

# Utah Jobs for Veterans State Grant



DEPARTMENT OF  
**WORKFORCE  
SERVICES**

## MODIFICATION PLAN



Program Year 2020 — Program Year 2023  
Submitted August 2020  
State Veterans' Program Plan Narrative

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## INTRODUCTION

*How the State intends to provide employment, training, and job placement services to veterans and eligible persons under the JVSG*

Veteran Employment Services is a diverse set of services delivered through the Utah Department of Workforce Services (Workforce Services) with the intent of assisting our veteran job seekers obtaining and retaining employment. The Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) funds the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists, the Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) staff, and the Consolidated DVOP and LVER positions. In accordance with VPL 3-14 changes 1-2 and VPL 3-19 their responsibilities for employment, training, and job placement services are outlined as follows:

### EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

#### 1) DVOP Specialist

- Individualized career services
  - ♦ Comprehensive and specialized assessment
  - ♦ Employment planning
  - ♦ Career planning
  - ♦ Career counseling
- Customer follow-up and engagement
- Referrals to outside community partners
- Job development
- United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program coordination

#### 2) LVER

- Develop relationships with employers who are interested in hiring veterans
- Job development

- Recruitment assistance
- Educate/train employers and employer associations:
- Veteran employment law
- Incentives for hiring veterans
  - ♦ Federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)
  - ♦ Utah Veteran Employment Tax Credit (UVETC)
- Develop and promote:
  - ♦ United States Department of Labor (DOL) Veterans' Employment and Training Services (VETS) Hire Vet Medallion Program participation
  - ♦ Utah Patriot Partner (UPP) Program participation
- Job and resource fairs
- Employer online and employment center recruitments

### 3) Consolidated DVOP and LVER

- Individualized career services
  - ♦ Comprehensive and specialized assessment
  - ♦ Employment planning
  - ♦ Career planning
  - ♦ Career counseling
- Referrals to outside community partners
- Job development
- VR&E coordination
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- Recruitment assistance
- Educate/train:
- Veteran employment law
- Incentives for hiring veterans
  - ♦ WOTC
  - ♦ UVETC
- Develop, promote:
  - ♦ DOL VETS Hire Vet Medallion Program participation
  - ♦ UPP Program participation
- Job and resource fairs
- Employer online and employment center recruitments

## TRAINING

### 1) DVOP Specialist

- Job Connection Workshops
  - ♦ Job Search Strategies
  - ♦ Networking
  - ♦ Resume Writing
  - ♦ Interviewing
  - ♦ Professionalism in the Workplace

- Work Success workshop
- Referral and coordination with:
  - ♦ Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
  - ♦ Wagner Peyser services
  - ♦ Family Employment Program (FEP)
  - ♦ VR&E
  - ♦ Utah Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
  - ♦ Accelerated Credentialing to Employment (ACE)

### 2) LVER

- Development of apprenticeships, internships, and on-the-job training experiences.
- Employer seminars
- Federal contractor assistance
- Veteran resource and Infinity Group assistance
- Job placement

### 3) Consolidated DVOP and LVER

- Job connection workshops
  - ♦ Job search strategies
  - ♦ Networking
  - ♦ Resume writing
  - ♦ Interviewing
  - ♦ Professionalism in the workplace
- Work Success workshop
- Referral and coordination with:
  - ♦ Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
  - ♦ Wagner Peyser services
  - ♦ Family Employment Program (FEP)
  - ♦ VR&E
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- Job placement

## **JOB PLACEMENT**

### **1) DVOP Specialist (eligible spouse as needed)**

- Registration for job seeking
- Provision of priority of service
- Assist with the training of priority of service
- Labor exchange
- Labor market information

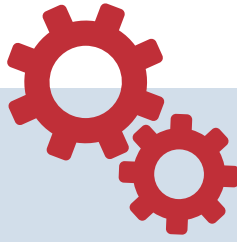
### **2) LVER**

- Worksite visits
- Coordination with federal contractors

### **3) Consolidated DVOP and LVER**

- Registration for job seeking
- Provision of priority of service
- Assist with the training of priority of service
- Labor exchange
- Labor market information
- Worksite visits
- Coordination with federal contractors
- Rural employer and veteran employment assistance





## SPECIAL DUTIES

*The duties assigned to DVOP specialists and LVER staff by the State; specifically implementing DVOP and LVER duties or roles and responsibilities as outlined in 38 U.S.C. § 4103A and 4104; these duties must be consistent with current guidance.*

### **DVOP Specialist**

The primary duty of the DVOP specialist is to provide Individualized Career Services (ICS) to those eligible veterans and eligible spouses who have a significant barrier to employment (SBE) or are a member of an additional population identified by the Secretary as eligible for services (outlined in Eligible Veterans section below). The provision of individualized career services includes the provision of any of the following services:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs
- The development, implementation, and monitoring of an individualized Employment Plan that describes negotiated actions to achieve the veteran's employment goal
- Individual or group counseling or career planning
- Short-term pre-vocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct, to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training
- Follow-up contact and offer of services

The provision of individualized career services takes place using the case management approach as taught by the National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI). This, at a minimum, requires the completion of an assessment and the development of an individual employment plan.

Additionally, the DVOP specialists conduct outreach activities to identify potential eligible veterans and eligible spouses who may be in need of individualized career services to obtain, or retain employment. We encourage these job seekers to register or apply, as appropriate, for services. Outreach services are provided on-site on a scheduled basis or at events within the local communities for the purposes of locating veterans with SBEs. DVOP specialists will use existing Workforce Services databases (of veterans being served by Workforce Services for other purposes) to identify opportunities to offer their services to those who appear to have SBEs. This is referred to as Proactive Service Offers.

Every Employment Center has staff assigned to Workforce Services Connection Teams to provide employment exchange services to all job seekers that walk into the center. Workforce Services uses a comprehensive approach to provide services to veterans. The Connection Teams are trained to assist veteran job seekers in the provision of employment



exchange or basic career services. One Connection Team member is identified as the Veteran Subject Matter Expert (SME). The SME receives more in depth training in providing services to veterans and to serve as a resource to the remaining Connection Team members.

The Connection Teams also identify those job seekers who require individualized career services. When an eligible veteran or eligible spouse is identified and has an SBE as outlined in Section E below, the Connection Team member completes a referral to the local DVOP specialist.

Those job seekers who require individualized career services, but either do not meet the definitions of an eligible veteran or eligible spouse or do not meet the criteria as outlined in Section E below, are referred to other Workforce Services employees trained in the provision of individualized career and training services.

## **LVER**

Workforce Services utilizes one full-time LVER position and a Consolidated DVOP and LVER position to meet the requirements of Title 38, Section 4104 of the U.S. Code. Workforce Services is able to meet these requirements as the agency leverages the services of other Workforce Services employees and the Workforce Development Specialists, combined with the services of the LVER.

The LVER has the following duties:

- Serves as the statewide point of contact for employers with questions about hiring veterans
- Collaborates and trains the Workforce Development Specialists in the processes, incentives, and coordination of services to employers hiring veterans
- Serves as a statewide point of contact for employer referrals from the Utah Director of Veterans' Employment and Training Services and the Regional LVER
- Coordinates Workforce Services efforts for all statewide, and assists with all local, job/career fairs that target veteran job seekers



The Connection Teams also identify those job seekers who require individualized career services.

- Coordinates the implementation and promotion of the Utah Patriot Partnership (UPP) program with participating Utah employers, including the promotion of ‘beyond the pledge’ activities and services as explained in Section C below
- Assists in the development and publication of policies and materials that can be used by the Economic Services Areas (geographical operational areas organized around economic drivers – Workforce Services has nine Economic Service Areas) to promote the hiring and retention of veterans

The LVER is centrally located at the Workforce Services Administration Building in Salt Lake City and supervised by the Workforce Services Chief of Veteran Services. The LVER coordinates their activities and works closely with the Economic Service Area’s



The LVER uses a wide range of activities to develop relationships with employers in conjunction with the Workforce Development Specialists.

assigned Workforce Development Specialists and the Consolidated DVOP/ LVER.

Within Workforce Services, the Workforce Development Specialists serve as the main points of contact between employers and Workforce Services. The LVER joins the Workforce Development Specialists to promote the benefits of hiring veteran and veteran spouses with all employers and ensures that the employers interested in hiring veterans are served.

The LVER uses a wide range of activities to develop relationships with employers in conjunction with the Workforce Development Specialists, the LVER contacts employers in person, using the telephone, mail and electronic media. He or she attends trade association meetings, employer conferences, job and information fairs to foster and maintain connections with employers. The expected outcomes are to develop job openings for veterans, make employers aware of the advantages in hiring veterans, and develop relationships with employers that will benefit veterans in the future.

### **Consolidated DVOP and LVER**

Workforce Services has one Consolidated DVOP and LVER position in the Mountainland Service Area. The intent with this position is two-fold. Firstly, they provide services to employers in Juab, Summit, and Wasatch counties and other less populated counties within the Service area as well as in less populated counties across the Eastern, Central and Southern areas of the state. Secondly, they more closely align Work Ready veteran job seekers with the recruitment needs of local employers. The Consolidated DVOP and LVER position allows for both close coordination between the employers and the veterans throughout the Service Area.

The Consolidated DVOP and LVER works in collaboration with Mountainland Service Area Workforce Development Specialists and the statewide LVER position. The collaboration ensures consistency in the provision of services to employers and the successful implementation of UPP pledge and beyond the pledge activities.





## PROGRAMS AND STATEWIDE INTEGRATION

*The manner in which DVOP specialists and LVER staff are integrated into the State's employment service delivery system or American Job Center*

**W**orkforce Services is a large state agency composed of many federal and state funded programs. The mission of the department is to strengthen Utah's communities by supporting the economic stability and quality of our workforce. The work of the department is organized around four cornerstones: operational excellence, exceptional customer services, employee success, and community connections. Additionally, Workforce Services has identified four target populations: veterans, refugees, homeless individuals, and individuals with disabilities.

Multiple divisions of Workforce Services provide services to veterans, active serving military members, and their spouses, but employment services are primarily provided through the Workforce Development Division. The Workforce Development Division is operationally organized into Economic Service Areas and further into Employment Centers. Each Employment Center is structured using the American Job Center concept as outlined in WIOA. The DVOP specialists and the Consolidated DVOP and LVER position are co-located throughout the Employment Centers. They serve along the side of and are fully integrated with our employment center staff. As customers are screened upon entry into our centers, eligibility is conducted, allowing a seamless

referral process for both our customers and our DVOP. Having this collective and united staffing approach our DVOP is a critical element and readily available to provide the necessary services to eligible customers.

Co-location in each Employment Centers throughout the state allows each DVOP specialist to be part of the team that provides services to veterans. It allows the Job Connection Team of each Employment Center to ensure each veteran job seeker is screened to receive all supportive services available within the center and that they are referred to all services provided by all governmental agencies and community based organizations in each area.

Services to employers are also provided through the Workforce Development Division. The Workforce Development Specialists are assigned to work within the Economic Service Area. There are currently thirteen Workforce Development Specialists across Utah. The LVER works in close coordination with each Workforce Development Specialist, with specific responsibilities of veteran employment, training, and job placement. This relationship allows concentrated coordination and consistent collaboration that is of benefit to our employers, our DVOP specialists, and our veterans.

Each month our LVER attends each Economic Service Areas respective veteran employment team meetings. Members of this team consist of the DVOPs, LVER, ACE specialists, Workforce Development Specialists and service area leadership. It is within this forum that coordination is made with an update on veteran case load activities, coordination and status of veteran job development activities and any employer outreach and training. This meeting creates the standard for quality case management and consistent action and messaging, both internal to the service area, as well as with external partners and employers. Furthermore, the LVER uses this meeting to coordinate veteran events and activities that cross Economic Service Area boundaries, as well as update or receive information from the Workforce Development Specialists in regards to the Utah Patriot Partnership (described below). The Workforce Development Specialists and LVER strive to build and maintain relationships with local employers.

In addition to the JVSG, Workforce Services Veteran Employment Services consists of the provision of priority of services by all Workforce Development Division staff, the Accelerated Credentialing to Employment program (ACE), the Utah Patriot Partnership Program, the Hilton Honors Military Reward Program, plus the collaboration and coordination with Utah military installations, military and veteran service providers and community partners, and other partners. Workforce Services maintains and funds the full-time positions of Chief of Veteran Services, State Program Specialist for Veterans Employment Services, and the Intensive Services Coordinator with non-JVSG resources.

## ACE PROGRAM

The Accelerated Credentialing to Employment (ACE) program began in July 2012 and was designed to provide assistance and services to veterans and spouses who do not have a SBE or are not a member of an additional population for services from a DVOP specialist. Their primary focus has been working with members of the Utah National Guard and Reserve units. ACE is a state-funded program and consists of four full-time and one part-time ACE Specialists.

The ACE specialists split their time between conducting outreach activities, primarily attending National Guard or Reserve unit weekend drills, leadership meetings, and post-deployment activities. They also provide case management services for ACE participants to obtain needed credentials that would assist the participant in obtaining employment.



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The ACE specialists and DVOP specialists must coordinate their services continuously as often the job seeker must be referred to the other specialist for services and to ensure a seamless transition for the veteran job seeker between specialists.

The ACE program also keeps track of jobs in demand to ensure that veterans are trained in occupations that will lead to employment. This process leads to job-driven training and outreach to employers that are needing new technology driven skills and workers willing to learn these new skills, such as veterans. UWORKS, the Workforce Services job matching system, provides guidance available to veterans, employment center staff and DVOP specialists to find the best jobs for veterans. Workforce Services has a large number of publications and information for veterans that describe the services available to assist them with employment.

## UTAH PATRIOT PARTNERSHIP



The Utah Patriot Partnership (UPP) program is an employer recognition program launched by Workforce Services in 2011. The purpose of UPP was to recognize employers who were willing to pledge the hiring of qualified veterans over qualified non-veteran applicants. Currently over 2,600 employers have “made the pledge” and joined UPP. For their participation, employers are provided a signed certificate from the Governor (suitable for framing) and window decal indicating their participation at their place of business. The easy-to-identify ‘star’ symbol is placed next to the employer’s name within the jobs.utah.gov and the UWORKS system, indicating to veterans and Workforce Services staff that they are a UPP employer. Many of our partners are relied upon and utilized for veteran employment.

Beginning in the spring of 2021, the UPP program is being expanded to promote and solicit the participation of employers to go ‘beyond the pledge’ by completing activities that encourage both the hiring of veterans and the retention of veteran employees. Examples of ‘beyond the pledge’ activities include the development of company policies that support employees in the National Guard and Reserve, the development of a company Veteran Employee Resource Group, and the establishment of goals for the hiring of veteran and their spouses.

The LVER ensures the promotion of UPP on a statewide level and distributes the ‘Welcome’ Packets to the local Workforce Development Specialists for new UPP employers. The Workforce Development Specialist makes contact with the employer to determine the best method to recognize their participation in UPP, deliver the ‘Welcome’ packet, explain the ‘beyond the pledge’ activities, and review the company’s hiring expectations and strategies for hiring veterans.

Additionally, the LVER and Workforce Development Specialists promote, assist, and encourage our employers to apply for the DOL VETS Hire Vet Medallion Program. We want employers to be recognized nationally as those who have employed and retained veterans, established employee development programs for veterans, and offered veteran-specific benefits to improve retention. Information about the HIRE Vets Medallion Program is included on our Veteran page on jobs.utah.gov as well as presented to employers as part of UPP.

## HILTON HONORS MILITARY REWARD PROGRAM



The Hilton Honors Military Reward Program provides up to 100,000 hotel points to eligible transitioning service members and veterans to support needed travel for verifiable employment related activities, such as a job search, training for a new job, or finding housing. Workforce Services launched a partnership



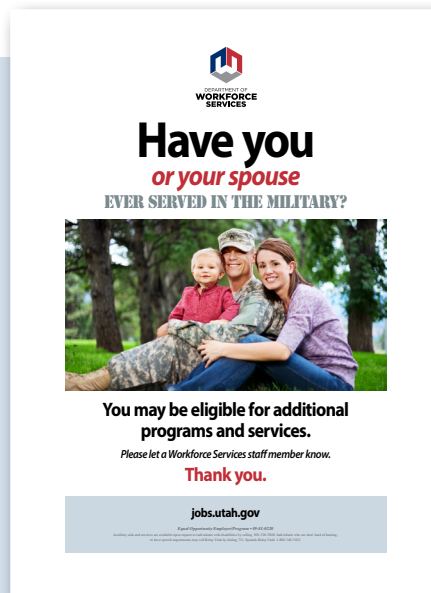
The Utah Employment Coalition for Veterans, Military Service Members, and their Families conducts multiple Veteran Career and Benefit Fairs throughout the state.

with the Hilton Honors Military Rewards Program in 2017 and includes those who have served in the Armed Forces, National Guard, spouse of a veteran or Guard or Reserve member and resident of or planning to move to Utah. Workforce Services follows up with the veteran or spouse and offers services if needed, including referrals to the local DVOP Specialist.

## PARTNERSHIPS

- **Utah Employment Coalition for Veterans, Military Service Members and Their Families.** Workforce Services maintains relationships with the VA and the Utah Department of Veteran and Military Affairs (UDVMA) to ensure each veteran receives up-to-date information about the services available through those resources. In 2011 these agencies, in collaboration with the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, several local chambers of commerce, and other interested partners formed the Utah Employment Coalition for Veterans, Military Service Members, and their Families. The Coalition conducts multiple Veteran Career and Benefit Fairs throughout the state. Workforce Services is an active member of this coalition and supports all of these events through promotional efforts, assistance with administration and planning, often staffing a booth about Veteran Employment Services, and development of year-to-year strategies. Through this coalition, we established and still actively participate in a number of committees and meetings that provide opportunities and benefits for our veteran and military communities.
- **The OEF/OIF coordination meeting.** Once a month, partners from each level of the government, including legislative liaisons, along with non-profit organizations, medical providers, and other parties who provide services to veterans meet collectively and discuss opportunities, new and updated programs, and events available to our veterans and military members.
- **Utah State Military and Veteran Affairs Legislative Commission.** The commission is composed of state legislative, community service, veteran service organizations, military and business community leaders. It is through this commission that our state prepares for the upcoming legislative session.
- **Salt Lake Military Advisory Committee (MAC).** The committee in partnership with the Salt Lake Chamber is made up of active and reserve military leaders throughout the state, veteran service organizations, DOL and State veteran employment representatives, local business leaders, and military and veteran associations. The

Posters for our Employment Centers were updated earlier this year to remind veterans about the services for which they and their spouses could be eligible.



committee focuses on building relationships between military installations and businesses by increasing awareness through monthly briefings and tours. This is an open committee.

- **Veteran Service Organizations.** Throughout our state, our veteran employment services participate in area specific meetings. It is through and with these organizations that we are able to disseminate information, promote programs, and increase opportunities for our veterans and their families.
- **Utah Department of Veteran and Military Affairs Veteran Service Officer Partnership.** Our UDVMA uses our employment centers throughout the state to meet with and assist veterans with their Department of Veteran Affairs disability claims. Times and locations are published online and widely distributed throughout the community. It is through this partnership that we are also able to assist veterans with employment needs. This collaboration effort has and will continue to provide great opportunities for our veterans.
- **Hill Air Force Base Collaboration.** In our Clearfield Employment Center, our staff

partners with Hill Air Force Base. Through this partnership, we host job events for contractors on base, assist transition service members and spouses with employment training, services, and assistance. In addition, our staff attend the scheduled Transitional Assistance Program (TAP) courses and have an active role with the Family Readiness Group.

- **Department Veteran Sub-Committee.** From the direction of our Executive Director’s office, we have assembled key staff members with representatives from every division, each of our five economic service areas, operations and policy training. On an annual basis, during our annual conference, both directors from UDVMA and Workforce Services put out their “Calls to Action” for our veteran team. These calls to action are goals aligned to specific data points where we want to see improvement. It is through this committee that we develop strategy and tactics, share best practices, and ideas on how to best achieve the department’s goals and objectives. The committee meets remotely on a monthly basis.
- **Utah Veteran Training Conference.** Annually, Utah requests to use JVSG funds to hold our



yearly training conference. This conference is an opportunity for our JVSG staff, our supervisors, managers, and department leadership to meet collectively and conduct training, collaborate with one another, and share best practices. In addition, we bring in our partners to share their programs, new or updated opportunities and to build on our united commitment to provide quality service to our veteran community across the state. Moreover, during the training our staff will have direct discussion points of how to sustain quality services to veterans with significant barriers to employment. Our Executive Director speaks to

our collective staff to charge and motivate them to continue our quality service, plus assign next program year Calls to Action on specific points to reinforce our commitment of service to our veteran populations.

The Workforce Services leadership team, along with the Workforce Development Specialists, is involved with the Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development, the Chambers of Commerce and other employer groups. Through these groups and the Workforce Services Workforce Research and Analysis Division, Workforce Services keeps abreast of new employers and expanding industries in Utah.



## INCENTIVE PROGRAM

### **Address the objectives to be achieved through the state's incentive awards program**

Workforce Services uses the Incentive Awards Program to recognize employees that provide exceptional service to veterans. One objective of the program is to encourage our employees to be more attentive to the needs of our veterans and to motivate them to provide each veteran with outstanding quality service. Furthermore, a second and equally important goal is to ensure that there is continuous improvement to our overall system of providing services to veterans throughout the department.

The department has in has three unique levels of Veterans Performance Incentive Awards that are funded independently of other incentive programs within the department. These veterans' program specific awards are the Service to Veterans Award,

the Eagle Award, and the Stars and Stripes Award for Service to Veterans.

- **Service to Veterans Award:** The Service to Veterans Award is given to employees throughout the state by our Division leadership. Any Workforce Services employees that is nominated for providing direct services to veterans are submitted through each division pathway. Each Division will have an allotment of Service to Veterans Awards to award during the performance year. The Service to Veterans Award is a \$125 cash award.
- **The Eagle Award:** Five Eagle Awards are given annually for excellence in service to veteran customers. All Service to Veteran recipients will be considered for these awards. A committee of division representatives will be formed to review all Service to Veteran





recipient nominations and select five Eagle Award recipients by August 15 of each year. The Eagle Award is a \$500 cash award, an Eagle Statue, accompanied by a framed certificate. This award is presented at the annual Veterans Training Conference.

- **Stars and Stripes Award for Services to Veterans:** The Stars and Stripes Award for Services to Veterans is a single award presented by the Executive Director at the annual Veterans Training Conference. This award is a department-wide award and is presented to the most deserving of the Eagle Award recipients

as determined by an awards committee, which is comprised of the Department Assistant Deputy Director, a Division Director, the Chief of Veteran Services, the State Program Specialist for Veteran Employment Services, and the Director of Veterans' Employment and Training Service in Utah. The decision is made primarily from the information provided during the Eagle Award process. The Stars and Stripes Award is a \$750 cash award and an accompanying U.S. Flag, encased in a glass flag case and engraved to highlight the achievement of the recipient.



## ELIGIBLE VETERANS

*The populations of eligible veterans to be served, including any additional populations designated by the Secretary as eligible for services, and any additional populations specifically targeted by the State Workforce Agency for services from one-stop delivery system partners (e.g., Native American veterans; veterans in remote rural counties or parishes)*

### SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

Utah has identified the following Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE). If an eligible veteran or eligible spouse has one of these SBEs and requires individualized career services to obtain or retain employment, they are served by the DVOP specialists in accordance with the most recent federal guidance.

#### Disabled Veteran

Workforce Services defines a disabled veteran as a special disabled or disabled veteran who 1) is entitled to compensation or, but for the receipt of military retired pay, would be entitled to compensation under the laws administered by the United State Department of Veteran Affairs (VA); 2) was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability; 3) has a disability rating of 30% or higher provided by the VA or a military service issued disability determination; or 4) any veteran who attests to having a disability claim pending with the VA.

Our main outreach to disabled veterans is completed through our partnership with the VA's VR&E Office in Salt Lake City. One Workforce Services employee is the assigned Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC) to coordinate services and serve the needs of all shared veteran customers. This includes:

- Providing an overview of DVOP services during the weekly VR&E Orientations
- Screens and refers veterans to Workforce Services programs and services
- Assists with VR&E's Initial Rehabilitation Planning by providing labor market information on potential employment goals and coordinating apprenticeship and on-the-job training placements
- Refers veterans to the local DVOP specialists for employment services when employment is needed during the implementation and completion of the Rehabilitation Plan and or when the veteran is determined to be Job Ready

- Monitors VR&E Job Ready referrals and serves as a point of contact between VR&E and Workforce Services
- Provides VR&E counselors monthly reports that are completed by DVOP specialists and then updates the DVOP specialist of all VR&E case closures

The partnership between VR&E and Workforce Services is governed by a VPL 01-16 and GOM 03-17. Additionally, Workforce Services provides operational guidance to the local DVOP specialists regarding the provision of services to all VR&E referrals.

All eligible veterans, transitional service members, and Reserve/National Guard have the opportunity to self-identify upon initial contact with Workforce Services, or at any time thereafter, as a disabled veteran. For self-attestation, Workforce Services workers have been trained to identify the level of services that the individual needs and to determine if the level of services qualifies as an individualized career service before the individual is referred to the local DVOP specialist. If the level of services needed is other than individualized career services, the Workforce Services worker has been trained to either assist the veteran or refer the veteran to the appropriate internal and external resources.

### Homeless Veteran

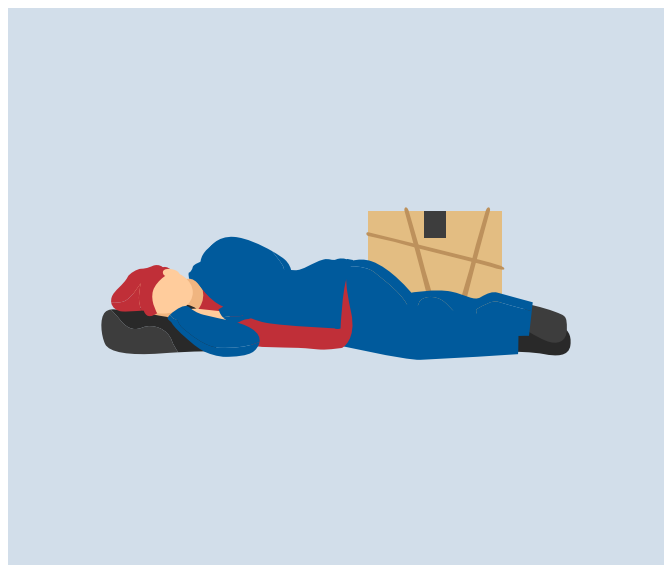
Utah is recognized nationally for its efforts in reducing the numbers of chronically homeless individuals, including homeless veterans. Jon Pierpont, Utah Workforce Services Executive Director, has been a member of the statewide Homeless Coordinating Council from its inception in 2005.

Over the past two years the State of Utah initiated a holistic strategic homeless plan, with an emphasis along the Wasatch front and the downtown Salt Lake City area. This plan involved parties from each level of government, local non-profit organizations, religious organizations, community leaders, and downtown businesses. Representatives from each of these entities

belong to and serve on the Shelter the Homeless board, Utah’s nonprofit board “that serves the public good through the alleviation of human suffering and foster economic well-being.” With land the board had previously purchased at key locations throughout the valley, Shelter the Homeless built their first Homeless Resource Center in the city of Midvale, known as the Midvale Family Shelter.

In 2019, three additional Homeless Resource Centers were developed in the Salt Lake City area, where programs and services are provided to aid homeless individuals and families and promote self-sufficiency. Currently these facilities, along with temporary warming and overflow facilities in the winter months, provide invaluable shelter and services for our citizens and veterans alike. Inside each facility, supportive agencies are on hand to provide services for the clients to achieve their employment goals. Workforce Services has full-time employment counselors at each resource center.

Each customer is screened against the homeless veteran definition. Workforce Services defines a homeless veteran as one who 1) either lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; 2) has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or privately operated shelter for temporary residence, or has a primary nighttime residence that was not designed or ordinarily used for



regular sleeping accommodations; 3) any individual or family who is fleeing, or is attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions in the individual's or family's current housing situation, and who have no other residence and lack the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing. When a veteran or eligible spouse meets the homeless veteran definition and they are in need of individualized career services, they are immediately referred to a DVOP specialist. Workforce Services is able to track the services provided to homeless veterans once they are so identified.

Each fall, Workforce Services staff participates in the annual "Project Homeless Connect." This event is for those experiencing homelessness and helps link them up to resources, provide basic hygiene supplies, plus some medical and dental services. Any veterans or eligible spouses who self-identify are directed to the VA and our veteran employment services booth. We discuss services and available resources with them and invite them into their closest employment center for applicable services.

The number of homeless veterans in Utah has decreased dramatically over the past two years; it has been and will continue to be our goal to reduce the numbers each and every year. We will continue to work collaboratively and collectively with both our partners inside our department and other partner providers throughout our state by providing quality service to eligible veterans and eligible spouses who are homeless.

### **Recently Separated – Unemployed**

A recently separated member (RSM)-unemployed is defined by Workforce Services as a veteran job seeker who has registered for services within 36 months of their military service separation date and who at any point in the previous 12 months has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks.

Workforce Services maintains active relationships with the Utah National Guard and Reserve units throughout the state to ensure that RSMs are greeted and provided

information regarding the employment services available to them. Workforce Services attends and participates in statewide veteran events to coordinate the provision of services, including employment services, to RSMs and spouses.

Many job seekers self-identify as an RSM upon their registration for services with Workforce Services. These veterans are provided services primarily by the Connection Team members in each Employment Center. Each center has a trained veteran subject member expert (SME) as well to assist. If the veteran is a transitioning service member and has experienced long-term unemployment a referral is completed to the local DVOP specialist for individualized career services.

Veterans who are receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits and are scheduled for a reemployment eligibility assessment, are introduced to the local DVOP specialist and offered their services by Unemployment Insurance staff. Furthermore, our employment staff reach out to each Unemployment Insurance veteran recipient that is within four weeks of exhausting their Unemployment Insurance benefit. Both of these efforts have resulted in numerous veterans connecting to Workforce Services Veteran Employment Services and to the appropriate Workforce Services staff members.

Another outreach tactic that our staff continues to use is reaching out to newly registered veterans, transitioning service members, reserve component members, and eligible spouses that create a new profile on our department website. Again, our staff give these new customers information on services available and encourage them to visit their local employment center. Through this effort and the quality service of our staff we continue to see positive results directly affecting our veteran customers.

Historically, in June 2013 we had 1,553 veterans receiving unemployment benefits, as of February 2020 that number is at 640. Moreover, our state unemployment rate continues to be optimistic. In 2014, our state had a veteran unemployment rate of 4.9%, today our rate is below 3%.

## Recently Incarcerated Veterans

Workforce Services defines a Recently Incarcerated Veteran as a veteran who is or has been subjected to any stage of the criminal justice process or requires assistance in overcoming artificial barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction and who has been released from incarceration. A Recently Incarcerated Veteran is considered to have a SBE and, if they are in need of individualized career services, are eligible to be served by the DVOP specialists. Our department along with our state and federal partners attend our state penitentiary release day, which is bi-weekly. At this event, each prisoner is required to visit each provider's booth. At the Workforce Services booth, we explain the services available and the contact information of the closest Employment Center. For those who do follow up at the Employment Center they are screened upon registration for service for DVOP specialist eligibility. Those who meet the requirements are referred to a DVOP specialist for individual career services. We also work closely with our local VA Re-entry Specialist to assist those veterans with their employment goals.

The Veterans Justice Outreach Program is a VA based initiative focused on partnering with local law enforcement, jails and courts to assist eligible veterans access the treatment they need. Utah has four veteran's courts with three in Salt Lake City (federal, district, and another in the Justice court system) and one in Utah County (district). These courts have been an invaluable resource for our veterans. Our department continues to participate in the state's veteran court system. Our DVOP or Veterans Justice Outreach specialist plays an important role in the existing court and will continue to be included as new veterans' courts are established. They specifically work with the veteran and the courts to address any employment issues with employment plans negotiated between each party. Our

DVOP or Veterans Justice Outreach specialist attends court sessions to report on the Veteran's progress.

With direct and constant involvement within the Veteran Courts and with our VA Veterans Justice Outreach partners, veterans greatly increase their opportunity to get back on track, reduce or eliminate any barriers, and are provided a road map to achieving personal economic goals. During the 2020 State Legislative session, House Bill 100 – Veterans Treatment Court Act passed and will go into effect this July. This bill expands the opportunity for the Judicial Council to create additional veteran treatment courts throughout the state. Another testament of the commitment from our state leadership to assist veterans, minimize barriers to maximize employment and self-sufficiency opportunities.



## Lacking a High School Diploma or Equivalent Certificate

This SBE is determined based on the eligible veteran's or eligible other's self-declaration that they do not have a high school diploma or an equivalent certificate. This is an SBE that will not be encountered much with many of today's recently separated members; this is more common among older veterans. This is a harder population of veterans to conduct outreach activities with. Our partnership with the UDVMA however has been instrumental in identifying the veterans and their demographic data in Utah. Using this information, the DVOP specialists are able to conduct targeted outreach activities specifically to veterans with this SBE.

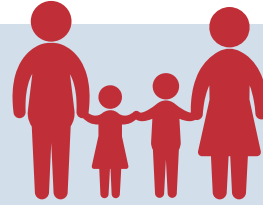
## Low-Income Veteran

A veteran, who received income, or is a member of a family that received a total family income for the previous six-month period prior to the application for services, that in relation to family size does not exceed the higher of the poverty line for an equivalent period, or 70% of the lower living standard income level for



an equivalent period. Upon initial contact with the Employment Center, the job seeker will be given the opportunity to self-identify as having this SBE.

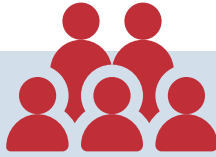
The Connection Team uses an income chart with family size delineations to assist with this self-identification. Additionally, DVOP specialists conduct outreach activities to individuals who receive services from other Workforce Services programs like unemployment insurance benefits, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, financial assistance, or vocational rehabilitation services and because of each respective program income guidelines who could potentially be eligible for their services under this SBE.



The Connection Team uses an income chart with family size delineations to assist with this self-identification. Additionally, DVOP specialists conduct outreach activities to individuals who receive services from other Workforce Services programs.







## ADDITIONAL POPULATIONS

### **Veterans Age 18-24**

Veterans age 18–24 have been identified by the Secretary of Labor as an additional population to receive individualized career services from the DVOP specialists. This guidance was provided in VPL 3-19. In Utah, this age group traditionally has a lower unemployment rate than their older counterparts; regardless, our staff works all angles and options to provide them with the quality services needed for them to reach their economic and employment goals. Additionally, any veteran in this age category receiving other Workforce Services benefits is identified in a monthly list given to our employment center staff to conduct outreach activities. By consistently conducting outreach activities to these veterans, Workforce Services expects to further drop the unemployment rate even lower.

### **Vietnam-era Veteran**

Veterans whose active military service was during the Vietnam era (2/28/1961 - 5/7/1975) if they served in the Republic of Vietnam OR between the dates of 8/5/1964 and 5/7/1975 for all others. There are an estimated 47,000 veterans between the ages of 65 and 84 living in Utah. However due mostly to age, the large majority are not actively seeking employment. When a veteran job seeker identifies as belonging to this group, services are provided at the appropriate level including a referral to a DVOP specialist for individualized career services.

### **Transitioning Service Member**

A transitioning service member is a military service member who is within 12 months of separating or 24 months of retirement from active duty service and 1) has been determined to not meet Career Readiness Standards; 2) is between the age of 18-24, or 3) has been voluntarily separated due to a reduction in force.

### **Wounded — Transitioning Service Member**

A member of the Armed Forces who is wounded, ill or injured and receiving treatment in a military treatment facility or warrior transition unit. There is one military treatment facility in Utah located at Hill Air Force Base (HAFB), but they do not provide treatment to transitioning service members. The closest warrior transition unit is located at Fort Carson, Colorado. We do maintain contact with this facility and with our regional contact of the Army Wounded Warrior program. In addition, we maintain open lines of communication with the HAFB Airman and Family Readiness Center and the Utah National Guard and Reserve Family Assistance Centers to ensure that qualifying veterans are referred to appropriate services.

## **Wounded — Caregiver of a Transitioning Service Member**

A family member (parent, spouse, child, step-family member or extended family member) of a Wounded Service Member or non-family member who lives with a Wounded Service Member and provides personal care services to the Wounded Service Member. As noted above, we maintain open lines of communication with the HAFB Airman and Family Readiness Center and the Utah National Guard and Reserve Family Assistance Centers to ensure that qualifying veterans are referred to appropriate services.

## **Native American Veterans**

Utah has several Native American reservations within its borders. Two of the tribes have a large number of members who live on the reservations. The Navajo Nation lies on the border between Utah and Arizona and the majority of the services available to Navajo tribal members are on the south side of the reservation in Arizona. Navajo veterans and eligible spouses seek services from the Blanding and Moab Employment Centers. These two centers have an excellent relationship with the Navajo Nation and make an extra effort to provide services to Navajo veterans.

The Ute tribe, located in Fort Duchesne, Utah, is the second largest Native American tribe in Utah. Tribal members use both the Roosevelt and Vernal Employment Centers for services. Workforce Services has a DVOP specialist stationed in the Vernal Employment Center that provides individualized career services to the veteran members of the Ute Tribe.

## **Underemployed Veterans**

Another ‘additional population’ that has been identified by Workforce Services are underemployed veterans. Our Employment Centers consistently see walk-in veteran job seekers and our DVOP specialist while doing outreach services consistently locate veterans who are employed, but in need of assistance in finding better employment. Often these job seekers are above the income guidelines outlined above under “Low Income Veterans.” A simple definition of an underemployed veteran is one who is not fully utilizing the education, skills or experience to get a higher paying job, or they might currently lack the skill set they need to get a better job.

These underemployed veterans are often identified while conducting Proactive Service Offers to recipients of Unemployment Insurance benefits, public assistance program (SNAP, Medicaid, etc.), housing assistance, or Vocational Rehabilitation benefits or services. Regardless of how identified these veteran job seekers are referred to the Connection Team Veteran SME for services. If the veteran is in need of individualized career services or training services, the SME will make a referral to the appropriate ACE Specialist or Training Employment Counselor. As a team, these Workforce Services staff members strive to ensure the Underemployed veteran receives the assistance they need.