

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT,  
TRAINING, AND EMPLOYER OUTREACH (ACVETEO)

2022 Final Report

December 1, 2022

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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**  
Veterans' Employment and Training Service  
Washington, DC 20210

December 1, 2022

The Honorable Marty Walsh, Secretary  
U.S Department of Labor  
Frances Perkins Building  
200 Constitution Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20210

Secretary Walsh:

On behalf of the Department of Labor's Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach (ACVETEO), it is my honor to present you with the committee's recommendations for 2022.

Every effort was given to achieve the goal of assisting our military veterans and spouses in a successful transition. This undertaking is at the forefront of the entire team's mind and heart. None of this work could have been completed without the amazing support of the DOL VETS Team.

The committee knows that no stone was left unturned in our work and every request for assistance was provided. This outstanding level of support is to be commended.

Sincerely,

*Darrell L Roberts*

Darrell L Roberts  
Chair, Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach  
Sheetmetal, Air Rail and Transportation Workers Union (SMART) Director of Organizing

## **PART I**

### **Executive Summary**

Congress established the Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach (ACVETEO) in 2007 under the authority of Section 4110 of Title 38, U.S. Code. ACVETEO is a non-discretionary federal advisory committee and is subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C. App.2.

ACVETEO consists of 14 members - a diverse group of veterans from each military branch, as well as the value-added experiences from civilian subject matter experts with extensive experience in employment policy, veterans' services, and workforce development. The committee receives extensive expert support not only from DOL, but also from a number of additional ex-officio members from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Department of Defense (DOD), Small Business Administration (SBA), and Office of Personnel Management.

ACVETEO assesses the employment and training needs of our veterans. Such needs may include transition assistance, protection of employment and reemployment rights, education, skills training, and integration into the workforce, among others, as well as assisting the DOL Assistant Secretary of Veterans' Employment & Training Service (VETS) in outreach activities to employers. ACVETEO is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness with which existing DOL programs deliver required services to America's veterans and, where deficiencies are detected, to recommend appropriate remedial action.

The 2022 report of ACVETEO provides six recommendations and supporting rationales to the Secretary of Labor and Congress to address concerns and issues relevant to employment, training and transition assistance for the military and veteran communities. This year's report focused on three specific areas under the purview of the Department of Labor (DOL):

- Underserved Populations,
- Innovative Veteran Training and Employment
- Service Delivery.

The committee determined from the onset to continue our focus with these three subcommittees.

Our report has three main parts including: (1) this executive summary; (2) a summary of our 2022 recommendations; and (3) a review of the 2022 recommendations with their supporting rationales. We look forward to continuing our important work together on behalf of our veterans and their families.

**PART II**  
**Summary of 2022 Recommendations**

**Underserved Populations**

1. Due to the unknown impact of the Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022 (PL 117-168) on the disabled veteran population, USDOL VETS should either expand the definition of Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) or designate a targeted population eligible for Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) services to any eligible person who falls under the VA Care or Presumption of Care eligibility rules as defined in the Act.
2. USDOL VETS should define **all** workforce populations and demographic sets that are included in USDOL VETS Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) strategy and efforts to cultivate a federal workforce that draws from the full diversity of the Nation and that advances equitable employment opportunities. Once identified, USDOL VETS should include **all available population sets and demographic pockets** in monthly and annual employment situation reports for veterans and nonveterans in the workforce. This information can be used to identify workforce populations with the greatest needs, skills gaps, and areas of successful employment outcomes within the workforce.

**Innovative Veteran Training and Employment**

3. The Department of Labor (DOL) should explore opportunities to engage with their industry partners who participate in Apprenticeship Programs and expand program usage beyond the Apprenticeship Program itself.
  - a. DOD should ensure its corporate partners who leverage the Apprenticeship Program are also aware of and leverage the DOD SkillBridge Program where appropriate.
  - b. DOL should work with counterparts from DOD SkillBridge to do the same for DOD industry partners and ensure they are aware of and leverage the DOL Apprenticeship Program.
  - c. DOL should find more meaningful ways for servicemembers and spouses with disabilities, and spouses in general, to participate in their programs.
4. The Department of Labor (DOL) should expand the ENPP program and increase linkage with TAP, Apprenticeship and SkillBridge for veterans with disabilities, veterans without disabilities and all spouses.

## Service Delivery Subcommittee

5. DOL should set into motion a process for addressing the below listed five elements of the Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002 (JVA) that have yet to be fully implemented and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 to address the extremely low numbers of disabled veterans exiting WIOA Adult with training. It would also begin to address the low outcomes for veterans and disabled veterans exiting job center programs by establishing a formal coordinating mechanism between local veteran owned businesses/local federal contractors and their local job center staff working with veterans. Full implementation would include identifying and rewarding service innovations that are effective in benefiting veterans in obtaining sustainable wages on career tracks and treating them as best practices to be duplicated by other job centers.

The process for developing implementation should include a mechanism for incorporating annual performance reviews of veteran's employment, training, and placement services provided through Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPS), Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs), and WIOA staff working directly with veterans.

In addition, the four-tier enrollment system detailed in TEGl 10-09 (Technical Assistance and Guidance Letter, dated November 10, 2009 - Implementing Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses in all Qualified Job Training Programs Funded in Whole or in Part by the U.S. Department of Labor) should be enforced on both the state and local WIOA levels as well as by VETS on the national level. Monitoring should be performed by VETS and the Departmental agency responsible for the qualified job training program's administration and oversight and locally drafted corrective action plans should be required as the TEGl requires

6. DOL VETS should evaluate the effectiveness of the Employment Navigator and Partnership Pilot (ENPP). Such an evaluation should include a survey of participants of the ENPP to determine, at a minimum, participant satisfaction with their experience and assess employment and earnings outcomes of participants compared to non-participating separating service members, which should be used to help inform: 1) future expansion of the ENPP to new locations and/or a virtual option; and 2) whether the ENPP should be made permanent.

## **PART III**

### **Recommendations and Rationales by Specific Areas: Underserved Populations, Innovative Veteran Training and Employment, and Service Delivery**

#### **Underserved Populations**

As referenced in previous reports, different subpopulations in the broader veteran community experience a variety of barriers and challenges that hinder their ability to fully participate in the civilian workforce. This has been acknowledged in the past by a variety of organizations, including USDOL VETS. For example, USDOL's Employment Navigator Pilot Project is offering personalized career assistance to help prepare transitioning service members and spouses for career success, serving 5,595 transitioning service members and 386 spouses at over 19 locations through July 31, 2022. The Off Base Transition Training (OBTT) pilot is operating in five states, providing both brick and mortar and virtual training. VETS is also launching a new Customer Experience (CX) initiative in FY23.

This Committee holds the opinion that broad and sweeping efforts to address economic and employment concerns among veterans should be supplemented by strategies and programs that specifically target various subpopulations, particularly those that have been traditionally underserved. Accordingly, the Committee makes the following recommendations to advance impactful service delivery to other underserved subpopulations that are experiencing additional barriers to employment.

Recommendation 1. Due to the unknown impact of the Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022 (PL 117-168) on the disabled veteran population, USDOL VETS should either expand the definition of Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) or designate a targeted population eligible for Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) services to any eligible person who falls under the VA Care or Presumption of Care eligibility rules as defined in the Act.

*Rationale:* 38 USC 4103A(a) directs the Secretary of Labor to regularly assess the definition of a Significant Barrier to Employment to ensure it reflects the best available data and trends associated with veteran employment and continues to identify those veterans who are to be given priority and maximum emphasis for DVOP services. Guidance further provides the Secretary authority to designate additional populations as eligible for DVOP services in addition to those individuals with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBEs).

Veteran Policy Letters 03-14, 03-14 Change 1, and 03-14 Change 2, all include the following SBE related to disability:

- A special disabled or disabled veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(1) and (3);

- Special disabled and disabled veterans are those: who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs; or were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability.

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The Secretary has already identified Vietnam-Era veterans, veterans aged 18-24, eligible transitioning service members and spouses serving as caretakers of wounded, ill, or injured service members receiving treatment in military treatment facilities or warrior transition units as eligible for DVOP services.<sup>i</sup> Adding eligible persons who fall under the VA Care or Presumption of Care eligibility rules as defined in the PACT ACT would cover those veterans who did not receive a compensable VA disability rating at the time they left service and would provide them access to career services to help reduce unemployment, promote career opportunities and family-sustaining wages, and positively affect the economy.

The VOW Act requires DVOP specialists to place maximum emphasis on assisting veterans who are economically or educationally challenged. Veterans who were exposed to burn pits and other toxic substances may not have a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many states reported they had the capacity to serve additional eligible persons. Since the pandemic forced temporary closures of most American Job Centers, states adapted their service delivery models to provide a variety of virtual services for veterans and other persons, creating more efficiencies and opportunities without impacting capacity.

All states continue to conduct relationship building, outreach and recruitment activities with other service providers to seek out new Significant Barriers to Employment and priority category veterans and make referrals to non-JVSG funded programs such as WIOA, State Vocational Rehabilitation, Goodwill, SNAP and TANF. Adding veterans impacted by burn pit and/or toxic substance exposure would not detract from their ability to serve SBE veterans and other eligible populations. Since these groups may already be accessing the services of their local American Job Center, DVOP specialists would be able to focus on providing services at the center to individuals who want and need assistance and do so in a cost-effective manner.

Recommendation 2. USDOL VETS should define **all** workforce population sets and demographic pockets that are included in USDOL's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) strategy and efforts to cultivate a federal workforce that draws from the full diversity of the Nation and that advances equitable employment opportunities.<sup>ii</sup> For example, data for military spouse employment is a segment of the underserved population that can be improved. Once identified, USDOL VETS should include **all available population sets and demographic pockets** in monthly and annual employment situation reports for veterans and nonveterans in the workforce. This information can be used to identify workforce populations with



the greatest needs, skills gaps, and areas of successful employment outcomes within the workforce.

*Rationale:* After focused efforts by partners in the public, private, and nonprofit sector, unemployment rates for veterans are equal to or lower than unemployment rates among non-veterans. However, this positive news obscures variations in veteran unemployment among various subpopulations. For instance, unemployment among African American veterans averaged 5.0 percent in 2021, higher than the 4.2 percent unemployment rate among their white counterparts.<sup>iii</sup> Hispanic/Latino veterans fared worse with average unemployment in 2021 of 6.0%. In addition, unemployment is significantly higher among Native Americans, who serve in the military at higher rates; specific reporting on the rate of unemployment among Native American veterans and other DEIA populations will help DOL determine whether specific, targeted programming would benefit this population.

Targeted and comprehensive interventions to improve employment outcomes rely upon having accurate, detailed information. With access to detailed demographic breakdowns of key metrics, the Department of Labor itself, as well as its partners in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, can improve outreach and programmatic strategies toward specific segments of the veteran population whose outcomes are lagging behind others. It is recommended in leveraging artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI/ML) using big-data for an effective and actionable approach for underserved populations.<sup>iv</sup> This will be a solution for data gaps in qualitative and quantitative analysis of populations such as Native Americans, Pacific Islanders, and military spouses.

### **Innovative Veteran Training and Employment**

Recommendation 3. The Department of Labor (DOL) should explore opportunities to engage with their industry partners who participate in Apprenticeship Programs and expand program usage beyond the Apprenticeship Program itself.

- a. DOD should ensure its corporate partners who leverage the Apprenticeship Program are also aware of and leverage the DOD SkillBridge Program where appropriate.
- b. DOL should work with counterparts from DOD SkillBridge to do the same for DOD industry partners and ensure they are aware of and leverage the DOL Apprenticeship Program.
- c. DOL should find more meaningful ways for transitioning servicemembers, veterans and spouses with disabilities, and veteran and spouses in general, to participate in their programs.

*Rationale:* Currently there is very little overlap between the industry partners of DOL who use the Apprenticeship Program and those who also use the SkillBridge Program. The same is true for DOD industry partners. This is a loss for those industry partners as well as transitioning servicemembers (TSM's), veterans and spouses.

Both Apprenticeship and SkillBridge programs could easily be expanded by making existing industry partners aware of the broader scope of possibilities to engage TSM's, veterans and spouses for training and employment.

DOL and DOD should view these programs as complimentary and a way to increase industry penetration of veteran and spouse employment. These different channels will serve different needs for both industry and TSM, veteran and spouse groups.

Finally, DOL should spearhead an effort to ensure these programs serve the needs of disabled veterans in terms of awareness, roles and opportunities and helping industry partners realize the value of disabled veterans and how their needs and value may be accommodated and leveraged.

Recommendation 4. The Department of Labor (DOL) should expand the Employment Navigator and Partnership Pilot (ENPP) program and increase linkage with TAP, Apprenticeship and SkillBridge for veterans with disabilities, veterans without disabilities and all spouses.

*Rationale:* The Employment Navigator and Partnership Pilot (ENPP) program has been a great success and should be scaled up to meet the needs of servicemembers and industry. DOL should ensure that the program is well marketed and well-integrated into the existing channels of career guidance and development in TAP, Apprenticeship and SkillBridge. This would provide a seamless connection between service and employment where a series of warm handoffs bring a servicemember along from thinking about transition, to identifying a career path to preparing for and actively exploring that career path to employment. This will further strengthen the value proposition of service for both servicemembers and industry.

## **Service Delivery Subcommittee**

Recommendation 5. DOL should set into motion a process for addressing the below listed five elements of the Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002 (JVA) that have yet to be fully implemented and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 to address the extremely low numbers of disabled veterans exiting WIOA Adult with training. It would also begin to address the low outcomes for veterans and disabled veterans exiting job center programs by establishing a formal coordinating mechanism between local veteran owned businesses/local federal contractors and their local job center staff working with veterans. Full implementation would include identifying and rewarding service innovations that are effective in benefiting veterans in obtaining sustainable wages on career tracks and treating them as best practices to be duplicated by other job centers.

The process for developing implementation should include a mechanism for incorporating annual performance reviews of veterans employment, training, and placement services provided through Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPS), Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs), and WIOA staff working directly with veterans.

In addition, the four-tier enrollment system detailed in TEGL 10-09 (Technical Assistance and Guidance Letter, dated November 10, 2009 - Implementing Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses in all Qualified Job Training Programs Funded in Whole or in Part by the U.S. Department of Labor) should be enforced on both the state and local WIOA levels as well as by VETS on the national level. Monitoring should be performed by VETS and the Departmental agency responsible for the qualified job training program's administration and oversight and locally drafted corrective action plans should be required as the TEGL requires.

*Rationale:* A review of the ETA's annual State Data Books for WIOA/Wagner Peyser shows that AJCs in nearly every state are indicating low outcomes when it comes to veterans and especially disabled veterans. This has led to serious concerns over the long-time systemic exclusion of disabled veterans from WIOA Adult training as well as extremely low wage outcomes experienced by disabled veterans receiving services in the three principal job center programs: (1) WIOA Adult, (2) the Job Service, and (3) the Disabled Veteran Outreach program.

- In PY 2019, 23 states reported exiting no disabled veterans with training in all counties in an entire program year.
- Over 10,000 disabled veterans were registered with DVOPs in the 23 states that exited no disabled veterans with training.
- In PY 2019, 18 additional states exited fewer than 25 disabled veterans with training.
- In PY 2019, California (38%) and Alabama (13%) exited 51% of all disabled veterans exiting with training.

Congress directly addressed the exclusion of veterans and disabled veterans in DOL job training programs in the Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002. Twenty years later, there is little evidence that the required monitoring and compliance measures have been properly implemented. The JVA not only requires ongoing monitoring of veterans services by VETS but also by states as well. The law requires local WIOA entities that are cited for non-compliance regarding veterans to submit corrective action plans. Monitoring and Compliance are two of eight major components of the JVA that have yet to be implemented, all of which were meant to promote accountability.

**Elements of the Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002 yet to be Implemented:**

- Establishing recommended enrollment rates in local areas for veterans and disabled veterans
- Requiring that a list of federal contractors go out to states, locales and training providers
- Financial and non-incentive awards that encourage service to veterans' innovation in WIOA
- Establishing local coordination groups for local veterans services including veteran owned businesses
- A Comprehensive performance accountability system overseen by VETS that also includes veterans as well as disabled veterans
- Monitoring compliance for the four-tier enrollment system detailed in TEGL 10-09 on both the state and local WIOA levels

Recommendation 6. DOL VETS should evaluate the effectiveness of the Employment Navigator and Partnership Pilot (ENPP). Such an evaluation should include a survey of participants of the ENPP to determine, at a minimum, participant satisfaction with their experience and assess employment and earnings outcomes of participants compared to non-participating separating service members, which should be used to help inform: 1) future expansion of the ENPP to new locations and/or a virtual option; and 2) whether the ENPP should be made permanent.

*Rationale:* With more than a year and a half of operability, proper evaluation of the ENPP is necessary to determine the quality and effectiveness of the program. An evaluation of the ENPP that includes feedback from participants will help employment navigators to better serve Transitioning Service Members (TSMs) and their spouses by having a better sense of knowing what works and what can be improved upon. Participant outcomes will help demonstrate the effectiveness of the ENPP, which can be used to expand the ENPP to serve more TSMs and their spouses and make the program permanent with Congressional action.

## **PART IV**

### **Appendix**

#### **ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:**

##### **Appointed members:**

Jim Lorraine  
America's Warrior Partnership  
Recognized Authority (Training)

Mike Hazard  
UA Veterans in Piping Program  
Recognized Authority (Employment)

Pamela Johnson  
Goodwill Industries  
Recognized Authority (Rehabilitation)

Cody Nicholls  
University of Arizona  
Recognized Authority (Training)

Joe Wynn  
National Association of Black Veterans (NABVETS)  
Veteran Service Organization Representative

Gregory Kelly  
Disabled American Veterans (DAV)  
Veteran Service Organization Representative

Kayla Lopez  
Victory  
Recognized Authority (Training)

James Redstone  
Society for Human Resource Management Representative (Mandated Organization)

M. Eric Eversole  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce Representative (Mandated Organization)

Lori Adams  
National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) (Mandated Organization)

Tim Carlton  
National Governors Association (NGA) (Mandated Organization)

Michael McDermott  
Arcadia Group  
Business Roundtable Representative (Mandated Organization)

Jason Kuroiwa  
Japanese American Veterans Association (Veteran Service Organization)

Darrell L. Roberts (Chair)  
Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers Union  
Labor Union or Organization Representative (Mandated Organization)

**Ex-officio, Nonvoting Members:**

- Secretary of Veterans Affairs
- Secretary of Defense
- Director, Office of Personnel Management
- Assistant Secretary of Labor (VETS)
- Assistant Secretary of Labor (ETA)
- Administrator, U.S. Small Business Administration

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/VETS/legacy/files/veterans-program-letter-03-19.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> [Office of the Solicitor's Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)

<sup>iii</sup> <https://ivmf.syracuse.edu/article/the-employment-situation-of-veterans-march-2022/>

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Strategic-Plan-to-Advance-Diversity-Equity-Inclusion-and-Accessibility-in-the-Federal-Workforce-11.23.21.pdf>