



## Services for veterans

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**Veterans eligible for wide array of employment-related services**

**WorkSource has specialists who focus solely on veterans**

**State agencies work together to meet each veteran's needs**

**Early contact with veterans is a key to success**

The Employment Security Department provides a wide array of services to help military veterans find jobs and to support them financially while they look and/or train for work. Most of these services are arranged or provided through WorkSource offices that are located all over Washington and at the Warrior Transition Unit at Fort Lewis.

### More on employment services for veterans

**Federal funding** ~ The Employment Security Department applies annually to the federal Department of Labor for grant funds that are available under the Jobs for Veterans Act. These funds are allocated based on the number of unemployed veterans in our state. Washington state's funding has consistently remained just under \$4 million per year.

The funds are used solely to support two categories of veterans-specialist positions ("local veterans employment representatives" and "disabled-veterans outreach program" specialists) at the WorkSource offices; no state funding is used for these positions. The veterans specialists are responsible for promoting the hiring of veterans, particularly recently discharged veterans, and assisting veterans who face significant barriers to getting hired, such as disabled veterans. They also work with local businesses that hold federal contracts to help them recruit potential veteran candidates to fill vacancies.

**Coordination with other agencies** ~ The WorkSource staff partner with the federal Department of Veterans Affairs' Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Division to coordinate the right mix of services that each veteran needs to prepare for and find a job. For example, veterans have access to a range of skill-development opportunities (which might range from a one-day class to a vocational course to an apprenticeship to a college degree). They also receive information and counseling on how to look for a job, referrals to job openings, and labor-market information about the types of jobs that are in demand in their communities.

**Coordination with the military** ~ Two veterans specialists have been embedded with the Warrior Transition Unit at Fort Lewis in Pierce County to provide services to members of all branches of the military (including active-duty, National Guard and the reserves) who were injured in combat. The specialists identify potential occupations, provide skills and interest assessments, and prepare the veterans for transition to civilian life.

WorkSource also participates in events hosted by the state and federal military departments for National Guard and active-duty members who are scheduled to return from federal activation or be discharged. The WorkSource veterans specialists provide information about eligibility for unemployment-insurance benefits, the types of services available through local WorkSource offices, the availability of training and apprenticeship programs, and other programs for which they are eligible.

**Apprentice programs hone skills for good-paying jobs**

*Apprenticeship programs* ~ Many veterans have skills that transfer well into the construction industry, but they lack the formal training and certifications that may be required. Apprenticeships are a good way to complete their training while earning a living and gaining valuable on-the-job-experience. WorkSource employment counselors refer veterans to the Helmets to Hard Hats apprenticeship program operated by the Building & Construction Trades Council. Helmets to Hard Hats is an example of an apprenticeship program created specifically to recruit veterans into the construction industry.

**Contacts**

*Jennifer Peppin, communications manager, 360-902-0904  
Chip Kormas, program coordinator, 360-438-4068*