



**Annual Report to Congress  
Fiscal Year 2018**

U.S. Department of Labor  
Veterans' Employment and Training Service

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## Executive Summary

In FY 2018, VETS continued to administer programs to meet the employment and training needs of transitioning service members, veterans, and their eligible spouses, especially those with significant barriers to employment, and continued to connect employers across the country with career focused veterans. VETS programs help veterans prepare for and fill the jobs being created by the nation's employers. The new HIRE Vets Medallion Program will encourage more employers to recruit, hire, and retain veterans. VETS employees are dedicated to the mission of providing transitioning service members, veterans, and their spouses the employment services they deserve.

The **Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG)** program provides funding to states for Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff. DVOP specialists provide individualized career services to veterans with significant barriers to employment, including disabled veterans, and other eligible veterans as determined by the Secretary of Labor (Secretary). Individualized career services include a comprehensive and specialized assessment of skill levels and job training needs, the development of an individual employment plan, group and individual career counseling and planning, and short-term skills development (including interview and communication skills). LVER staff promote veteran hiring through outreach activities that build relationships with local employers.

The **Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP)** continues to address employment needs of the most vulnerable veteran population by reintegrating homeless veterans into the workforce. During PY 2017, the HVRP successfully placed 10,817 previously homeless veterans on a path to self-sufficiency.

The **Transition Assistance Program (TAP) DOL Employment Workshop** provides valuable assistance to transitioning service members and their spouses by giving them the tools necessary for a successful transition from military service to civilian employment. The Veterans Opportunity to Work to Hire Heroes (VOW) Act of 2011 (Title II of P.L. 112-56, enacted in November 2011) mandated that nearly all transitioning service members participate in the Employment Workshop.

The National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2019 (NDAA FY 2019) was enacted on August 13, 2018. This Act mandates that the Department of Defense (DOD) provide individualized pre-separation counseling no later than 365 days before a service member's release from the service. The Act also mandates VETS to provide one day of TAP instruction to transitioning service members regarding employment preparation. Transitioning service members may also select two days of optional instruction on the following:

- preparation for employment provided by DOL;
- education information provided by DOD;
- vocational training provided by DOL; or
- entrepreneurship information provided by the Small Business Administration.

In addition, VETS is responsible for compliance investigations and reporting under several statutes. VETS receives and investigates claims arising under the **Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994** (USERRA), 38 U.S.C. 4301-4335. USERRA:

- prohibits discrimination against persons because of their service in the military;
- encourages non-career service in the military by eliminating or minimizing the disadvantages to civilian careers and employment which can result from such service;
- minimizes the disruption to the lives of persons performing service in the military, as well as to their employers, their fellow employees, and their communities, by providing for the prompt reemployment of such persons upon their completion of such service; and
- prohibits discrimination against individuals who attempt to enforce their rights under USERRA and prohibits retaliation against those who testify in any proceeding under the Act.

The VETS USERRA Annual Report to Congress includes more detailed information regarding program and enforcement outcomes, and can be found here:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/programs/userra>

Under the **Veterans' Employment Opportunities Act** (VEOA), 5 U.S.C. 3330a-3330c, VETS is responsible for investigating claims alleging a Federal agency's failure to apply Veterans' Preference in hiring or during a reduction-in-force, and claims from veterans alleging a lack of access to a Federal agency's covered employment opportunities.

VETS is responsible, under the **Vietnam Era Veterans' Reemployment Assistance Act of 1974** (VEVRAA), 38 U.S.C. 4212(d), for collecting annual reports from Federal contractors regarding the number of protected veterans hired during the calendar year, as well as the total number of protected veterans they employ. Under VEVRAA, Federal contractors and subcontractors who, after December 1, 2003, entered into a contract with the government valued at \$150,000 or greater must file an annual report with VETS.<sup>1</sup>

In 2018, the annual average veteran unemployment rate was 3.5 percent<sup>2</sup> – the lowest since this data series began in 2000. While this is good news, there is still work to be done in serving unemployed and underemployed veterans in the labor force. The following report discusses how the various programs administered by VETS, along with partner agencies, helped to facilitate smooth transitions to civilian employment for those serving in our military, and provided continuing employment assistance for veterans, military spouses, and caregivers.

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Acquisition Regulatory (FAR) Council's inflationary adjustment of October 1, 2015, raised the threshold to \$150,000. The increase results from an inflationary adjustment provision that authorizes the FAR Council to review and adjust acquisition-related threshold amounts in statutes that apply to federal procurement. *See* Section 807 of the Ronald Reagan National Defense Authorization Act, codified at 41 U.S.C. 1908; *see also* Federal Acquisition Regulation; Inflation Adjustment of Acquisition-Related Thresholds, 80 Fed. Reg. 38293, 38298 (July 2, 2015) (adjusting VEVRAA's procurement related threshold).

<sup>2</sup> [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) – Employment Situations of Veterans Summary, March 2019.

## Introduction

This report is prepared in accordance with Title 38, United States Code (U.S.C.), Sections 4107(c), 4212(c), 4215(d), and 2021(d). The report describes the programs and compliance activities of the Department of Labor’s (DOL) Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (VETS).

### ***PROGRAM YEAR AND FISCAL YEAR***

Some of the workforce activities described in this report are provided by Program Year (PY) basis, Fiscal Year (FY) and calendar year.

- Information collected on a fiscal year basis is presented in this report from 10/1/2017 – 9/30/2018 (FY 2018)
- Data collected on a program year basis are presented from 7/1/2017 – 6/30/2018 (PY 2017)
- Data collected on a calendar year basis are presented from 1/1/2018 – 12/31/2018 (CY 2018)

### ***VETS’ MISSION STATEMENT***

To prepare America’s veterans, service members, and their spouses for meaningful careers, provide them with employment resources and expertise, protect their employment rights, and promote their employment opportunities.

## I. The Workforce System

VETS coordinates with DOL’s Employment and Training Administration (ETA) to serve veterans through the public workforce system—a system that supports economic growth by providing workers and employers important resources to maximize employment opportunities.

The workforce system offers assistance through a nationwide network of roughly 2,400 one-stop job centers (referred to as American Job Centers, or AJCs), which include programs funded and coordinated by DOL, state and local governments, and other Federal partners. Last year more than 4.2 million Americans, including over 310,000 veterans, received staff-assisted employment assistance at an AJC<sup>3</sup>. This assistance may include job search services, career planning and counseling, or job training.

### ***PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS IN THE WORKFORCE SYSTEM***

Section 2 of the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA) of 2002, as codified in 38 U.S.C. 4215, established “Priority of Service” for veterans in DOL-administered job training programs. Under this authority, veterans and eligible spouses receive priority access to workforce training programs directly funded, in whole or in part, by DOL. Priority of Service applies to both program participation and access to the full range of services offered by each DOL-funded program.

<sup>3</sup> Source: WIOA state reporting for Wagner-Peyser and Jobs for Veterans State grants; data for quarter ending 06/30/2018

To obtain Priority of Service, a veteran or eligible spouse must meet the statutory definition of a “covered person,”<sup>4</sup> as well as other statutory requirements that pertain to the program for which services are sought.

The VOW to Hire Heroes Act amended 38 U.S.C. 4215 and requires that this annual report include an evaluation of whether eligible veterans receive Priority of Service and are fully served when accessing Departmental programs. Under 38 U.S.C. 4215(d), this evaluation must include: (1) an analysis of Priority of Service implementation at the local level; (2) an analysis of whether the representation of veterans in DOL programs is proportional to the incidence of representation of veterans in the labor market; and (3) performance measures developed by the Secretary to determine whether veterans are receiving Priority of Service and are being fully served by qualified job training programs.

DOL assessed the Priority of Service by measuring the proportion of veterans who received services within 45 days of accessing the workforce system as 94 percent in FY 2018. This assessment does not account for veterans who chose not to pursue staff-assisted services after their first workforce system contact.

#### ***VETERANS' PARTICIPATION RATES FOR FY 2018***

In calendar year 2017, veterans made up 6.0 percent of the civilian labor force, ages 18 and over.<sup>5</sup> As displayed in Table 1, data for PY 2017 indicate that ETA’s adult employment and training programs served over 300,000 veterans among over 4.2 million participants at an American Job Center, which results in a participation rate for veterans of 6.8 percent, roughly the same as PY 2016. The veteran unemployment rate in calendar year 2018 was 3.5 percent for veterans compared to 3.8 percent for nonveterans.<sup>6</sup> The table below displays the number of veterans served by several ETA workforce programs.

<sup>4</sup> The term “covered person” under 38 U.S.C. 4215 means any of the following individuals:

- A veteran.
- The spouse of any of the following:
  - i. Any veteran who died of a service-connected disability.
  - ii. Any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time of application for assistance under this section, is listed, pursuant to section 556 of title 37 and regulations issued thereunder, by the Secretary concerned in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days: missing in action, captured in line of duty by a hostile force, or forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power.
  - iii. Any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability.
  - iv. Any veteran who died while a disability so evaluated was in existence.

<sup>5</sup> Based on BLS Current Population Survey (Not Seasonally Adjusted).

<sup>6</sup> 2018 statistics on veterans and nonveterans are available at <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat48.pdf>.

**Table 1. PY 2017 Participation in DOL/ETA Programs**

<b>PY 2017 DOL/ETA ADULT PROGRAMS</b>	<b>Number of Veteran Participants</b>	<b>Total Number of Participants**</b>	<b>Veterans' Participation Rate in DOL Programs</b>
Wagner-Peyser Employment Service	295,228	4,330,507	6.8%
WIOA Adults	47,189	781,174	6.0%
WIOA Dislocated Worker	30,566	469,601	6.5%
WIOA Youth	389	148,492	0.3%
Dislocated Worker Grants	2,802	35,805	7.8%
Total <sup>7</sup>			

Sources: Program data derived from ETA reporting systems, which track participation levels and services offered to participants. These various systems include: Workforce Integration Performance System (WIPS); Individuals were counted only once per program year per program. The data for PY 2017 programs are for the period of July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018. Data is based on PY 2017 Q4 WIOA Performance Records.

\*Based on the DOL definition of “veteran” for purposes of providing priority of service. Previously used all veterans. Total individuals does not account for co-enrollment in multiple programs.

\*\*Note these counts only include participants. Information on Reportable Individuals by program is not available for PY 2017.

***DOL CHIEF EVALUATION OFFICE***

In FY 2018, the Department’s Chief Evaluation Office completed or continued several veteran-related studies. The topics of these studies include: an institutional analysis of American Job Centers; an impact study for HVRP; and an evaluation of the effectiveness of TAP, including effectiveness of email messaging to transitioning service members. A brief synopsis of each study along with a link to the full published report is found in Appendix I.

**II. Performance Management**

VETS programs address the Department’s Strategic Goal 1: *Support the Ability of All Americans to Find Good Jobs*. As described below, VETS programs materially contribute to this goal, yielding significant results for veterans and service members who are transitioning to the civilian workforce.

***PRIMARY INDICATORS USED TO EVALUATE PERFORMANCE***

PY 2016 marked the first year of WIOA data collection and reporting. PY 2017 was the first year this outcome data was available due to the transition of the Workforce Investment Act to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). When fully implemented, VETS’ programs will utilize four primary indicators of performance provided for in WIOA, listed below.

<sup>7</sup> Some programs and states co-enroll participants to ensure integrated service delivery to job seekers. Accordingly, the total listed in this table represents the sum of participants in all of the programs. Due to the high levels of co-enrollment, the total numbers served in Wagner-Peyser is a recommended indication of the total individuals served in the workforce system.

- **Employment Rate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter after Exit:** the percentage of participants served who are employed in the second quarter after exit from the program.
- **Employment Rate in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter after Exit:** the percentage of participants served who are employed in the fourth quarter after exit from the program.
- **Median Earnings 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter after Exit:** the mid-point of all quarterly wages earned in the second quarter after exit.
- **Effectiveness in Serving Employers:** this measure is in a pilot phase and states are instructed to report on two of the following metrics: participant retention with the same employer from 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter after exit to 4<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit; repeat business customers as a count of businesses who re-use workforce services over a three-year period; and employer penetration rate as the proportion of businesses who are using the core program services out of all employers represented in an area or state served by the public workforce system.

**Table 2. JVSG Performance Outcomes, PY 2017**

Performance Metric	Outcome
Employment Rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	56.6%
Employment Rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	55.7%
Median Earnings 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	\$6,322

### III. Jobs for Veterans State Grants

Through Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG), as authorized under 38 U.S.C. §4102A (b)5, VETS offers employment and training services through State Workforce Agencies nationwide. This program assists veterans with significant barriers to employment and other eligible individuals, to facilitate their transition to meaningful employment, and to assist employers in filling their workforce needs with job-seeking veterans.<sup>8, 9</sup>

VETS provides funds to states to support three types of staff positions: DVOP specialists, LVER staff, and Consolidated Positions (positions which perform the functions of both the preceding staff positions). States provide funding allocation plans to improve services and outcomes. These plans include strategies for reaching populations of eligible veterans

<sup>8</sup> In addition to veterans with significant barriers to employment, all veterans ages 18-24 are eligible for services from a DVOP specialist. See Veterans' Program Letter 03-19, *Designation of Additional Populations Eligible for Services from Disabled Veteran's Outreach Program Specialist* (Feb. 07, 2019), available at <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/VETS/legacy/files/veterans-program-letter-03-19.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> In the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2015, P.L. 113-235, JVSG eligibility was expanded to Transitioning Service Members of the Armed Forces who have participated in the Transition Assistance Program and have been identified as in need of intensive services and members of the Armed Forces who are wounded, ill, or injured and receiving treatment in military treatment facilities or warrior transition units, and their spouses or other family caregivers. This expansion of eligibility was also included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, P.L. 114-113, and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017, P.L. 115-31.



throughout the state, services to veterans, and cooperative arrangements between states and private industry, educational institutions, trade associations, and labor unions. Under WIOA, State Workforce Development Boards are encouraged to develop a combined state plan for all education and workforce programs, which may include the JVSG program.

#### ***DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM***

The primary duty of DVOP specialists is to provide individualized career services to eligible program participants. Individualized career services are designed to: 1) mitigate an individual's barriers to employment through comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and needs, 2) develop an individual employment plan, including group and individual career counseling and planning, and 3) provide short-term instruction to augment skills development, such as interview and communication skills. DVOP specialists may be located at AJCs, or co-located with other service providers, such as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and DOD Transition Assistance offices.

#### ***LOCAL VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTATIVES***

LVER staff promote veteran hiring through outreach activities that build relationships with local employers with the goal of connecting employers across the country with career-ready veterans. Often, LVERs are part of a state's business service team. LVERs coordinate with DVOP specialists and other AJC staff to transition veteran clients seamlessly into appropriate employment in the local community.

#### ***CONSOLIDATED POSITION***

Consolidated DVOP/LVER positions are considered, by request, to allow states flexibility to provide appropriate employment services for veterans and employer support in areas currently underserved and/or where the assignment of only full-time DVOP specialists or LVER staff would be impractical.

#### ***DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING FOR DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF***

Quality training is essential to DVOP and LVER success. Newly-appointed DVOP specialists and LVER staff must receive job-related training within 18 months of their appointment. This training is provided by the National Veterans' Training Institute through a competitively-awarded contract from VETS. In FY 2018, 99.4 percent of the 322 newly hired DVOP specialists and LVER staff completed core training within the 18-month required timeframe. The FY 2018 total number of staff who received training is lower than the prior fiscal year due to a change in the core courses. The Intensive Services, Employer Outreach, and Facilitating Veteran Employment courses (referred to as legacy courses) offered in prior years were replaced midway through FY18 with five new core courses. The five core courses implemented midway through FY18 include:

- A Day in the Life of JVSG Staff in an American Job Center;
- Legal Guidance Affecting Veterans' Employment Services;
- Removing the Employability Gap for Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment;
- Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist Core Competency Development; and
- Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) Core Competency Development courses.

**DVOP AND LVER STAFF AND FUNDING LEVELS**

VETS awards JVSG grant funds by formula to each state, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The formula, governed under 38 U.S.C. 4102A(c) (2) is based on the following factors:

- The number of unemployed individuals in the general population in each state, compared with the total number of unemployed individuals in the general population across all states; and
- The number of veterans in the civilian labor force in each state, compared with the total number of veterans in the civilian labor force across all states.

In accordance with the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA), 38 U.S.C Chapter 41 Section 4102A, and policy guidance regarding staffing levels, states may determine the ratio of DVOP specialists and LVER staff based upon local economic conditions and a state’s plan for meeting the employment service needs of the program’s target population. Table 3 provides FY 2017 and FY 2018 funding and staffing levels for DVOP specialists, LVER staff and Consolidated Position Staff.<sup>10</sup>

**Table 3. DVOP Specialists and LVER Staff Funding<sup>11</sup>**

<b>DVOP Specialists</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>Change</b>
DVOP Funding	\$116,436,068	\$115,078,724	-\$1,357,344
Projected DVOP Staffing	1,392	1,368	-24
Actual DVOP Positions Supported	1,237	1,378	141
Average Cost per Position	\$94,128	\$83,511	-\$10,617
<b>LVER Staff</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>Change</b>
LVER Funding	\$54,241,316	\$52,409,398	-\$1,831,918
Projected LVER Staffing	561	572	11
Actual LVER Positions Supported	515	567	52
Average Cost per Position	\$105,323	\$92,433	-\$12,890
<b>Consolidated Position Staff</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>Change</b>
Projected Consolidated Funding	\$877,052	\$3,244,860	\$2,367,808
Projected Consolidated Staffing	12	36	24
Actual Consolidated Positions Supported	10	36	26
Average Cost per Position	\$87,705	\$90,135	\$2,430

Table 3: In FY 2018, the number of DVOP specialists, LVER staff, and consolidated positions increased by approximately 10 percent from FY 2017. States continue to meet the goal of providing individualized career services to JVSG participants, which is the primary responsibility of DVOP specialists; in FY 2018 the individualized career service delivery rate was approximately 89 percent.

<sup>10</sup> As reported in the Veterans’ Employment and Training Operations and Program Activity Report (VOPAR) System, FY 2017 (ending September 30, 2017) Staffing, Spending and Funding Balance Worksheet.

<sup>11</sup> The results in this table reflect updated actuals and do not always tie to the Congressional Budget Justification (CBJ), which included best estimates at the time drafted.

**JVSG SERVICES FOR PARTICIPANTS**

In PY 2017, 99,296 participants<sup>12</sup> were referred to DVOP staff who provided services to the specific categories of veterans shown in Table 3. Please note, however, that the categories in Table 4 include overlapping data because a veteran may be counted in more than one category (e.g., a veteran could be categorized as both female and as a homeless veteran). Veterans are identified under these categories during the initial intake process at AJCs.

**Table 4. DVOP-Served Participant Statistics**

<b>Population or Sub-Population</b>	<b>PY 2016</b>	<b>PY 2017</b>	<b>Percentage Point Change</b>
<b>Veterans and other eligible spouses served (percentage of total)</b>	<b>113,211</b>	<b>99,296</b>	<b>-12.3%</b>
Disabled veterans	33,474 (30%)	40,829 (41%)	+11%
Long-Term Unemployed	3,560 (3%)	6,189 (6%)	+3%
Female veterans	16,706 (15%)	15,443 (16%)	+1%
Homeless veterans	12,989 (11%)	14,004 (14%)	+3%

\* Data for direct services to veterans by LVERs was not collected in PY 2017, but will be available for PY 2018.

**WEIGHTED OUTCOMES**

The JVSG program utilizes a weighted outcome metric to measure the impact of incentivizing individualized career services being given to veteran participants. This is based on a 2007 Government Accountability Office (GAO) recommendation that DOL “implement a weighting system for the DVOP and LVER performance measures that takes into account the difficulty of serving veterans with particular barriers to employment” as required under the JVA, 38 U.S.C. 4102A(f).<sup>13</sup>

Under this system, a veteran who receives individualized career services through the JVSG program receives a value, or weight, of 1.25, while all other participants receive a weight of 1.0. This weighting incentivizes case managers to provide higher proportions of individualized career services to veterans with significant barriers to employment. Intensive services lead to better employment outcomes, and the weighted measure proposed by GAO was a way to incentivize this behavior within the state workforce system. It should also be noted that this GAO finding came at a time when JVSG delivered intensive services at a significantly lower rate. Currently, nearly 90 percent of all services provided by DVOP specialists are intensive/individualized career services. As such, there is a significant difference when comparing the weighted entered employment rate to the unweighted rate.

<sup>12</sup> This figure represents the unduplicated participant count of veterans and transitioning service members served by DVOP specialists, as reported in the Workforce Integrated Performance System. Data as of 6/30/2018.

<sup>13</sup> Government Accountability Office Report 07-594, *Labor Could Improve Information on Reemployment Services, Outcomes, and Program Impact*, May 2007.

**Table 5. Weighted Measure Counts of Participants Who Exited the Program and Received Services Delivered by a DVOP Specialist**

<b>Weighted Veterans Measure</b>	<b>PY 2016</b>	<b>PY 2017</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Number of Veterans Who Received Staff Assisted Services	113,211	99,296	-12.3%
Number of Veterans Who Received Individualized Career Services	104,309	87,201	16.4%
Number of Veterans Who Entered Employment	N/A	48,139	N/A
Unweighted Entered Employment Rate	N/A	54.8%	N/A
Weighted Entered Employment Rate	N/A	66.7%	N/A

*\*“Entered Employment” metric included in this tables refers to any participant who was unemployed at time of participation, and who found work within the first quarter after program completion.*

*Note: Performance outcomes were not available in PY 2016 due to the WIA to WIOA transition.*

**IMPLEMENTING A UNIFORM NATIONAL THRESHOLD VETERANS ENTERED EMPLOYMENT RATE**

The JVA amended 38 U.S.C. 4102A(c)(3)(B) to require that the Secretary establish, through regulations, a Uniform National Threshold Entered Employment Rate (UNTEER) for veterans, to evaluate states’ performance in helping veterans meet their employment needs. To establish this UNTEER for veterans, data was compiled from each state using participant services funded from either Wagner-Peyser or JVSG. “Entered Employment” is defined as: “of those participants who were unemployed at time of initial participation, the percentage of those who were subsequently employed in the first quarter after program exit”. Use of the Entered Employment definition was developed before current WIOA regulations, and is therefore not the same as WIOA employment rate definitions.

The UNTEER for veterans for PY 2017 was set at 52.7 percent, based on the national entered employment rate of 58.5 percent. Based on this national threshold, the following states and territories have veteran entered employment rates lower than 90 percent of the established national threshold: California, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Guam, Hawaii, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Mexico, and the Virgin Islands. These states will be provided technical assistance by VETS and ETA in order to increase entered employment rates for veterans.

**INCENTIVE AWARD ANALYSIS**

Under 38 U.S.C. 4102A and 4112, as amended by the JVA, VETS provides funds for performance incentive awards, to be administered by states, to recognize quality employment, training, and placement services for veterans. In particular, one percent of a state’s total JVSG Program Year grant allocation is reserved to be used for the following:

- Encouraging the improvement and modernization of employment, training, and placement services for veterans; and
- Recognizing eligible employees and employment service offices for excellence in the provision of such services, or for having made demonstrable improvements in the provision of services to veterans.

Typically, states use these incentive funds to provide cash awards to individual staff recipients. However, a state may provide nonfinancial incentives in lieu of, or in combination with, cash awards, as outlined in its VETS-approved state Veteran Service Plan.<sup>14</sup> Further, states have the option to decline the allocation of incentive award funds. In FY 2018, VETS set aside \$1,724,482 for the incentive funds. Of this total, 38 state agencies (including agencies in the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands) used \$1,194,585 for staff and office incentive awards, roughly consistent with previous years. Sixteen state agencies declined receipt of incentive award funds due to legislative restrictions, state policies, union agreements, or for other unspecified reasons. These declined funds are used to consider special initiatives proposed by states, including temporary increases to DVOP and LVER staffing.

#### **IV. Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program**

The Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP), authorized under 38 U.S.C. 2021, provides employment and training services to help homeless veterans transition into meaningful employment and to develop effective methods to address the complex problems resulting in homelessness.

HVRP funds are awarded to eligible entities through a competitive grant process outlined in an annual Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA). Eligible entities in PY 2017 included state and local workforce development boards; public agencies; Native American governments and Native American tribal organizations; nonprofit organizations; and for-profit commercial entities. Grantees provide an array of services to veterans experiencing homelessness through a holistic case management approach, which includes important linkages to a variety of support services available in local communities. Successful grant applicants must specifically describe how their outreach to homeless veterans will build an effective level of collaboration with other entities, such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program; Grant and Per Diem Program grantees, and the Supportive Services for Veteran Families grantees.

Each HVRP participant receives customized employment and training services to address his or her specific barriers to employment. Services may include occupational, classroom, and on-the-job training, as well as job search, placement assistance, and post-placement follow-up services. DVOP specialists and LVER staff also support HVRP grantees by providing valuable resources to help grantees achieve job placement and retention goals through case management, direct employer contact, job development, and follow-up services.

In FY 2018, DOL awarded funds to 164 grantees. Specifically, DOL awarded 41 newly-competed grants and approved 123 grantees to receive option-year funding. These include awards to targeted programs designed to address the employment barriers of specific veteran populations, such as formally incarcerated veterans, female veterans, and those with families.

In FY 2018, S. 2248, "Veterans Benefits and Transition Act of 2018," (Pub-Law 115-407) was

<sup>14</sup> State Veterans' Services Plans are developed by states to describe the methods that will be used to provide specific services to veterans using prescribed funding levels.

signed into law on December 31, 2018. This bill covers a range of veterans' issues, including provisions that would increase veterans' benefits and those that aim to improve the transition process from military to civilian life. Specific to DOL, Pub-Law 115-407 amends Section 2021(a) of title 38, U.S.C., by expanding eligible participants under the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) to include:

- (1) homeless veterans (including veterans who were homeless but found housing during the 60-day period preceding the date on which the veteran begins to participate in a program under this section);
- (2) veterans participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs supported housing program for which rental assistance is provided pursuant to section 8(o)(19) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(19)) or the Tribal HUD-VA Supportive Housing (Tribal HUD-VASH) program;
- (3) Native Americans who are veterans and receiving assistance under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 41001 et seq.); and
- (4) veterans described in section 2023(e) of title 38, U.S.C., or any other veterans who are transitioning from being incarcerated; and (5) veterans participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs rapid rehousing and prevention program authorized in section 2044 of title 38, U.S.C.

In PY 2017, roughly 81 percent of the 17,958 HVRP participants were co-enrolled in American Job Centers. Co-enrollment increases the array of comprehensive services for current and formerly homeless veterans receive in AJCs, such as, but not limited to, JVSG, WIOA, state vocational rehabilitation via the VA, and Wagner-Peyser. In a study of the impact of enrolling HVRP participants into AJC services, DOL's Chief Evaluation Office found that homeless veterans enrolled in HVRP were more likely to receive individualized career services when compared to homeless veterans not enrolled in HVRP<sup>15</sup>. In the HVRP analysis of ETA's Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) data for the first two quarters of PY 2017, VETS found 83 percent of the HVRP participants received individualized career services and 61 percent of the non-HVRP homeless veterans received individualized career services in the AJCs.

In addition to an employment placement rate of over 60 percent in PY 2017, table 5 provides performance information from the HVRP program for the previous two program years. HVRP enrollment data increased 11 percent from the PY 2016 total of 16,230 to the PY 2017 total of 17,958. The average cost per participant in PY 2017 of \$2,178 represents an increase of \$104 (or 5 percent) from the PY 2016 average of \$2,074. The average hourly wage also increased from PY 2016 to PY 2017. The average hourly wage at employment rose from \$12.87 in PY 2016 to \$13.50 in PY 2017.

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/Formative\\_Evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_Homeless\\_Veterans\\_Reintegration\\_Program\\_Report.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/Formative_Evaluation_of_the_Homeless_Veterans_Reintegration_Program_Report.pdf)

**Table 6. HVRP Participant Statistics, PY 2016 and PY 2017<sup>16</sup>**

	Participants Enrolled			Average Cost per Participant			Average Cost per Placement			Average Hourly Wage at Placement		
	PY 2016	PY 2017	Change	PY 2016	PY 2017	Change	PY 2016	PY 2017	Change	PY 2016	PY 2017	Change
<b>Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program</b>	16,096	17,958	+11%	\$2,087	\$2,178	+5%	\$3,102	\$3,617	+16%	\$12.87	\$13.50	+5%
<b>HVRP Subset: Homeless Female Veterans and Veterans with Families</b>	3,328	3,974	+19%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$13.90	\$14.44	+4%
<b>HVRP Subset: Incarcerated Veterans' Transition Program</b>	1,604	2,227	+39%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$12.27	\$12.70	+4%

Note: NA = The average cost per enrollment and average cost per placement were not available in PYs 2016 and 2017 as these population groups were no longer able to be separated out from grantee data submissions.

***HOMELESS VETERANS' STAND DOWN GRANTS***

Each year, VETS utilizes a portion of HVRP funds to support Stand Down events.<sup>17</sup> These events, held in local communities, provide a variety of social services to homeless veterans. Stand Down events serve as gateways into structured housing and reintegration programs. In particular, Stand Down organizers partner with local businesses and social service providers to offer the following services:

- shower facilities/haircuts;
- meals;
- legal advice;
- medical examinations and dental treatment;
- hygiene care kits;
- immunizations;
- information on veterans' benefits;
- information on training and employment opportunities;
- information on support services, including child care; and
- emotional support and camaraderie among other veterans.

VETS awarded \$470,256 for 65 Stand Down events in FY 2018.

<sup>16</sup> The results in this table reflect updated actuals and do not always tie to the Congressional Budget Justification (CBJ), which included best estimates at the time drafted.

<sup>17</sup> The maximum amount awarded to HVRP eligible entities to support a Stand Down event is \$7,000 for a one-day event and \$10,000 for a multi-day event.

## **V. The Transition Assistance Program (TAP)–DOL Employment Workshop and Career Exploration and Planning Track (CEPT)**

The TAP for separating and retiring service members and their spouses, provided under 10 U.S.C. 1144, is a cooperative effort among DOL, DOD, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, VA, the Small Business Administration, and the Office of Personnel Management. VETS administers the DOL Employment Workshop as a required component of TAP, both domestically and at overseas installations, providing job preparation and employment services to assist transitioning service members in entering the civilian workforce. The number of Employment Workshops DOL provides is based on the requirements of the Armed Services.

The DOL Employment Workshop is standardized so that all attending service members and their spouses receive the same high level of instruction. The course consists of three days of classroom instruction that is focused on four core competencies:

- Developing and executing a job search plan;
- Planning for success in a civilian work environment;
- Creating resumes, cover letters, and other self-marketing materials; and
- Engaging in successful interviews and networking conversations.

In FY 2018, DOL revised the TAP Career Technical Training Track curriculum and changed the name to the Career Exploration and Planning Track (CEPT). CEPT is an additional optional two-day workshop focused on exploration of apprenticeships and industry-recognized credentials for transitioning service members and their spouses; this course supplements the required DOL Employment Workshop. The CEPT provides these service members with an opportunity to identify their relevant skills, increase their awareness of training and apprenticeship programs that can lead to industry-recognized credentials and meaningful careers, and develop an action plan to achieve their career goals. The revised CEPT curriculum covers four themes: (1) personal assessment using three assessment tools; (2) researching specific career fields of interest; (3) understanding training requirements and identifying training opportunities; and (4) establishing goals and develop a detailed plan to achieve those goals.

In FY 2018, VETS and the Women’s Bureau (WB) began a series of nation-wide listening sessions, expert interviews, and a secondary data analysis of existing research, to begin developing a framework that will guide the content for TAP for military spouses. The WB is drafting a curriculum for military spouses, both women and men, organized around the priority areas of: (1) preparation for employment; (2) preparation for education; (3) preparation for vocational training; and (4) preparation for entrepreneurship. Delivery options will be evaluated to determine the most effective format, likely focusing on a hybrid model of introductory face-to-face programming followed by digital delivery, both synchronous and asynchronous.

In FY 2018, the interagency partners collected and analyzed survey results regarding participants’ satisfaction with the TAP curriculum and delivery methods. Survey results indicated 96 percent would use what they learned in their own transition planning and 94 percent reported that the



DOL Employment Workshop enhanced their confidence in transition planning. The survey data cited above suggest that the DOL Employment Workshop is meeting the expectations of its audience.

NDAA FY 2019 amended section 1142 of title 10, U.S.C., to improve TAP by:

- (1) establishing at least three transition counseling pathways for service members;
- (2) requiring the Department of Defense to provide a copy of the joint service transcript to a service member prior to transition to veteran status and to transmit the transcript to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; and
- (3) providing pre-separation counseling to each service member, including: educational assistance benefits, relocation assistance services, and employment/reemployment rights and obligations.

TAP course administrator’s tabulate and report the number of transitioning service members participating in domestic, international, and CEPT workshops, and those are provided in tables 7, 8 and 9 below.

***DOMESTIC WORKSHOP***

As displayed in Table 7, DOD’s demand for DOL’s Employment Workshop activity decreased six percent between FY 2017 and FY 2018.

**Table 7. Domestic DOL Employment Workshops and Participants, FY 2017 - 2018**

Category	FY 2017	FY 2018	Percent Change
Workshops	5,463	5,115	- 6%
Participants	150,987	141,978	- 6%

***OVERSEAS DOL EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOP***

VETS currently delivers DOL Employment Workshops at sites in Bahrain, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Guam, Italy, Korea, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, Cuba, Romania, and Qatar.

Table 8 shows the number of participants in the DOL Employment Workshop overseas decreased between FY 2017 and FY 2018, based on DOD demand.

**Table 8. Overseas TAP Workshops and Participants, FY 2017 - 2018**

Category	FY 2017	FY 2018	Percent Change
Workshops	634	654	+ 3%
Participants	13,391	12,602	- 6%

Additionally, in FY 2018, VETS conducted regularly scheduled Wounded Warrior DOL Employment Workshops at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Fort Belvoir, Virginia; and Fort Riley, Kansas. The military services’ projected demand for the DOL Employment Workshops is expected to remain consistent with that of FY 2018 for the foreseeable future.

***CEPT COURSES DELIVERED***

As displayed in Table 9, DOL CEPT workshop activity increased in workshops and participants

between FY 2017 and FY 2018 based on DOD demand.

**Table 9. CEPT Workshops and Participants, FY 2017 - 2018**

<b>Category</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
<b>Workshops</b>	919	938	+2%
<b>Participants</b>	6,908	7,091	+3%

**TAP DATA ANALYTICS**

In FY 2016, VETS began daily data transfer from the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) to the Veteran Data Exchange Initiative (VDEI) to gain a better understanding about transitioning service members to allow VETS to better serve these individuals. In FY 2018, approximately 162,000 transitioning service members participated in TAP workshops, and data elements on transitioning service members broken down by race, gender, military occupation specialty, and other categories are now available for the roughly 200,000 transitioning service members each year. Partnering with DOL’s Chief Evaluation Office, VETS is examining the VDEI data to determine how the data can be used to analyze employment outcomes for transitioning service members and improve service delivery. VETS will also continue to examine potential data sources to match to the VDEI data to further enhance the power of this information. Currently, based on E-form data sent to DOL from DMDC, VETS sends emails to transitioning service members to highlight the importance of participating in the DOL Employment Workshop as early as possible to provide employment tools that support the transition process.

For those unable to attend TAP in-person, VETS makes available on its website the TAP Virtual Curriculum, as well as the TAP Employment Workshop Participant Guide. In addition, the Department initiated development of a TAP mobile application (app). The purpose of this mobile app is to provide online tools for transitioning service members in a format that is accessible from a smartphone. The app will provide access to a full suite of the CareerOneStop mobile tools, and will include DOL TAP course materials. Additionally, the app will provide transition checklists and automated notifications.

## **VI. HIRE Vets Medallion Program**

The Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing (HIRE) American Military Veterans Act of 2017, P.L. 115-31 (Division O), required DOL to establish a program to recognize employer efforts to recruit, employ, and retain veterans. As described in the Act, there are different award criteria for large employers (500-plus employees), medium employers (51-499 employees), and small employers (50 or fewer employees). The Act also specifies the HIRE Vets Medallion Program be a self-funded program for which applicants pay a non-refundable application fee. On November 13, 2017, VETS published the Final Rule establishing the HIRE Vets Medallion Program, 82 FR 52186. In 2018, VETS established the standard operating procedures and criteria for the award, developed new IT systems to capture and analyze the applications, selected the awardees, and presented the demonstration medallions to the recipients at a ceremony in November to coincide with Veteran’s Day. At the request of the Secretary, VETS accomplished all this work a full year ahead of the Congressional mandate of 2019. The demonstration was limited to 300 applications, 239 award recipients received a demonstration

award. The demonstration award recipient list, along with additional information about the program is available at [www.hirevets.gov](http://www.hirevets.gov). The full program, with no limitation in the number of applicants, will be implemented in 2019. VETS first annual report to Congress on the success of the program is due in 2019.

## **VII. Veterans Employer Outreach Program**

VETS continues a robust Veteran Employment Outreach Program (VEOP) to make it easier for employers to find, hire, train, and retain veterans by leveraging federal, state, and local governments resources. Through its National-to-Local Engagement and Integration Strategy, VEOP coordinates employment opportunities for veterans among the public and private sectors and local communities and leverages the workforce system with its network of over 2,400 AJCs nationwide.

In FY 2018, VETS' Regional Veterans' Employment Coordinators (RVEC) engaged with 2,188 employers to promote veterans as a viable resource for employment. RVECs referred 140 employers to DOL's Office of Apprenticeship. The Office of Apprenticeship was revamped in 2018 as a DOL priority to provide training and secure job opportunities to individuals, including veterans. VETS has been fully supported of this effort. As of October 2018, RVEC referrals have led to 22 DOL registered apprenticeship programs.

## **VIII. Compliance and Investigations**

VETS is responsible for administering the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), under citation, investigating complaints alleging violations of veterans preference in federal hiring under citation, and federal contractor data reporting under 38 U.S.C. 4212. This report includes a brief description of USERRA. Further details of VETS' USERRA enforcement activities, including data on cases opened during the last fiscal year, are provided in the Department's USERRA Annual Report to Congress, found here: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/programs/userra>

VETS conducts a robust public outreach campaign to educate service members, employers, and others on their rights and responsibilities under USERRA. VETS provides an online USERRA Advisor (<http://www.dol.gov/elaws/userra.htm>) to assist veterans in understanding employee eligibility, job entitlements, and obligations, as well as benefits, remedies, and employer obligations under USERRA. The Advisor helps employees assess the potential validity of their complaint and allows them to file USERRA complaints electronically. In FY 2018, VETS provided technical assistance and conducted outreach to more than 7,000 individuals nationwide, including service members, members of professional groups, and the general public.

### ***VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY ACT***

Under 5 U.S.C. 3304(f), as added by the Veterans' Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA), preference eligibles or veterans who separated from the Armed Forces under honorable conditions after three years or more of active military service, are allowed to apply for certain Federal merit promotion opportunities for which an agency accepts applications from

individuals outside its own workforce. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3330a(a)(1)(A), VEOA also provides that preference eligibles who allege their rights are violated under any statute or regulation relating to veterans' preference may file a claim with DOL.

VETS maintains a Veterans' Preference Advisor that provides information and advice in an electronic format to employers and employees regarding veterans' preference issues. In particular, the Veterans' Preference Advisor helps veterans determine the types of preferences and benefits to which they are entitled, explains the process for filing a complaint, and provides an electronic claim form. The Veterans' Preference Advisor can be found on the Department's "e-laws" website at: <http://www.dol.gov/elaws/vetspref.htm>.

Table 10 displays the total number of Veterans' Preference cases investigated during FY 2018 and case outcomes. Of the 290 complaints received in FY 2018, and the 35 cases carried over from FY 2017, VETS closed 287 cases. On average, cases were resolved in 28 days.

**Table 10. FY 2018 Veterans' Preference Cases<sup>18</sup>**

Category or Subcategory	Number or Percentage of Cases
Total Cases	325
Cases Carried Forward from FY 2017	35
Cases Opened During FY 2018	290
Total Cases Closed During FY 2018	287
Percent of FY 2018 Cases Closed within 60 days	91%
Percent of FY 2018 Cases Closed within 90 days	98%
Average Number of Days Case Was Open	28

**VIETNAM ERA VETERANS' READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1974 (VETS-4212 REPORT)**

The reporting requirement of the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 (VEVRAA), as amended, 38 U.S.C. 4212(d), requires that contractors and subcontractors awarded qualifying Federal contracts annually report on the total number of their employees who belong to certain categories of veterans, and the number of those employees newly hired during the reporting period.

The reporting obligation applies to those entities with a Federal government contract of \$150,000 or more entered into or modified after December 1, 2003.<sup>19</sup> Pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 4212(a) and (d), as amended by the Jobs for Veterans Act, contractors submitting these reports provide data on protected veterans in their employ that fall under one or more of the following categories:

- Disabled veterans;

<sup>18</sup> As reported in the Veterans' Preference Information Management System

<sup>19</sup> As explained previously, while 38 U.S.C. 4212 refers to a \$100,000 contract threshold, effective October 1, 2015, the contract threshold increased to \$150,000 per an inflationary adjustment statute implemented by the Federal Acquisition Regulation Council. See Federal Acquisition Regulation; Inflation Adjustment of Acquisition-Related Thresholds, 80 Fed. Reg. 38293, 38298 (July 2, 2015).

- Veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. military during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized;
- Veterans who, while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces, participated in a United States military operation for which an Armed Forces service medal was awarded pursuant to Executive Order 12985; and
- Recently separated veterans (within three years of discharge or release from active duty).

The VETS-4212 reports must be filed each year by September 30. Table 11 provides a summary of the reports filed during FY 2018.

**Table 11. VETS-4212 Annual Federal Contractor Reporting as of September 2018<sup>20</sup>**

Category	FY 2017	FY 2018	Change
Total Federal Contractors Filing	16,467	12,993	(3,474)
Total Submitted Reports	334,836	285,759	(49,077)
All Protected Veterans Employed	1,000,717	894,311	(106,406)
Total All Employees	26,470,728	22,276,538	(4,194,190)
All Protected Veterans Newly Hired	252,266	225,205	(27,061)
Total All New Hires	6,957,115	5,499,107	(1,458,008)

***NONDISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY REQUIREMENTS***

DOL’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) is responsible for enforcing the nondiscrimination and equal employment opportunity requirements of VEVRAA. OFCCP’s implementing regulations are at 41 CFR Part 60-300. VEVRAA prohibits Federal contractors and subcontractors from discriminating in employment against protected veterans, and requires these employers to take affirmative action to recruit, hire, promote, and retain these veterans. Covered contractors and subcontractors are required to engage in outreach to veterans and establish an annual hiring benchmark against which they measure their progress. Violations of VEVRAA are identified through complaint investigations and compliance evaluations of covered Federal contractors and subcontractors. In FY 2018, OFCCP concluded 812 neutrally scheduled compliance evaluations, and, of these, 59 (or 7 percent) remedied VEVRAA violations. Also, OFCCP processed 132 complaints on the basis of VEVRAA.

**IX. Interagency Collaboration**

VETS has a strong collaboration with other DOL agencies and DOD and VA to fulfill its mission.

***WOMEN’S BUREAU***

The Women’s Bureau (WB) and VETS maintain a collaborative relationship relating to women

<sup>20</sup> The numbers reflected in this table for 2017 included VETS-4212 reports filed after the filing season ended on September 30. Due to several factors beyond contractors’ control (e.g. severe weather), the Department allowed filing beyond the season deadline without penalty.

veterans and military spouses. The agencies work together to empower women veterans to successfully compete for jobs in the civilian labor force, and to educate employers on the value of adding women veterans and military spouses to their workforce. The WB worked with VETS to develop the military spouse portal, and are currently working on developing TAP for military spouses.

#### ***OFFICE OF FEDERAL CONTRACT COMPLIANCE PROGRAMS***

OFCCP collaborates with VETS to support outreach to employers that are federal contractors seeking to recruit and hire veterans. Together, VETS and OFCCP support affirmative actions to employ and advance employment-protected veterans through the reporting requirements of the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act (VEVRAA); this Act helps employers to monitor the success of their recruitment and outreach efforts in attracting protected veterans.

#### ***BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS***

The Bureau of Labor Statistics is an important partner of VETS, as BLS provides critical statistics on how veterans compare to non-veterans in labor force participation, unemployment rates, and occupational analyses. VETS and VA also directly fund a "veteran supplement" which provides additional BLS survey results on an annual basis to complement the monthly employment survey.

#### ***EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION***

As mentioned in Section I (The Workforce System), VETS collaborates with ETA which administers the public workforce system and key workforce programs that serve veterans and military spouses. VETS works closely with various ETA programs to ensure Priority of Service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided, that guidance to grantees includes a veteran focus, and that statistics and analytics for veteran outcomes are achieved.

#### ***WIOA ADULT, YOUTH AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS***

The WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker programs, authorized under Title I of WIOA, are designed to provide quality employment and job training services to assist eligible individuals to find and obtain meaningful employment and to help employers find the skilled workers they need to compete and succeed in the 21st-century economy. WIOA reauthorized the Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker programs previously authorized under WIA. With the new reporting requirements, states submitted their first WIOA performance reports in October 2017. Full WIOA performance outcomes will not be available until October 2019.

#### ***TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE***

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA or Trade Act) Program helps trade-affected workers who have lost or may lose their jobs as a result of foreign trade. Individuals in worker groups certified by the Secretary as being trade-affected may be eligible for services, training, income support, and other allowances to assist them in obtaining new jobs and the skills, credentials, resources, and support they may need to become reemployed. In FY 2018, over 2,400 veterans received assistance through TAA.

#### ***NATIONAL DISLOCATED WORKER GRANTS***

Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs) provide resources to states and other eligible applicants to respond to large, unexpected layoff events causing significant job losses.

This funding is intended to temporarily expand capacity to serve dislocated workers, including veterans, and meet the increased demand for WIOA employment and training services. Depending on the circumstances, DWG funds can be used to temporarily employ dislocated workers or provide assistance that helps them obtain new work. WIOA makes DWG resources available to areas experiencing higher than average demand for employment and training activities for dislocated veterans and spouses.

***INDIAN AND NATIVE AMERICAN PROGRAM***

This program provides unemployed and under-skilled Native American, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian adults with intensive training and support services. With this assistance, members of these indigenous communities are better equipped to find and take advantage of a broad array of employment opportunities. WIOA reauthorized the Indian and Native American Program.

***APPRENTICESHIP***

Apprenticeship programs combine paid work experience with job-related technical instruction. Apprenticeships have historically prepared workers to obtain high-skilled, high-paying jobs that help employers build their qualified workforce. As outlined in the Presidential Executive Order: Expanding Apprenticeships in America issued July 15, 2017, VETS provides support to DOL's actions in sections 4, 6, and 8.

***DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS***

DOL partners with VA to provide efficient and seamless service to the veterans with disabilities who receive services through VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program (38 U.S. Code, Chapter 31). Following VR&E's determination that a veteran or service member is entitled to Chapter 31 benefits, local VR&E, VETS and AJC staff coordinate efforts to provide local labor market information (LMI) to be used in developing the veteran's Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan (IWRP) and employment services (ES) to assist the veteran in securing suitable employment.

In FY 2018, the partnership was reinforced through the execution of local Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) signed by the VETS' Director for Veterans' Employment and Training (DVET), the VA VR&E Director, and the State Agency (SA) as established during FY 2017. These MOUs guided each partner's roles and responsibilities throughout FY 2018. As relationships and processes matured at the local level, referrals and positive outcomes increased during FY 2018. By the end of FY 2018, all states but one, the Virgin Islands, reported referrals of both types. The National Memorandum of Agreement signed in FY 2016 expires in FY 2019. This provides an opportunity to reevaluate the partnership and potentially extend membership to other entities, thereby increasing the future employment prospects and positive outcomes of veterans enrolled in the Chapter 31 program.

***PARTICIPANTS AND OUTCOMES OF VETERANS ENROLLED IN THE JOINT PARTNERSHIP***

The following table compares data for FY 2017 and FY 2018 using the reporting tool implemented in FY 2017. The emphasis on referring veterans for LMI to be used in development of the IWRP provided these veterans specific information on job opportunities expected to be most in demand based on his or her unique circumstances and location. Although there is an 18.28% decrease in the number of veterans being considered rehabilitated compared to last year, the rehabilitation rate has remained stable and the average hourly entry wage for

those veterans considered rehabilitated was \$21.23, a \$0.90 or 4.43% increase over FY 2017. There were 2,628 total cases closed for other than LMI or employment in FY 2018, a 25.78% decrease as compared to FY 2017. The reporting tool expanded case closure options, increasing the ability to delineate specific impacts within the data outside of employment. The number of veterans who entered other-than-suitable employment was 165, a 6.45% increase over FY 2017 and the number of veterans who met VA’s definition of being rehabilitated decreased by 339 or 1.53%. In addition, there was a decrease of 491 unresponsive closures over FY 2017, representing 45.02% of all non-rehabilitation and unsuitable employment closures. These data indicate that moving forward, all parties need to emphasize the value of working with the SA, principally the Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists.

**Table 12. FY 2017 and 2018 VR&E Outcomes (number of participants or wages)<sup>21</sup>**

Category	FY 2017	FY 2018	Number Difference	Percent Change
Veterans Referred from VR&E	11,735	16,134	4,401	38%
Referred for LMI	5,871	11,692	5,821	99%
Referred for Employment Services	5,864	4,442	-1,420	-24%
Carried In from previous year’s participation	2,855	2,705	-150	-5%
Closed Cases (other than LMI or employment):				
Financial Disincentive	51	16	-35	-69%
Family Responsibilities	39	35	-5	-13%
Medical Reasons	153	135	-17	-11%
Not Satisfied with Services	47	23	-24	-51%
Exceeded 18 Months in Job Ready Status	268	232	-36	13%
Incarcerated	2	2	0	0%
Pursuing Self-Employment	44	49	5	11%
Returned to Active Duty	5	3	-2	-40%
Deceased	3	2	-1	33%
Moved Out of State	201	163	-38	19%
Unable to Locate or Unresponsive Veteran	1,672	1,183	-491	29%
Unwilling or Unable to Relocate for Employment	9	7	-2	22%
School (furthering education)	382	270	-112	29%
Closed, Other*	663	508	-155	23%
<b>Total Closed Cases (other than LMI or employment)</b>	<b>3,539</b>	<b>2,628</b>	<b>-913</b>	<b>-26%</b>
Entered Other Than Suitable Employment	155	165	10	6%
Rehabilitated	1,854	1,515	-339	-18%
Avg. Entry Hourly Wage For Those Cons. Rehab.	\$20.33	\$21.23	\$0.90	4%

\*Includes employment prior to referral, Maximum Rehabilitation Gained (MRG), and declined AJC services.

<sup>21</sup> As reported in the Veterans’ Employment and Training Service Operations and Program Activity Report (VOPAR) System, National VR&E Quarter Data Report.



## X. Online and Electronic Tools

### **DOL VETS Website:** <http://www.dol.gov/vets>

Provides information on DOL VETS' programs and policies in support of the mission to serve America's transitioning service members, veterans, spouses, and caregivers by preparing them for meaningful careers, providing employment resources and expertise, protecting their employment rights and promoting their employment opportunities.

### **Veterans.gov:** <http://www.veterans.gov>

VETERANS.GOV is designed to be the virtual “first stop” in the employment search process for veterans, transitioning service members, and their spouses—and for employers in the hiring process. Through VETERANS.GOV, employers receive personalized assistance in finding and employing veterans. VETERANS.GOV provides an easy format for veterans to connect with federal, state and other resources and provides assistance to employers seeking to employ veterans.

### **Military Spouses Portal**

Part of the DOL VETS main site, <https://www.veterans.gov/milspouses/> is a public resource designed to assist active duty military spouses obtain licenses and credentials when transitioning across state lines. Specifically, military spouses can search directly on the portal for guidelines and state laws on professional licensing, including information on how occupational licenses from one state can be recognized in another. The page features a map that highlights which states offer temporary licensing, expedited licensing, or licensure by endorsement for relocating spouses. Military spouses can also find specific points of contact for each licensing board with the state they are moving to, providing them a direct contact to ensure smooth transition of their license.

### **HIRE Vets Medallion Program:** <http://www.hirevets.gov>

Provides information and facilitates the application system for the Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing (HIRE) American Military Veterans Medallion Program. The Program recognizes employer efforts to recruit, employ, and retain veterans. Employer-applicants meeting criteria established in the rule will receive a “HIRE Vets Medallion Award.”

### **Online Advisors:** <http://www.dol.gov/elaws/>

In FY 2018, VETS continued to support established e-laws Advisors on the Department's e-laws website. These Advisors mimic the interaction a person might have with an employment law expert and provide assistance with filing complaints under each of these laws. Two of these Advisors were mentioned earlier in this report:

- **USERRA Advisor** (<http://www.dol.gov/elaws/userra.htm>)
- **Veterans' Preference Advisor** (<http://www.dol.gov/elaws/vetspref.htm>)

VETS maintains two additional e-laws Advisors:

- **Veterans' Employment and Career Transition Advisor** (<http://www.dol.gov/elaws/realifelines.htm>) – This Advisor provides valuable

information and access to contact information for one-on-one employment assistance and online resources to assist transitioning service members and veterans in their reintegration into the civilian workforce.

- **e-VETS Resource Advisor** (<http://www.dol.gov/elaws/evets.htm>)  
This Advisor assists veterans, transitioning service members, and all those who support them to quickly and easily navigate information and resources on a range of topics, including benefits and compensation; education and training; employment; family and caregiver support; health; homeless assistance; transportation and travel; and state-specific information and resources. This Advisor integrates with the National Resource Directory, a web-based directory of more than 11,000 national, state, and local services for veterans, service members, and their families and caregivers.

### **The Veteran and Military Transition Center**

(<https://www.careeronestop.org/Veterans/default.aspx>) and **My Next Move for Veterans** (<https://www.mynextmove.org/vets/>) are two collections of easy-to-use online tools for transitioning service members, allowing them to search for continuing education providers, employment resources, and veteran benefit & assistance programs. The tools also allow transitioning service members and veterans to search for employment by military occupation specialty, and provide access to the online employment toolkit.

### **TAP Employment Workshop eBook**

DOL provides TAP Employment Workshop participants the opportunity to download, at no cost, the [DOL Employment Workshop eBook](#). The Department encourages all participants to download the content for preview before the course is taken, as well as to keep for post-course reference.

### **National Veterans Training Institute**

The website <https://nvti.org> was developed as a resource to provide information on courses offered, application and tuition costs, and travel information; a repository for helpful DOL and VETS links; and a place to visit to see recent veteran-related workforce news, such as monthly unemployment rates and academic credits provided for military experience.

## **XI. Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach (ACVETEO)**

ACVETEO is a Congressionally-mandated advisory committee authorized under 38 U.S.C. § 4110 and is subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). The ACVETEO shall:

- assess the employment and training needs of veterans and their integration into the workforce;
- determine the extent to which the programs and activities of the Department are meeting such needs;
- assist the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training

(ASVET) in carrying out outreach activities to employers with respect to the training and skills of veterans and the advantages afforded employers by hiring veterans;

- make recommendations to the Secretary, through the ASVET, with respect to outreach activities and employment and training needs of veterans; and
- carry out such other activities deemed necessary to making required reports and recommendations.

In FY 2018, ACVETEO met all Title 38 requirements by conducting four quarterly meetings and submitting the FY 2018 ACVETEO Annual Report to Congress on time. The recommendations in the Annual Report will help DOL improve employment programs for transitioning service members, veterans and their spouses. The Annual Report is available at: <https://www.dol.gov/vets/aboutvets/advisorycommittee.htm>.

## **Appendix I: VETS FY 2018 Learning Agenda – Ongoing Projects**

Below are items in VETS' five-year Learning Agenda, developed in coordination with the Chief Evaluation Office (CEO). The items listed below represent ongoing evaluations during FY 2018.

### **Recently Completed Projects**

#### **1. Institutional Analysis of American Job Centers**

This study's purpose is to thoroughly understand and document the institutional characteristics of AJCs, including activities funded through WIA and through other sources of funding. A number of studies have been conducted on certain aspects of AJCs, previously known as One-Stop Career Centers. However, there is a need to fully understand the administrative and service delivery processes used in AJCs. To further our knowledge of and research on the public workforce system, this institutional analysis will combine administrative data analysis with in-depth implementation analysis of AJCs.

This report was completed in 2018. See <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/KeyFeaturesAJCs.pdf>

#### **2. Accessibility of American Job Centers for Persons with Disabilities (including veterans)**

This study evaluates the accessibility status of AJCs and the ways that the public workforce system is serving people with disabilities, including veterans. Another purpose of the study is to generate valid and reliable data on the extent to which the workforce development system complies with Federal accessibility regulations.

This report was completed in 2017. See <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/AJC-Accessibility-Study.pdf>

#### **3. Veteran Employment Services and Outcomes - Research Study Design**

The purpose of this project is to develop a research study design that meets the legislative requirements of Section 502, Jeff Miller and Richard Blumenthal Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2016. The design will identify a rigorous approach to studying 3 groups of veterans over a five-year period of time: (1) veterans who received intensive services through an American Job Center, (2) veterans who did not receive intensive services but who otherwise received services at an American Job Center, and (3) veterans who neither sought nor received services at an American Job Center.

The two reports for this project were completed in 2018. See <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/VETS-EDOR.pdf> and <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/VETS-KDR.pdf>

### **Ongoing Projects or Research under Way**

#### **1. Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program Impact Evaluation Study**

The goals for this study are to evaluate the effectiveness of Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) on participants' employment outcomes, using the most rigorous design feasible (experimental or quasi-experimental methods); and to conduct an implementation evaluation to understand program models and variations, partnerships, and the homeless veterans served.

## **2. Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Department of Labor Employment Workshop (Phase II)**

The TAP evaluation will test the base hypothesis of the program: the TAP DOL Employment Workshop reduces the number of weeks participants spend unemployed between separation from the military and entry to their first civilian job. Additionally, the evaluation will assess the differential effects of enhancements to TAP program workshops on employment outcomes.

To test the hypothesis, the study team will utilize data from the Army, linked with wage data from the National Directory of New Hires, which will require a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Department Of Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Department Of Defense (United States Military Academy, West Point). The MOU remains under review, but upon its execution, the analysis will be undertaken and analysis completed by summer 2019.

## **3. Evaluation of Email Messaging to Increase Engagement of Transitioning Service Members to AJCs**

This study will be piloted in two sites to test the use of emails as a way to improve the connection and engagement of transitioning service members to AJCs. The email messages will be sent to transitioning service members during their TAP participation, shortly before they plan to exit the military, and after they exit the military.

## **4. Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) Evidence Building and Implementation Study**

RESEA is an initiative that provides funds for states to better link the unemployed with the overall workforce system by bringing individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits into American Job Centers. Transitioning veterans receiving UCX are a target population for the RESEA program. This study will identify options for developing and applying tiered evidence standards to RESEA interventions; examine approaches for identifying evidence-based RESEA service delivery strategies and practices; examine the current state of the evidence of RESEA and its components; describe how RESEA is being implemented; describe the types and packages of services provided under current RESEA programs; describe the common components of RESEA programs that appear to be effective or promising; and identify options for DOL and states to consider for building the evidence base and filling gaps in the literature.