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VETERANS' PROGRAM LETTER NO. 06-07

TO: ALL REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS AND DIRECTORS FOR
VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING
ALL STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY ADMINISTRATORS
ALL REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS, EMPLOYMENT AND
TRAINING ADMINISTRATION (INFO)

FROM: 
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SUBJECT: VETS' Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Workshop
Initiatives

- I. **Purpose:** To provide guidance to States and Veterans' Employment and Training Service's (VETS) field staff on the TAP Employment Workshop Initiatives to be implemented on September 24, 2007.
- II. **Background:** Public Law 101-510, as amended, requires the Department of Defense, in collaboration with the Departments of Labor, Homeland Security and Veterans Affairs, to provide the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) for members of the Armed Forces and their spouses. These transition services may be provided up to 12 months prior to separation or within 24 months of retirement. The Department of Labor is responsible for conducting a two and a half day Employment Workshop that provides employment information, assistance and training to assist departing service members in making informed decisions for reintegrating into civilian careers.

Employment Workshops assist service members in building a plan to assure their smooth transition from their military jobs to civilian employment. The workshops are facilitated by Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER), Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialists (DVOPS), VETS Federal Staff, or contract staff.

The biggest challenges that separating service members face in finding employment are 1) developing resumes that translate their military skills, education and training into skills that are recognizable and valuable to civilian employers; and 2) acquiring effective skills for interviews with potential employers. This is particularly true for young veterans, who might have never needed a resume or interview skills before or during their military service. Even members of the military who already have civilian jobs, such as those in

the National Guard and Reserve, may need good resumes and effective interview skills, especially if they contemplate job or career changes following their active military service.

The Employment Workshop responds to these challenges. In many cases, TAP facilitators already focus heavily on resume writing and interviewing, and many military transition offices at the separation points complement these efforts by providing resource centers where service members are able to refine their resumes.

However far too many service members leave the workshop without completing a resume and without practicing for interviews. In order to ensure the continued, consistent delivery of high quality transition instruction, useful information and practical assistance to service members who will be entering the job market, VETS is implementing four initiatives to overcome the biggest barriers to employment that service members face when they transition to civilian employment.

III. 2007 TAP Employment Workshop Initiatives

The following are the new initiatives for the Transition Assistance Program Employment Workshop. These initiatives are being accomplished without increasing the length of the program by a reallocation of time to other modules.

- A. Standards and expectations briefing:** Participants will receive a briefing at the beginning of the workshop that outlines the standards and expectations of the workshop. This includes completing a hand-written draft of their resume, participating in mock interviews, and gaining a working knowledge of the One-Stop Career Center system.
- B. Completion of hand-written draft resume:** Practical exercises will help transitioning service members translate their military experience, training and skills into terms employers understand and are looking for. Each workshop participant will develop a (draft) resume.
- C. Mock interview sessions:** Participants will practice interviewing techniques and receive feedback. Participants will receive instruction on how to respond to likely employer questions during an interview, and become aware of the importance of body language, personal demeanor and dressing for success.
- D. One-Stop Career Center and job search information:** Participants will gain knowledge of their state workforce system, the location of their hometown One-Stop Career Center, the functions of the DVOP and LVER, and will be encouraged to conduct a job search on their state job board.

IV. Implementation of VETS 2007 TAP Employment Workshop Initiatives :

- A. **Implementation time-table:** These initiatives have been successfully tested at numerous TAP sites. All TAP sites should begin implementing these initiatives on September 24, 2007 with full implementation complete by October 26, 2007.
- B. **TAP Facilitator materials:** Updated versions of the Employment Workshop PowerPoint presentations, TAP Facilitator Manual, and sample workshop agendas will be available for download from the NVTI TAP Facilitator web site by September 4, 2007.
- C. **Resume curriculum facilitator training:** TAP facilitators will have access to a web-based video training application to prepare themselves to deliver the new resume curriculum beginning September 24, 2007.
- D. **“Create an Effective Resume” TAP Participant Manual insert:** A companion insert for the resume curriculum is being printed and will be shipped concurrently with TAP manual orders. These inserts will be distributed to workshop participants along with their TAP Employment Workshop manuals.
- E. **TAP Employment Workshop participant brochure:** A new brochure is being printed that will serve as an outline of the Employment Workshop and resource tool for participants. The brochures, like the manual insert, will ship concurrently with TAP manual orders and are to be distributed to participants along with the TAP Employment Workshop manuals.

V. **Action Required:**

- A. States should review this VPL to ensure that all staff assigned as facilitators for TAP Employment workshops are advised of the contents of this directive.
- B. Directors for Veterans’ Employment and Training (DVET) are available for consultation and to provide technical assistance on questions related to the guidance issued in this Veterans’ Program Letter.
- C. The National Veterans’ Training Institute (NVTI) will be developing a 2-week TAP Facilitator Training Course that supports these initiatives.

VI. **Inquiries:** Questions may be addressed to the DVET and RAVET. The VETS TAP Program Lead, Mr. Tim Winter may also be contacted at (202) 693-4705.

VII. **Expiration Date:** This Veterans’ Program Letter is valid until rescinded or superseded.