed members of the American workforce. The U.S. Department of Labor wants to ensure that current and former military personnel have access to the career tools necessary to find good jobs with good wages and career pathways — especially after returning home from combat. The Key to Career Success campaign is designed to connect veterans with workforce services that can be secured through One-Stop Career Centers in communities so veterans can access high quality employment and training services.

### **HOW DOES A VETERAN FIND A LOCAL ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER?**

Enclosed is the Key to Career Success card that will help locate the nearest One-Stop Career Center in a local community. There are currently more than 3,000 One-Stop Career Centers across the United States.

The U.S. Department of Labor sponsors two tools to help veterans find a local One-Stop Career Center. America's Service Locator, [www.servicelocator.org](http://www.servicelocator.org), locates the closest One-Stop Career Center by entering a zip code. Once a One-Stop Career Center has been located, a map and driving directions can be downloaded.

As an alternative, veterans can call the Toll-Free Help Line at **1-877-US2-JOBS (TTY: 1-877-889-5627)**. Help Line staff can provide a referral to a local One-Stop Career Center, as well as help with employment and training related questions.

### **HOW DOES A VETERAN USE THE KEY CARD AT THE ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER?**

Once a One-Stop Career Center has been located, the Key to Career Success card can unlock a veteran's career potential. One-Stop Career Center staff are ready to serve veterans and their family members through an exciting array of career and supportive services including:

- Skills assessment and interest surveys;
- Career guidance;
- Job search assistance;
- Skills training for high-demand jobs in a local community;
- Child care; and
- Transportation.

One-Stop Career Center staff will ensure that veterans receive the highest priority of service as highly valued members of American society.

### **WHAT OTHER VETERAN SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE?**

One-Stop Career Center staff can also assist veterans in applying the valuable skills and training acquired during military service and translating those skills into civilian employment positions. Also, many One-Stop Career Centers offer relocation assistance.

### **WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP MILITARY SPOUSE/FAMILY?**

Frequent permanent changes of station (PCS) moves associated with the military lifestyle create challenges for spouses and family members, including maintaining stable careers and job tenure and obtaining and receiving training and education. It is critical to provide military spouses with the best available tools to aid them in their search for employment. One-Stop Career Centers are also prepared to offer services and special programs targeted to meet their specific employment needs.

**Milspouse.org** is an electronic tool detailing educational, employment and training, and other relevant community resources available to military spouses.

**Toll Free Help Line  
1-877-US2-JOBS**