



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON

23 JUN 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Army Directive 2014-18 (Army Career and Alumni Program)

1. References:

- a. Title 10, United States Code, sections 1142–44.
- b. VOW to Hire Heroes Act, Pub. L. No. 112-56, sections 201–256, 125 Stat 711–733 (2011).
- c. Memorandum, Department of Defense/Department of Veterans Affairs Wounded, Ill, and Injured Senior Oversight Committee, December 10, 2008, subject: Implementation of Wounded, Ill, and Injured-Related Standard Definitions.
- d. Department of Defense-Veterans Affairs Veterans Employment Initiative Task Force Implementation Plan, Appendix A: Army, December 31, 2012.
- e. Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) Directive-type Memorandum (DTM) 12-007 (Implementation of Mandatory Transition Assistance Program Participation for Eligible Service Members), November 21, 2012, incorporating Change 2, effective April 10, 2014.
- f. Memorandum, Secretary of the Army, 29 Aug 2011, subject: Army Transition Policy.
- g. Execution Order 051-12, HQDA G3 DAMO AOC (MC), 292224Z Dec 11, subject: ISO Army Transition.

2. Background

- a. This directive implements the mandates and requirements of the VOW (Veterans Opportunity to Work) to Hire Heroes Act and the DoD-U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Employment Initiative as it relates to the Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) in coordination with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the VA.
- b. For the purpose of this Army directive, “transition” is defined as separating from active duty after serving 180 days or more of continuous active service pursuant to Title 10 United States Code. This directive is focused on facilitating the successful transition for both active component (AC) and reserve component (RC) Soldiers. “Transition date” is defined as the separation date on the DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge From Active Duty).

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3. Implementation Guidelines. Soldiers will execute transition plans in conjunction with unit training requirements.

a. Commanders will ensure that all transitioning Soldiers fully participate and meet all transition requirements.

(1) The distributed model (enclosure 1) leads to a phased transition. This model is optimal for long-range planning and Soldier preparation.

(2) Soldiers may follow a 5-day consecutive model to meet Career Readiness Standards (CRS) in the minimal amount of time. This model is optimal for Soldiers who have less than 90 days to transition.

b. Commanders will identify those Soldiers who may require a higher priority of access to services and a higher level of support, including individualized attention and/or reasonable accommodation, during the transition process. This population includes transitioning Soldiers who are (i) 18–24 years of age, (ii) first-term enlistees, (iii) involuntary separations due to force shaping, (iv) in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System process, and (v) rapid separations from military service.

c. Commanders will make sure all Soldiers carry out transition in accordance with the timeline for the designated transition model (distributed or consecutive). Exceptions to the distributed transition model are authorized only if a Soldier qualifies as a short-notice loss or is a deploying RC Soldier who will complete transition requirements in accordance with the transition models at enclosures 2 and 3. A short-notice unprogrammed loss occurs when a Soldier is voluntarily or involuntarily separated before his or her scheduled release date and does not have adequate time to accomplish the requirements 90 days before the release or discharge date. These Soldiers are considered to be at high risk for unemployment and therefore must immediately be enrolled in ACAP and complete CRS as soon as feasible.

d. ACAP XXI is the system of record to schedule, track and record transition-related tasks and compliance. The use of parallel systems to track and schedule training is authorized. However, completion of all requirements and standards as documented on DD Forms 2648 (Preseparation Counseling Checklist for Active Component), 2648-1 (Preseparation Counseling Checklist for Reserve Component) and 2958 (Soldier's Career Readiness Standards/Individual Transition Plan Checklist) will be recorded in ACAP XXI.

e. Additional implementation guidance for ACAP is at enclosure 4.

4. Mandatory Transition Components. In addition to meeting CRS as specified, all transitioning Soldiers will participate in the following components. Exemptions are authorized as stipulated in enclosure 5. Soldiers may voluntarily participate in any

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component. CRS include VOW Act mandates (paragraphs 4a(1)–(3)) and DoD policy standards (paragraphs 4a(4)–(13)). All Soldiers will complete a capstone event to verify that they have met all CRS, including standards within selected career tracks, if applicable. Transition courses are available to Soldiers who need additional transition assistance (see enclosure 6).

a. Career Readiness Standards

(1) Receive preseparation counseling (in accordance with DD Forms 2648 or 2648-1). These forms are part of the Soldier's Army Military Human Resource Record and filed in the Interactive Personnel Electronic Records Management System, known as iPERMS.

(2) Attend VA Benefits Briefings I and II.

(3) Attend DOL Employment Workshop (DOLEW). Exemption from this component is available in accordance with the requirements detailed in enclosure 5.

(4) Complete registration with eBenefits at [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov).

(5) Complete a standardized 12-month postseparation budget.

(6) Complete a gap analysis by cross-walking military occupational specialty skills against the requirements for civilian career(s).

(7) Document requirements and eligibility for certification, licensure and apprenticeship in the Soldier's desired career field.

(8) Complete an individual assessment tool approved by the Department of the Army that identifies aptitudes, interests, strengths and skills.

(9) Complete an Individual Transition Plan (ITP). The first commander with authority under the Uniform Code of Military Justice will review the ITP with the Soldier to identify weaknesses or gaps in the plan and determine if the Soldier needs to reinforce skills or products through supplemental counseling or instruction. Commanders are encouraged to get assistance from ACAP counselors or other subject matter experts to finalize the Soldier's ITP.

(10) Complete a job application package or provide documentation of receipt of a job offer. The package must include a private or public sector resume, personal and professional references, and at least two submitted job applications. Soldiers seeking employment will upload their resume on the VA eBenefits jobs center at [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov).

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(11) Receive a DOL Gold Card for DOL American Job Centers at the DOLEW.

(12) Complete a continuum of military service opportunity counseling (AC only).

(13) Verify CRS completion during a capstone event. Capstone is an event intended to verify that a Soldier has met CRS; make sure he or she has developed a viable ITP to achieve their transition goals; and, if necessary, give the Soldier a “warm handover” with appropriate partner agencies for additional assistance. All Soldiers will complete capstone no later than 90 days before transition and will document the results on a DD Form 2958. This form is part of the Soldier’s Army Military Human Resource Record and filed in the iPERMS. Specific guidance regarding capstone is at enclosure 7.

b. Career Tracks. In addition to the requirements in paragraph 4a, Soldiers may elect to participate in career tracks based on the post-service goals indicated on their ITP. Participation in the individual tracks is determined based on the Soldier’s ability to attain CRS. Each track is 2 days and offers intense focus on the specified subject matter (accessing higher education, career technical training or entrepreneurship). Each track includes applicable standards as follows.

(1) Accessing Higher Education and Career Technical Training. These two components are intended to help Soldiers who will seek further education upon transition, whether it is a college education or vocational or technical training. Participation is voluntary unless required for the Soldier to meet CRS. Soldiers will:

(a) complete a comparison of options for higher education or vocational or technical training;

(b) complete an individual assessment tool approved by the Department of the Army that identifies aptitudes, interests, strengths and skills;

(c) complete and submit an application or receive an acceptance letter from an institution of higher education or vocational or technical training; and

(d) confirm one-on-one counseling with an advisor or a counselor from an institution of higher education or vocational or technical training via telephone, email or letter.

(2) Entrepreneurship Track. Soldiers who want to be self-employed in the private or nonprofit sectors will attend a 2-day seminar with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). Soldiers will receive information related to the benefits and challenges of entrepreneurship and the steps required for business ownership. They will have the opportunity to connect with a small business owner as a mentor to

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help with the business start-up process. The ACAP counselor will initiate the warm handover with the SBA.

5. Reserve Component

a. Deploying RC Soldiers will complete transition requirements in accordance with the transition models at enclosures 2 and 3.

b. Individual Soldiers deploying from a CONUS Replacement Center will receive transition assistance during the pre- and post-deployment phases. They will complete all requirements before the release date on the DD Form 214.

c. RC Soldiers on Active Duty Operational Support orders performing duty on an active duty installation will get transition support from the installation where they are performing duty. The commander of the unit the RC Soldier is assigned or attached to is responsible for ensuring that the Soldier completes transition requirements (VOW/CRS).

d. RC Soldiers on Active Duty Operational Support orders performing duty at a location that is not located within 50 miles of an installation with transition services, or who do not receive transition services at a demobilization site, may access services through the Virtual ACAP Center (<https://www.acap.army.mil/virtual/>) or through the ACAP Contact Center (1-800-325-4715). The commander of the unit the RC Soldier is assigned or attached to is responsible for ensuring that the Soldier completes transition requirements (VOW/CRS).

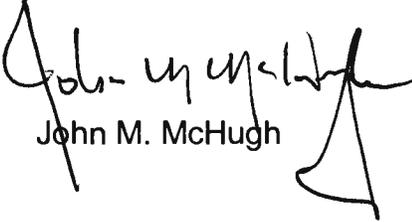
6. Proponent. The Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1 is the proponent for this policy and will incorporate the provisions of this directive into a new Army regulation detailing the Army transition process. The regulation will implement a Transition Soldier Life Cycle program and integrate the CRS requirements with career progression. The Soldier Life Cycle program begins upon accession and continues throughout a Soldier's career. Each Soldier will have an individual development plan that postures them to become career ready upon transition, retirement or deactivation/demobilization. The plan will serve as the baseline document for the Soldier's ITP at the beginning of the transition process. The Soldier Life Cycle program ends with a capstone event.

7. Waivers. I hereby delegate to the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) the authority to grant waivers to this policy consistent with policy changes from DoD. The Assistant Secretary may delegate this waiver authority to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Military Personnel/Quality of Life). All waivers will be coordinated with the Office of the Army General Counsel.

9. My point of contact is the Army Transition Division, U.S. Army Human Resources Command, 502-613-8400.

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10. This directive is rescinded upon publication of the new regulation on the Army transition process.



John M. McHugh

Encls

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## **DISTRIBUTED MODEL FOR ARMY TRANSITION**

1. No later than 12 months before transition, Soldiers must complete pre-separation counseling and document it on DD Forms 2648 and 2648-1 (3 hours). Demobilizing RC Soldiers will begin the transition process as soon as possible within their remaining period of service. Retiring Soldiers can begin the process 24 months before their planned retirement date.

2. No later than 10 months before transition:

a. Soldiers will attend initial individualized counseling and begin developing their ITP (3 hours).

b. Soldiers will complete the personal financial planning for transition seminar (5 hours) and build an integrated 12-month budget (2 hours).

3. No later than 9 months before transition:

a. Soldiers will attend the military occupational specialty crosswalk class and complete a gap analysis before attending the DOLEW (2 hours).

b. Soldiers will attend the DOLEW and begin developing a resume of choice (3 days).

4. No later than 6 months before the planned transition:

a. Soldiers will complete VA Benefits Briefings I and II, which cover compensation and pension, health care, vocational rehabilitation and employment, education and training, home loan guarantee, small business seminars, life insurance, survivor benefits and burial (6 hours).

b. Soldiers must register for eBenefits at [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov).

5. No later than 5 months before transition:

a. Soldiers will complete their resume of choice.

b. Soldiers will register with and upload their resume to the VA eBenefits job center at [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov).

6. No later than 90 days before transition:

a. Soldiers will voluntarily complete specialized training and focused transition-related courses. These focused courses include preparing for a new career; assessing knowledge, skills and abilities; translating military to civilian skills; writing resumes;

learning interview techniques; dressing for success; evaluating and negotiating job offers; pursuing continuing education, training, certification and licensure; searching for employment; and starting a business.

b. All Soldiers must meet current CRS requirements. Soldiers will have in their possession products that demonstrate their preparedness to make the transition to civilian life. Mandatory CRS requirements include preseparation counseling, documented continued military service opportunity via membership in the Army National Guard (ARNG) or U.S. Army Reserve, registration in VA eBenefits, an integrated 12-month postseparation budget, completed gap analysis and completion of capstone.

c. All Soldiers will complete capstone to confirm CRS, plan makeup training and receive a warm hand-over if needed. The intention of the warm hand-over is to mitigate gaps in needed assistance when the Soldier makes the transition from active duty to civilian life. The provision of referral information to a Soldier does not constitute a warm hand-over. The warm hand-over may be conducted in person, via telephone or by email between the partner agency or resource, the Soldier and an ACAP counselor. Soldiers facing unexpected or rapid separations who have from 31 to 89 days remaining before transitioning from active duty will be provided maximum assistance from their chain of command and the local ACAP office to help them complete CRS.

## **ARMY NATIONAL GUARD TRANSITION MODEL**

1. ARNG units may receive transition services at the home station, or the mobilization or demobilization station with the exception of DOLEW. The DOLEW will be conducted at the home station before the end date on the Soldier's DD Form 214 for ARNG Soldiers who are unemployed. ARNG Soldiers who are exempt from DOLEW will complete all VOW and CRS requirements, including capstone, at the demobilization station.
2. Commanders will provide a list of Soldiers who will complete CRS and capstone at the demobilization site and a separate list of Soldiers who will complete DOLEW and capstone at the home station. Both lists will be forwarded to the State deployment cycle support cell, the State transition assistance advisor and the First Army Operations Brigade point of contact.
3. U.S. Army Installation Management Command will adjust the release from active duty date on the mobilization orders and the DD Form 214 by up to 5 days for transitioning ARNG Soldiers in need of the DOLEW and capstone at home station. This alternative is only available to nonexempt Soldiers who cannot attain CRS while their unit is at the demobilization station. Installation Management Command will verify completion of all transition requirements and documentation in ACAP XXI.
4. At home station post-deployment (for nonexempt Soldiers):
  - a. Soldiers will complete DOLEW, a job application package and capstone before the end date on their DD Form 214.
  - b. The ARNG will coordinate with DOL to conduct the employment workshop training.
  - c. The ARNG will document completed employment workshop training and capstone in ACAP XXI.

## ARMY RESERVE TRANSITION MODEL

1. Army Reserve units mobilized after 1 October 2013 receive transition assistance training from Forward Transition Support Teams at home station or Mobile Transition Teams or supporting ACAP Centers at the mobilization or demobilization platforms, as appropriate.
  - a. Units within the 12-month Army Force Generation deployment cycle will schedule home station transition assistance training during the Joint Assessment Conference.
  - b. In accordance with the First Army deployment timeline, commanders will finalize plans for all phases of transition assistance training (home station, mobilization platform and demobilization platform).
  - c. Units will complete home station transition assistance training in conjunction with other preparations for overseas deployment.
2. Transition assistance training to be completed during the home station phase includes:
  - a. preseparation counseling (2 hours);
  - b. ITP development (2 hours);
  - c. transition overview, including resilient transitions (1 hour);
  - d. crosswalk of military occupational specialty (2 hours);
  - e. personal financial planning for transition (7 hours); and
  - f. registering for eBenefits account ([www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov)).
3. During deployment, Soldiers should focus on refining their resumes and are encouraged to use virtual transition services at <https://www.acap.army.mil/virtual/> or 1-800-325-4715) to improve their preparedness for transition, if practical.
4. Soldiers will complete the following transition assistance training and CRS requirements at the demobilization platform:
  - a. The DOLEW (3 days) and receive a DOL Gold Card for American Job Centers.
  - b. VA Benefits Briefings I and II (6 hours), which cover compensation and pension, health care, vocational rehabilitation and employment, education and training, home loan guarantee, small business seminars, life insurance, survivor benefits and burial.

c. Soldiers who do not complete any portion of the transition assistance training during the premobilization phase will complete requirements at the demobilization platform.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF ARMY CAREER ALUMNI PROGRAM**

### **1. Coordinating Instructions**

a. The Commander, Installation Management Command and Commander, First Army will forecast quarterly and annual requirements for DOL, VA and SBA instructors at installations and mobilization and demobilization sites.

b. The Director, ARNG will forecast quarterly and annual requirements for DOL, VA and SBA instructors for home station training during pre-mobilization and post-demobilization periods.

c. The Chief, Army Reserve will forecast quarterly and annual requirements for home station training during pre-mobilization and post-demobilization periods for ACAP-delivered modules.

d. The Commander, U.S. Army Forces Command is the executive agent for mobilization to ensure the successful planning, preparation and execution of both mobilization and demobilization. Forces Command designated First Army as the supported command for all mobilization and demobilization operations. All other commands and entities are supporting and will coordinate their actions with First Army. First Army will synchronize and manage the overall implementation of this directive for the mobilized RC.

e. First Army will implement the VOW and CRS curriculum within the requirements-based mobilization and demobilization processes in support of Forces Command RC mobilization and demobilization and during joint assessments.

f. Army Commands, Army Service Component Commands and Direct Reporting Units will implement these policies in their respective areas of operation and responsibility and are encouraged to provide additional implementation guidance.

g. Installation Management Command will provide synchronization in coordination with VA, DOL, SBA and centrally managed contract personnel at installations and mobilization and demobilization sites.

h. The Director, ARNG and Chief, Army Reserve will provide synchronization in coordination with DOL, SBA and centrally managed contract personnel at home station in accordance with their implementation plans at the State and local level.

### **2. Soldier Transition Timeline**

a. Soldiers with 18 years active Federal service may begin the transition assistance process up to 24 months before their planned retirement date. All other Soldiers are

encouraged to begin this process no later than 12 months before their expected transition date.

b. Preseparation counseling will begin as soon as possible during the 12-month period before transition unless operational requirements do not allow it. Soldiers will complete capstone no later than 90 days before transition.

c. Demobilizing RC Soldiers will begin the transition process as soon as possible within their remaining period of service.

d. Soldiers who enter the Integrated Disability Evaluation System will begin the transition process immediately. Commanders will ensure that Soldiers begin transition upon the Medical Evaluation Board's referral (defined as the second signature on the permanent physical profile).

e. All transitioning Soldiers assigned or attached to a Warrior Transition Unit will complete transition requirements as part of their Comprehensive Transition Plan. Families or caregivers designated by recovering Soldiers are eligible for full transition services for the same periods of eligibility as their sponsor.

f. To the extent possible, Soldiers attached to Community Care Units should complete transition requirements before they are transferred to the unit. Soldiers who do not complete their training requirements will use the closest ACAP center (including those of sister Services), Virtual ACAP services at <https://www.acap.army.mil/virtual/> or the ACAP Contact Center at 1-800-325-4715.

g. Soldiers assigned or attached to a Warrior Transition or Community Care Unit who are medically unable to complete the transition process may have the process waived, in writing, by their commander.

3. Limited Participation. The characterization of a Soldier's discharge from military service determines his or her eligibility for certain components of the Transition Program.

a. Bad Conduct or Dishonorable Discharge. Soldiers are not eligible to attend the transition GPS tracks (Accessing Higher Education, Career Technical Training and Entrepreneurship).

b. Other-Than-Honorable Discharge. The General Court-Martial Convening Authority who approves the Other-Than-Honorable Discharge for the characterization of service determines whether the Soldier is permitted to attend the transition GPS tracks.

c. Spousal Participation. Spouses of eligible separating Soldiers may attend job placement training, transition counseling and transition GPS. Spouses are encouraged to participate in transition planning and counseling to the maximum extent possible.

## **EXEMPTIONS FROM PARTICIPATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOP**

1. Unless exempt, all Soldiers will participate in the DOLEW. Soldiers who qualify for an exemption and prefer not to participate in the workshop must formally document their preference not to attend on a DD Form 2958. DOLEW is the only VOW/CRS requirement a Soldier can be exempt from.
2. The exemptions from participation in the DOLEW are:
  - a. Soldiers retiring after 20 or more years of active Federal service.
  - b. Soldiers who meet one of these criteria:
    - (1) able to provide documented evidence of civilian employment,
    - (2) able to document acceptance into an accredited career technical training, undergraduate or graduate degree program, and
    - (3) attended DOLEW within the 36 months before transition.
  - c. Soldiers with specialized skills who, because of unavoidable circumstances, are needed to support a unit on orders to be deployed within 60 days.
  - d. Eligible recovering Soldiers most likely to transition from active duty who are enrolled in the Education and Employment Initiative or a similar transition program designed to secure employment or further education or vocational/technical training after transition in accordance with the policy DoD and VA established in reference 1c.
3. The first commander with Uniform Code of Military Justice authority will approve exemption requests.
4. The ACAP counselor will annotate any approved exemption on the DD Form 2958 and record it in ACAP XXI.

## **CORE CURRICULUM FOR TRANSITION GOALS, PLANS AND SUCCESS (GPS)**

1. The GPS Core Curriculum helps the individual Soldier attain CRS. The following transition courses are available to Soldiers who need additional transition assistance:

a. Transition overview.

b. Military occupational specialty crosswalk.

c. Resilient transitions. This includes topics on finding resources dedicated to consideration of Families, stress management, support systems, special issues and the value of a mentor.

d. Personal financial planning for transition.

2. Commanders may require Soldiers to participate in any of the GPS core training modules if the commander determines that the Soldier needs additional assistance in preparing for transition and/or attaining CRS.

## **CAPSTONE**

1. Commanders, or a commander's designee, are responsible for verifying that eligible Soldiers meet CRS at capstone. A makeup plan to accomplish each required CRS not met at capstone must accompany the checklist. Commanders remain responsible for ensuring that their Soldiers meet all transition requirements.
2. Upon completing capstone, eligible Soldiers will be counseled on their ITPs; referred to further training and services, as needed; and connected to appropriate interagency parties (VA, DOL or SBA) and local resources that provide continued benefits, services and support to eligible Soldiers when they become veterans.
3. ACAP counselors will connect Soldiers who do not meet CRS via a warm hand-over to the appropriate interagency parties or local resources for assistance in meeting CRS. The warm hand-over is an essential element of the capstone. It consists of a confirmed person-to-person introduction of the Soldier to an appropriate partner agency and assurance that the partner agency acknowledges that the Soldier requires post-military assistance its staff will follow through to help the Soldier. All Soldiers will complete capstone before separating from active duty.
4. When operational requirements make the prescribed timeline unfeasible for RC Soldiers demobilizing or deactivating from Title 10 active duty status, capstone will occur no later than the date of release from active duty as shown on the DD Form 214.