



# The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Evaluation Portfolio

## SUMMARY

The Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) partnered with the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) and commissioned contractor ICF Incorporated to conduct the *Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Impact Evaluation* and *TAP Employment Navigator and Partnership Pilot (ENPP) Formative Evaluation*.

The *Evaluation of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Impact Study Report* describes the quasi-experimental study using administrative data from the U.S. Army and the National Directory of New Hires that examined the impact of TAP on the employment and wages of recently separated Veterans. The study used a matched comparison group design to compare the outcomes of Veterans who participated in TAP to similar Veterans who did not participate. It presents the estimated impacts of participating in TAP up to 36 months post-separation. The study also explored TAP components and how they relate to employment and wage outcomes. Additional information about the analyses is in the *Evaluation of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Technical Supplement for the Impact Study*.

The *Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Navigator and Partnership Pilot (ENPP) Formative Study Report* examines the early implementation of the ENPP, which launched April 1, 2021, and variations in implementation by site. Data collection for this study includes interviews and focus groups with pilot staff and transitioning Service members at the 13 pilot sites, as well as with national Veteran employment partners. Interim findings were shared with VETS leadership to inform pilot enhancement and expansion. The findings can inform future implementation and outcomes studies of the ENPP.

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and its federal partners established the [Transition Assistance Program \(TAP\)](#) to help prepare separating and retiring Service members to successfully transition to civilian life. TAP prepares Service members for post-separation employment by helping them translate their military skills to the needs of civilian employers. The [Employment Navigator and Partnership Pilot \(ENPP\)](#) provides individualized career services outside the traditional TAP workshops to prepare transitioning Service members (TSMs) and spouses for post-service employment.

This Department of Labor-funded study was a result of the DOL Evaluation Plan. It contributes to the labor evidence-base to inform [employment and training](#) programs and policies and addresses Departmental strategic goals and priorities.



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## KEY TAKEAWAYS: Evaluation of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Impact Study Report

- **TSMs who completed TAP had better employment outcomes than TSMs who did not complete the program.** TAP participants obtained work significantly faster than non-participants, with larger percentages finding a job in the 1st quarter post-separation. They also had significantly higher rates of employment at 12 months post-separation but not at 6 months post-separation.
- **TAP participants had higher rates of employment retention.** For TSMs who were employed at 6 months post-separation, a significantly higher proportion of TAP participants were employed at the same job at 12 months or at any job at 12 months compared to the non-participant group.
- **TAP participants experienced fewer quarters without employment at 36 months post-separation.** No significant differences were found between the groups in quarters without employment at 12 months post-separation. However, non-participants were not employed for more quarters than TAP participants at 36 months post-separation. This finding was significant.
- **Participation in TAP was not associated with higher wages post-separation.** On average, employed TAP participants earned significantly less than employed non-participants across time. However, the differences between the treatment and comparison groups decreased over time.
- **TAP participants had a smaller wage change between the 1st and 5th quarter.** On average, TAP participants' adjusted wages were significantly lower than non-participants' adjusted wages at the 5th quarter post separation (after adjusting for their wage in the 1st quarter post-separation). Non-participants' wages grew more between the 1st and 5th quarter post-separation, compared to TAP participants' wages.
- **Black TSMs who participated in TAP had favorable employment outcomes.** Black men and women who participated in TAP found jobs faster than non-participants. Black men had the highest employment rate at 12-months post-separation relative to the non-participants and to other racial/ethnic subgroups of TAP participants. Black TSMs who participated in TAP also had fewer quarters with no employment than non-participants.
- **When a TSM completed TAP was related to favorable outcomes.** TSMs who completed TAP more than 6 months before separating had higher employment and wage outcomes than TSMs who completed the program within 6 months of separation.



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## KEY TAKEAWAYS: Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Navigator and Partnership Pilot (ENPP) Formative Study Report

- **Employment Navigator Hiring, Training, and Management.** Interview participants stressed the importance of screening Employment Navigators for soft skills. Employment Navigators requested trainings on resumes, federal resumes, opportunities for job shadowing, and peer exchanges.
- **Communications, Outreach, and Recruitment.** National pilot staff and clients requested expanded on-base marketing and ways to increase the program's reach on social media. Interview participants noted the need to emphasize the value-add of complimentary services offered by Employment Navigators to TAP managers.
- **Intake, Assessment, and Direct Service Delivery.** Clients valued one-on-one customized services. Employment Navigators and clients requested additional services for TSMs and military spouses located outside the continental United States. Clients requested services related to interview preparation.
- **Partnerships and Warm Handovers/Connections.** Handovers and connections appear most successful when clients are engaged and proactive. American Job Centers requested a data sharing agreement to facilitate handovers.
- **Data Systems.** TAP managers requested access to program and performance data. The Transition Employment Navigator System (TENS) has been an improvement over the previous customer management system.

[SEE FULL STUDY](#)

**TIMEFRAME:** 2020-2023  
**SUBMITTED BY:** ICF Incorporated  
**DATE PREPARED:** July 2023

**PARTNER AGENCY:** Veterans' Employment and Training Service  
**SPONSOR:** Chief Evaluation Office  
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