



Guide For Transition GPS Overview and Pre-Separation Counseling Checklist

*(Guide used for Completing the DD Form 2648 TEST,
JAN 2011)*

For use only upon official implementation by the Department of Defense

Introduction and Welcome

Good morning/afternoon (which every is applicable) and welcome this Pre-separation Counseling session of the TAP program. **Congratulations!!** And “THANK YOU” for your service to our Nation. You have served your nation and now it is time for us to serve you. Through your service in the United States Military, you have earned a lot of benefits and services.

Today, I will begin explaining the benefits you may have earned as well as provide you with information on the services and programs that are available to help you make a smooth transition to civilian life.

TAP Redesign - Transition Goals, Plan, Success (GPS)

The Department of Defense (DoD) has redesigned the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) to better meet your individual needs and prepare you to be “career ready” when you leave the military. I want to begin by explaining the TAP process each of you will be going through over the next few weeks and months.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: Command Career Counselor may want to take a quick “by show of hands” analysis to see how many in the class has:

24 – 18 months remaining before retirement or separation

18 – 12 months remaining

12 – 6 months remaining

6 – 3 months remaining

*Less than 90 days remaining

- Note: Anyone with less than 90 days that are just now attending Pre-separation Counseling should “raise a RED FLAG” to staff and unit Commanders. These individuals must be monitored closely to ensure they meet all VOW and Veterans Employment Initiative Task Force (VEI TF) mandates before separation. Installation TAP staff must pay close attention to this group and make sure they receive a “warm handoff” to partner agencies and local resources in the communities where these Service member plan to relocate.

Your transition process actually started when you begin considering whether you should stay in the military or separate. By now, all of you should have had a personal face-to-face discussion about transitioning with a member of your unit’s chain of command or a Command Career Command Career Counselor. Your presence here today tells me that at this stage, you are planning to separate.

That being said, let’s consider today’s Pre-separation Counseling session the START POINT for you to begin the formal transition process. There are two things I will cover in today’s Pre-separation Counseling session. First, I will give you an overview and explanation of the redesigned TAP new “Transition Goals, Plans, Success” or “Transition GPS”. Second, I will

go through all the item on the Pre-separation Counseling Checklist (DD Form 2648) item by item and explain the benefits, services, programs and resources available to you.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: Command Career Counselor should briefly explain GPS. So what is Transition GPS?

Command Career Counselor's Explanation:

G - Goals: At the end of today's session, you will be asked to identify your goals and write them down.

P Plans: You must have a written plan to be successful in achieving your goals. Therefore, under the Transition GPS you will be required to develop and complete an Individual Transition Plan or ITP. Your ITP will serve as your personal road-map which will help guide you towards achieving your goals.

S - Success: We want you to be successful in achieving your goals, whether that goal is find a job right away or start a new career; OR your goal may be to go to school to complete a degree; some of you may have a goal of obtaining a license or certification in your career field; and for some, your goal may be to start your own business. Finally, I am sure that may be someone in the class today whose goal is to do absolutely NOTHING!! – Good luck on that one. Because the Navy/Navy Reserves wants you to succeed, I must warn you that as you “take a break” your peers are moving ahead. The sooner you start an aggressive job search or finish a course of study, the higher chance you have of succeeding in this national economy. You and your family will have a better quality of life in the long run.

PRE-SEPARATION COUNSELING PART 1 TRANSITION GPS OVERVIEW

Let me explain the Transition GPS. Transition GPS consists of a Core Curriculum Tracks and Capstone. You will be scheduled to attend a series of classes and workshops, collectively referred to as the “Transition GPS Core Curriculum”, which is a 5 day curriculum. It includes:

- **Transition Overview**
- **Transition Resiliency – Lecture and Discussion**
 - Considerations for Families
 - Special Issues
 - Value of a Mentor
- **Military Occupational Code (MOC) Crosswalk**
- **Financial Planning Seminar**
- **Department of Labor Employment Workshop (DOLEW) (mandatory with exemptions – exemptions will be explained later when we go through the checklist)**
- **Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Benefits Briefing (mandatory with no exemptions)**
- **Individual Transition Plan (ITP) Review**

In addition to the Transition GPS Core Curriculum, you may also choose to attend one of three Transition GPS Tracks. The track you will attend will be determined by your personal goals. When we go through Part 2 of today's Pre-separation Counseling Session, you will be answering questions that assess your personal circumstances and that will enable each of you to identify your individual needs and match information and assistance resource referrals available to you. I will talk more about the personal assessment at the end of today's session when I go into more detail about developing your ITP. The three tracks are:

- Education – Accessing Higher Education – 2 days
- Career Technical Training – 2 days
- Entrepreneurship – Starting Your Own Business – 2 days
 - REMEMBER: Each of the two day tracks are in addition to the 5 day GPS Core Curriculum.

The Transition GPS and new policies require each of you to meet Career Readiness Standards, register for VA eBenefits account, develop and complete an ITP(already mentioned), complete an assessment tool that assesses your aptitude, interests, strengths, and skills, and attend a Capstone event.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE – OPTION: Here, the Command Career Counselor should have the option of describing each item below, or skipping them and describing them at the end of the day once the Command Career Counselor has completed going over the checklist. If the Command Career Counselor chooses to wait, Command Career Counselor should tell the class that he/she will explain each of these later in the session.

- **Career Readiness Standards (CRS)** – You must meet new Career Readiness Standards before you separate. I will go over the CRSs at the end of the Pre-separation Counseling session as well as identify the type of documentation you must show. I want to ensure these will be fresh in your mind.
- **eBenefits Registration – Service members demonstrate they have an eBenefits account**
 - If you already have an eBenefits account, then all you have to do today is log-on and bring up your account on my computer or if you brought your own laptop, you can log-on it and bring up your account. I have to verify and document that you have an eBenefits account before you depart today.
 - If there is anyone in class today that has not registered for their eBenefits account, then you will have to do your DS Log-on and register for you eBenefits account before you leave today. Again, I will have to verify and document that you have an eBenefits account.
- **Individual Transition Plan (ITP)** – Each of you are required to complete an ITP over the course of the transition process before you separate.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: Your ITP should serve as your roadmap to keep you on track in achieving your transition goals. When we complete the Pre-separation Counseling Checklist, I will ask you to complete page 1 of Block 1

of your ITP. You are to attach a copy of your DD Form 2648 or DD Form 2648-1 (which ever is appropriate) to your ITP. You are to take your ITP with you to every Transition GPS class you attend and you should update your ITP accordingly. Prior to you separating, retiring, demobilizing or deactivating (choose all that apply to the audience); your ITP will be reviewed by a Command Career Counselor along with and ITP Checklist to verify that you have met your Career Readiness Standards. The ITP has six blocks. Everyone will complete Block 1. The remaining blocks will be completed based on the career path you have or will choose. For example, if your post military goal is to find a job, then you will complete the Employment Section of the ITP. If your career path is to go to a degree completion college or university then you will complete the Education Block of the ITP. And of course, you can change and modify your ITP accordingly. Make sure you document changes in your ITP and date the entries.

Your ITP will not be completed in one day, one week and possible even in a month. It will continue to be developed as you continue your journey through the transition process.

- **Assessment Tool** – Each of you must show documentation that you have completed a standardized assessment tool, selected by your Military Service that assesses your aptitude, interests, strengths, and skills, that can inform you about decisions about education, career technical training, or employment towards a future career field. Contact your local installation Transition Office to find out which assessment tool you are to use and complete.
- **Capstone** – Approximately 90 days before you separate, your Military Service will have you participate in a Capstone event (as determined by your Military Service). During Capstone a representative from your Service will verify you met the CRS, ensure you have completed an ITP, and provide an opportunity for a “warm handoff” with a partner agency (DOL, VA, SBA, others).
 - When we say a “provide an opportunity for a warm handoff” we mean we help connect you with the appropriate partner agency (VA, DOL, SBA) , or other resources that will help you meet your Career Readiness Standards. In some cases, you may have to be scheduled to go back into one of the classes to strengthen your skills or improve your ability to navigate important web sites that will help you achieve your goals. The warm handoff could also mean setting up an individual appointment with a Command Career Counselor or some other subject matter expert to give you the assistance your need for a successful transition.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: Command Career Counselor may want to explain at this point what happens if Service member requires remedial training or further assistance. Service member will be recycled into the appropriate curriculum for gaining CRS verification, referred to the appropriate installation resources for assistance or handed off to VA, DOL, SBA etc., for assistance and follow-up.

Are there any questions about the Transition GPS? If not, let's begin going through the checklist.

PRESEPARATION COUNSELING PART 2 -- PRE-SEPARATION COUNSELING CHECKLIST

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTES:

(1) This may be a good time for the Command Career Counselor to confirm how many Service members brought their Pre-separation Counseling Checklist with them. Command Career Counselors should always have copies available for those who do not have one.

(2) Command Career Counselor should know whether the class consists of a mixed audience (Active Component and Reserve Component Service members as well as any spouses). Command Career Counselor should refer to the appropriate form or both forms based on audience.

Will everyone take out their copy of the Pre-separation Counseling Checklist (DD Form 2648 – for Active Component) OR (DD Form 2648-1 for Demobilizing National Guard and Reserves).

As I stated earlier, over the next few weeks and months, you will be going through the transition process to prepare yourself to leave the military and return to civilian life. We want to help you be career ready to make that transition. You should leave the military meeting clearly defined Career Readiness Standards (CRS). At the end of Phase II of Pre-separation Counseling, I will sign you up to attend the Transition GPS Core Curriculum, the appropriate Transition GPS Track and Capstone.

Our objective for this session (Phase II) is to explain all of the items on the checklist to you in detail so you are aware of each of them. You will use this Pre-separation Counseling Checklist as a reference in planning your transition from the military and throughout your next career.

You have done some amazing things while in the military, met some great people, and learned a lot of very useful and valuable 'transferable' skills. Skills and talents you used in the military that you also can use in the civilian sector are called transferable or "VALUED" skills.

Citizens across America join me in thanking you for your service to our great Nation and the sacrifices you and your families have endured. There is no amount of repayment worthy of the contributions you have voluntarily made on our behalf. Throughout this session, you will be introduced to resources, tools, and a network of professionals available to help you prepare for the journey back to civilian life. The key to a successful transition rests with your strategic planning for the journey ahead.

The tools available to help you transition smoothly have really evolved. The process has been significantly improved. You are very fortunate and we are excited that you will be experiencing such a comprehensive program to assist you in your transition.

In the military, you focused on your unit and the mission. Now is the time to focus on YOU.

The Pre-separation Counseling Checklist serves as your personal needs assessment. As we go through the checklist and you select topics you would like to learn more about, the form becomes a baseline for you to proceed in the appropriate path for your transition. The checklist will help you assess your personal circumstances and assist you in identifying your personal needs and matching information and assistance resource referrals available to help you have a successful transition.

I will now begin guiding you through the Pre-separation Checklist and you will be introduced to the benefits and services you have earned as well as resources available to assist you. Hopefully, this will not only answer the many questions you have, but will enlighten you to the wide array of assistance in place to help you. So, let's get started!

FOR ACTIVE COMPONENT (AC), ACTIVE GUARD RESERVE (AGR), ACTIVE RESERVE (AR), FULL TIME SUPPORT (FTS), AND RESERVE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR (RPA) SERVICE MEMBERS", January 2011 Version

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS.

Instructions for completing this Form: Access to this information will allow the Command Career Command Career Counselor to provide you with individualized support for your specific needs. After we have completed going through the checklist, the DD Form 2648, "Pre-separation Counseling Checklist", a copy of this form will be put into your official military record. You should retain and copy and refer to it thro

Do not use a pencil, red ink or felt tip pen when completing this form. Use a black or blue ink ball point pen to complete this form.

Fill out the form completely and legibly – including the requirement to write your name and social security number at the top of pages 2 through 5.

Write within each fields' boxes. Do not write beyond the outlines of the boxes.

Print all entries neatly.

Always begin entry with the first box, do not leave any blank spaces at the beginning of the fields' boxes.

Do not leave any spaces between words when filling out the fields' boxes.

Do not slash zeros.

Do not hyphenate the number seven.

Do not attempt to use a complete box for punctuation.

If your name or address is longer than the number of boxes, only keep writing until you have filled in all the boxes. Do not continue writing beyond the last box.

Mark with an 'X' in those boxes that require a selection. For example, the boxes in Section IV that require a YES or NO selection by the Service Member and/or Spouse will be marked with an 'X.'

SECTION II – PERSONAL INFORMATION

Block 1. NAME.

Enter your LAST NAME first in 1.a, enter your FIRST NAME in 2.a, and then enter your MIDDLE INITIAL in 3.a. The name field will not include a designation of JR, SR, ESQ, or the Roman numerals I through X. The name will not contain any special characters nor is any punctuation permitted.

Block 2. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER.

Enter your SSN without dashes (-).

Block 3. GRADE.

Enter your military grade without dashes (-).

Grade	Army	Navy	Marines	Air Force
Commissioned Officers				
01	Second Lieutenant	Ensign	Second Lieutenant	Second Lieutenant
02	First Lieutenant	Lieutenant Junior Grade	First Lieutenant	First Lieutenant
03	Captain	Lieutenant	Captain	Captain
04	Major	Lieutenant Commander	Major	Major
05	Lieutenant Colonel	Commander	Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel
06	Colonel	Captain	Colonel	Colonel
07	Brigadier General	Rear Admiral (L)	Brigadier General	Brigadier General
08	Major General	Rear Admiral (U)	Major General	Major General
09	Lieutenant General	Vice Admiral	Lieutenant General	Lieutenant General

10	General	Admiral	General	General
Warrant Officers				
W1	Warrant Officer1			
W2	Chief Warrant Officer2			
W3	Chief Warrant Officer3			
W4	Chief Warrant Officer4			
W5	Chief Warrant Officer5			
Enlisted Personnel				
E1	Private	Seaman Recruit	Private	Airman Basic
E2	Private	Seaman Apprentice	Private First Class	Airman
E3	Private First Class	Seaman	Lance Corporal	Airman First Class
E4	Corporal	Petty Officer, Third Class	Corporal	Senior Airman
E5	Sergeant	Petty Officer, Second Class	Sergeant	Staff Sergeant
E6	Staff Sergeant	Petty Officer, First Class	Staff Sergeant	Technical Sergeant
E7	Sergeant First Class	Chief Petty Officer	First Sergeant Master Sergeant	Senior Master Sergeant
E8	First Sergeant Master Sergeant	Senior Chief Petty Officer	First Sergeant Master Sergeant	Senior Master Sergeant
E9	Command Sergeant Major Sergeant Major	Master Chief Petty Officer	Sergeant Major Master Gunnery Sergeant	Chief Master Sergeant

Block 4. DATE OF BIRTH.

Enter your numerical date of birth Year (4 digits) Month (2 digits) Day (2 digits) without dashes (-).

Block 5. SERVICE

Select one Service by marking the appropriate box with an 'X.'

Block 5a. COMPONENT

Select one Component or Status by marking the appropriate box with an 'X.'

AC	Active Component
AGR	Active Guard Reserve
AR	Active Reserve

FTS	Full Time Support
RPA	Reserve Program Administrator

Block 6. DUTY STATION

Block 6.a. MILITARY INSTALLATION/CITY

Enter the name of the CONUS military installation where the pre-separation counseling is completed. The following abbreviations will be used for the CONUS military installations.

AB	Air Base
AFB	Air Force Base
AMC	Army Medical Center
CP	Camp
FT	Fort
MCAGCC	Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center
MCAS	Marine Corps Air Station
MCB	Marine Corps Base
MCLB	Marine Corps Logistics Base
MCRB	Marine Corps Recruit Depot
MEPS	Military Entrance Processing Station
NAB	Naval Air Base
NAS	Naval Air Station
NCBC	Naval Construction Battalion Center
NMC	Naval Medical Center
NS	Naval Station
NSA	Naval Support Activity
NSB	Naval Submarine Base
RAF	Royal Air Force
USAG	United States Army Garrison
USAREC	United States Army Recruiting Command
USCG	United States Coast Guard

If you are not at a military installation, the U.S. city in which the pre-separation counseling is conducted will be entered into 6.a.

Block 6. b. STATE

Enter the correct U.S. postal abbreviation for the State in which the pre-separation counseling is conducted. If you are receiving your pre-separation counseling at an overseas military installation, enter the correct APO or FPO State. If you live outside of the

50 United States, the District of Columbia, or one of the listed trust territories, enter a default value of “XX.”

AL	ALABAMA
AK	ALASKA
AS	AMERICAN SAMOA
AZ	ARIZONA
AR	ARKANSAS
CA	CALIFORNIA
CO	COLORADO
CT	CONNECTICUT
DE	DELAWARE
DC	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
AE	EUROPE & CANADA
TT	FEDERATED STATES OF MARSHALL ISLANDS, PALAU
FM	FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA
FL	FLORIDA
GA	GEORGIA
GU	GUAM
HI	HAWAII
ID	IDAHO
IL	ILLINOIS
IN	INDIANA
IA	IOWA
KS	KANSAS
KY	KENTUCKY
LA	LOUISIANA
ME	MAINE
MH	MARSHALL ISLANDS
MD	MARYLAND
MA	MASSACHUSETTS
MI	MICHIGAN
MN	MINNESOTA
MS	MISSISSIPPI
MO	MISSOURI
MT	MONTANA
NE	NEBRASKA
NV	NEVADA
NH	NEW HAMPSHIRE
NJ	NEW JERSEY
NM	NEW MEXICO

NY	NEW YORK
NC	NORTH CAROLINA
ND	NORTH DAKOTA
MP	NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OH	OHIO
OK	OKLAHOMA
OR	OREGON
AP	PACIFIC
PA	PENNSYLVANIA
PR	PUERTO RICO
RI	RHODE ISLAND
AA	SOUTH & CENTRAL AMERICA
SC	SOUTH CAROLINA
SD	SOUTH DAKOTA
TN	TENNESSEE
TX	TEXAS
UT	UTAH
VT	VERMONT
VI	VIRGIN ISLANDS
VA	VIRGINIA
WA	WASHINGTON
WV	WEST VIRGINIA
WI	WISCONSIN
WY	WYOMING

6. c. ZIP CODE

Enter the correct nine-digit ZIP Code where the pre-separation counseling was provided in the following format: "12345-6789." If the last four digits are unknown, leave the boxes blank. If the location of the pre-separation counseling is not in one of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, or one of the listed trust territories, enter the applicable APO or FPO number. If ZIP Code is unknown, leave blank.

Block 7. ANTICIPATED DATE OF SEPARATION

Enter your numerical date of separation Year (4 digits) Month (2 digits) Day (2 digits) without dashes (-).

Block 7.a. I AM

Select one by marking the appropriate box with an 'X.'

Block 8. DATE CHECKLIST PREPARED

Enter your numerical date the pre-separation counseling was completed Year (4 digits)
Month (2 digits) Day (2 digits) without dashes (-).

Block 8.a. Place an X in this box ONLY if you have 89 days or less remaining on active duty before separation or retirement.

Block 9. Is your spouse/family member/legal guardian/designee present during pre-separation counseling?

Select one by marking the appropriate box with an 'X.'

Block 9.a. Are you willing to be contacted after separation or retirement regarding the value of the transition assistance programs and services you received?

Select one by marking the appropriate box with an 'X.'

Block 10 thru Block 28 YOU will select YES or NO by marking the appropriate box with an 'X.' If available the Spouse will select YES or NO by marking the appropriate box with an 'X.' If the box is "grayed out" no selection choice will be offered. The Command Career Counselor will annotate the reference information within the REFERRED TO box if the Service Member or Spouse selects YES for more information on the topic item of interest.

SECTION IV

Pre-separation Checklist #10

Effects of a Career Change

The purpose of this section is to help you (and your spouse) develop an awareness of the possible effects of career changes.

Your military career has been both challenging and rewarding and you should be proud of your accomplishments. Now you are ready for a new career and you face new challenges as a civilian. Because you want to be confident the decisions you make about your future are the right ones, you may experience stress or anxiety as a result of changes, problems, and even opportunities.

Stress is not an attitude, trait or even a personal characteristic. It is a physical response to a situation that, if ignored, can lead to conflict, mental and physical exhaustion or even serious illness.

As you make your transition to civilian life, you need to identify the indications of stress in yourself and implement the coping techniques that work best for you. Some indicators of stress are constant fatigue, headaches, trouble sleeping or sleeping too much, stomach problems, feeling nervous and a desire to be alone. If you find you just can't seem to move forward, consider seeking assistance to help you.

Everyone knows that changing careers is a stressful undertaking, perhaps even more so for those who have been in the military for many years. You not only leave the military, but along with that, you leave a large portion of your identity. For example, a doctor who goes to school for many years, will earn a professional title for the rest of his or her life. As a Service member, you have worked for many years to proudly achieve your current rank or grade, however, upon leaving the Armed Forces, you leave this rank or grade behind. The civilian world, for the most part, does not recognize significance of the title you earned.

Some people transition and adjust to civilian life easily. Others may have a more difficult time. Transition can be traumatic and stressful, but it also opens up a whole range of new possibilities. If you approach your transition as an opportunity to grow, you have already taken a giant step toward reframing your identity.

Now is a good time to begin to think about the changes that lie ahead and plan for dealing with stress before it becomes a reality. You will be provided helpful resources for your transition. You may want to write down the ones that will be best for you on your DD Form 2648 in the "referred to" column.

Be reassured that there are many professionals available for you to speak with and many agencies exist to help you with your transition and the stress you may experience. Some of these professionals and agencies on the base are:

- The Base Chaplain

- Base Medical Clinic
- Behavioral Health Clinic
- Education Office (for assessment and college credit information)
- Family Support/Service Center or Airman and Family Readiness Center for the Air Force.

These centers have programs and Command Career Counselors to assist you and your family members in seeking employment in government and the private sector, counseling, job listings, career workshops, resume writing, reference libraries, training, and job search assistance, all with the goal of helping you and your family in your transition. Keep in mind that your family members are also transitioning into a new life and you need to go through this together. They can be your best source of comfort and encouragement during this time.

There are also agencies outside of the installation which can help too. Those include:

- The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- VA Vet Centers

Congress established the provision for readjustment counseling through Vet centers as a service available to you and your family after the military. Know that Vet centers are not the same as VA Medical Centers. These centers are staffed with professionals experienced and trained in providing mental health and readjustment counseling to veterans.

Another useful resource is Military OneSource, which is a service that provides immediate information concerning support available at the installation or in the community. Masters level Command Career Counselors can help provide information and referrals on topics, such as:

- Financial well-being
- Relocation
- Work and career
- Education
- Deployment and reunion
- Military life
- Parenting and child care
- Health
- Everyday issues

You may want to write down this website: www.militaryonesource.com or the toll-free number: 1-800-342-9647. (Overseas: 00-800-3429-6477.)

Military and Veterans Service Organizations are also good resources for assistance and guidance. Veteran Service Organizations provide advocacy, education and other support needs for the unique issues facing veterans. Many have their own job referral and registration services and they also sponsor job fairs and provide networking opportunities. As for Military Service Organizations, they can provide assistance and representation for millions of veterans, Service members and families. These organizations offer a wide

variety of different services such as scholarships for the children of military personnel, funding memorials and museums to honor those who have served their country, and more!

Also check into your local community's social service agencies, support groups and self-help books. You can search online for these agencies and resources in your area.

If you think you need more assistance or information regarding the effects of a career change, check "yes" in block 10 on the form. Then in the "referred to" area, write one of these resources down.

If not, simply check "no."

I hope this information will be helpful to you in your transition and that yours will be an easy one. But know and be comforted that there are a lot of agencies and professionals that are in place to help you with these very real situations.

Pre-separation Checklist #11a
U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) sponsored Employment Workshops and Service sponsored Transition workshops/seminars

The purpose of this section is to make you aware of the DOL Employment Workshop and how this program can greatly benefit you. In addition to the DOL Employment Workshop (DOLEW), the Military Services also provide additional transition employment workshops and seminars such as Federal Resume Writing.

The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) is a congressionally mandated program designed to help you and your family make a smooth and successful transition to civilian life.

The program is a combined effort of the Departments of Defense, Labor, Veterans Affairs, Homeland Security, Office of Personnel Management, Small Business Administration and the Department of Education.

The time you invest before separating will pay dividends when you are ready to seek another career. The DOL Employment Workshop gives you (and your spouse) a first-hand look of what to expect after Military Service and will ease your transition to civilian life.

REMEMBER: Spouses of eligibility transitioning Service members are eligible for job assistance through their local transition office. They should also contact the installation Spouse Employment Office which has a very robust spouse employment program. Spouses are strongly encouraged to attend the DOLEW as long as they do not take the seat from a transitioning Service member.

This workshop provides information on various job search techniques, labor market information, resume and interview skills, and much more. It will also help with individual transition planning, employment assistance, small business information, priority of service for veterans in DOL programs, and many other services.

Studies have indicated that people who attend DOL Employment Workshops find employment sooner than those not participating. The workshop provides valuable training and information that will give you an edge over other applicants. If you attend a workshop following your transition you could possibly pay \$100's if not \$1,000's of dollars for the same training in the private sector. This workshop is available to you and your spouse at no cost.

The DOL Employment Workshop is available: (explain where, when and how they have to register)

Before you attend the workshop you must complete and present documentation of a standardized assessment tool, selected by your Military Service to assess aptitudes, interests, strengths, skills, or leanings used to inform a Service members decisions about education, technical training, or employment towards a future career field. While all SMs can benefit from this assessment, the assessment must be given to the target population,

i.e., Service members completing their first term of duty, 18-24 year old Service members, those being involuntarily separated, and those Service members separating rapidly. To find out what assessment tool you are to use, you must contact a Command Career Counselor at your installation's Transition Office. The contact information for this installation is:

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: Command Career Counselor should provide the location and phone number at the installation of the Military Service hosting the Pre-separation Counseling session. Command Career Counselor should explain what each Service calls TAP for those Service members that may choose to use a sister Service for transition assistance.

Army – Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) Center
Navy -- Fleet and Family Support Center
Air Force -- Airman and Family Readiness Center
Marine Corps – Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) Office

Once you separate, you can still get help with employment by contacting the nearest local Department of Labor American Job Center in your local community. They provide veterans priority service and you can get the same assistance and information there that you would have received by attending a DOL Employment Workshop. For Post 9/11 veterans you receive priority service for up to six months after separation. That also applies to those eligible National Guard and Reserves. Make sure you download your "Gold Card" by going to <http://www.dol.gov/vets/goldcard.html> and take it with you when you visit an American Job Center. Your Gold Card will guarantee you priority service. You will hear more about this when you attend the DOLEW.

You are required to attend the DOL Employment Workshop unless you meet the criteria for an exemption. I will explain the exemption criteria later. Please check "YES" in block 11a. In the "referred to" section, please write in the contact information I provided.

Pre-separation Checklist #11b Verification of Military Experience and Training (VMET), DD Form 2586

The purpose of the VMET section is to inform you of how to obtain your VMET and how to use this document.

It's a smart move to download your VMET as soon as you have decided to leave the Service. We recommend that you have the form at least 120 days before your separation date. Although the VMET is not an official transcript, this document can assist you in verifying the type of military experience and training you received to potential employers. It will also help as you write resumes, interview for jobs, and negotiate credits at schools and obtain licenses and certificates.

Additionally, the VMET can be useful in discussing civilian occupations related to your military service. VMET helps you translate military terminology and training into civilian

terms, and establishes your capabilities with prospective employers. It can also be beneficial if you apply to a college or vocational institute.

The VMET document is available to all eligible departing Service members, including eligible National Guard and Reserves online at www.dmdc.osd.mil/vmet or visit the transition offices for more information.

This document is created from automated records on file. Missing information on members currently serving may be added through the standard personnel file submissions to Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC). Errors may or may not be corrected for separated or retired members. Please visit your local personnel office or see "Data Omissions/Errors" FAQs on the VMET web site or call DMDC at 1-800-727-3677.

If you want more information on the VMET, or if you need to download your personal VMET, mark "yes" and in the "referred to" column put the DMDC website, or the transition office.

If you already have your VMET, or have enough information, check "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #11c

Civilian Occupations Corresponding to Military Occupations/ONET

- **Licensing and Certification**
- **American Job Centers**
- **COOL**
- **USMAPS**
- **DANTES**

The purpose of this section is to inform you of the resources available through O*NET and other education and training tools.

The O*NET was developed under the sponsorship of the US Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. It is the nation's primary source of occupational information. The O*NET database contains information on hundreds of different occupations and describes job functions, what tools are used in specific jobs, the knowledge, skill and abilities required for the position and the type of training and education required.

O*NET also contains Career Exploration Tools and a set of valuable assessment instruments for workers and students looking to find or change careers. These tools include an ability, interest and work importance profiler. In addition, it helps with identifying industry standard keywords you can use when writing your resume. This database is available to you at no cost and is continually updated.

O*NET has a section entitled mynextmove.org. This site is useful for researching potential occupations. If you go to this site you can browse careers, search for careers by keywords and even find a career you never imagined.

If you want to know more about O*NET mark "yes" in block 11c and write, www.onetcenter.org in the "referred to" column.

If not, mark "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #11c(1)

Licensing, Certification and Apprenticeship Information

The purpose of the licensing and certification section is to inform you of some of the advantages to having particular credentials when pursuing an occupation outside of the military. This will help you increase your employability.

Credentialing is the “umbrella term” for licenses and certifications. Some federal, state or local laws may require specific credentials to legally perform some jobs. Employers also may choose to hire only employees who have certain credentials, or offer to pay those employees more. Having credentials may improve your prospects for promotion. Credentialed Service members demonstrate to prospective civilian employers that their skills are on par with their civilian peers.

There are two primary types of credentialing, licenses and certifications.

Licenses

Governmental agencies (federal, state, or local) grant licenses to individuals to practice a specific occupation, such as a medical license for doctors. State or federal laws or regulations define the standards that individuals must meet to become licensed. For these types of professions, licenses are typically mandatory.

Certifications

Certifications are different. Non-governmental agencies, associations, and even private sector companies may grant certificates to individuals who meet predetermined qualifications. These qualifications are generally set by professional associations (for example, the National Commission for Certification of Crane Operators) or by industry and product-related organizations (for example, Novell Certified Engineer). Certification is typically an optional credential; although some state licensure boards and some employers may require certification. For many occupations, more than one organization may offer certifications.

Be aware that licenses and certifications can be expensive. You may be able to use your GI Bill to help with the cost of credentialing. The VA’s Website <http://www.gibill.va.gov/> includes information on eligibility for these benefit programs, as well as documents and forms which will aid veterans, family members, and school officials. Tests must be specifically approved for the G.I. Bill. VA can pay only for the cost of the tests and not other fees connected with obtaining a license or certification.

Many veterans leave the military with a lot of skills and experience qualifying them for comparable civilian occupations, sometimes with little or no additional training. You will find that there will be positions at companies that require a license or certification. However, it is important to check with the state in which you’ll reside for the required credential needed. Or you may check with the particular occupation’s professional

organization to learn about the credentialing requisites. You'll have a clear advantage by having your licenses and certifications in order when applying for jobs.

If you do not need any further information on licensing and certification, mark "no" in the box provided.

If you would like more information and assistance, mark "yes" and in the 'referred to' column you might want to write one of the resources I share with you.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: Command Career Counselor should have list of resources on hand to provide to Service members.

TurboTAP is a web portal for military transitioners. It is a fairly comprehensive overview of transition and benefits, including licensing and certification information. You can log onto www.TurboTAP.org to visit the site. You will find extensive information relating to this topic in both the interactive Career Decision Toolkit and the Pre-Separation Guide.

I would also recommend that you visit the Base/Installation Educational Office or DANTES representative. DANTES also has a website at: <http://www.dantes.doded.mil/>.

In the past, the financial resources available to help become credentialed after leaving the military were limited primarily to assist with the cost of additional training and/or education that might be required. Legislation has allowed for payment of exam fees through the Montgomery GI Bill. Application and renewal fees are not typically covered.

When you attend the Military Occupational Code (MOC) crosswalk module during your one week Transition GPS Core curriculum, you will learn how to translate your military skills into civilian language. You will also develop a "gap analysis" which will help you see any gaps between your military skills and those required in the civilian industry. You will also learn whether or not your military occupation requires a civilian license or certification and if it does, you will be able to identify the requirements you need to meet in order to acquire your civilian certification.

You are encouraged to explore the robust collection of information contained in the Career Decision Toolkit located at www.TurboTAP.org.

Pre-separation Checklist #11c (1)(a)
Department of Labor America Job Centers

This section refers to the Department of Labor’s America Job Centers website which will help you explore credentialing requirements for various career opportunities. The web address is: <http://www.careeronestop.org/CREDENTIALING/CredentialingHome.asp>
This section of the website has information on credentials, licenses, apprenticeships, and resources.

If you would like more information and assistance, mark “yes” and in the ‘referred to’ column you can write the word “website.”

If you don’t need any further information, mark “no” in the box provided.

Pre-separation Checklist #11c (1)(b)

U.S. Army Credentialing On-line

COOL (Credentialing Opportunities On-Line) originally designed for Army personnel, explains how you can meet civilian certification and license requirements related to their Military Occupational Specialties (MOSs). The web address is <https://www.cool.army.mil>. Although intended for Soldiers, you will see by the job titles listed that you are more than likely to find a similar occupation or job duties to other Military Services with similar job titles or occupational codes.

You can use this site to:

- Get background information about civilian licensure and certification
- Identify licenses and certifications relevant to MOSs
- Learn how to fill gaps between military training and experience and civilian credentialing requirements
- Learn about resources available to Service members that can help them gain civilian job credentials
- Explore financial assistance to pay for licenses, training and so forth

Credentialing requirements information currently includes enlisted and Warrant Officer MOSs. Current plans do not include adding MOSs for officers.

If you would like more information and assistance, mark “yes” and in the ‘referred to’ column you might want to write “website.”

If you don’t need any further information on COOL, mark “no” in the box provided.

Pre-separation Checklist #11c (1)(c)
U.S. Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP)

USMAP is a program for Service members who are serving in the United States Marine Corps, Coast Guard, or Navy that allows you to have the opportunity to complete different civilian apprenticeship elements required under civilian apprenticeship programs. This program is a valuable effort to allow you to improve your job skills all the while gaining ground on requirements for civilian apprenticeship programs.

The program is recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), and they issue a certificate of completion when the program is completed. The DOL certificate is widely acknowledged and accepted by many companies and organizations throughout the nation.

The USMAP is a win-win for the military in that it helps streamline and formalize different types of training in the military and civilian worlds, and helps bridge the gap between the two different types of training.

Participation in the USMAP does not require you to make any off duty investment of hours. You can use up to half of the program on the job requirements directly from time spent doing your job on active duty.

The apprenticeship program is a structured, formal training program. To apply, you need to send an application to USMAP. Once your application has been processed, you will receive instructional materials on how to record your hours toward completion of the program.

If you would like more information and assistance, mark “yes” and in the ‘referred to’ column you might want to write the base education office or enter the website address listed on your DD Form 2648.

If you don’t need any further information on this topic, mark “no” in the box provided.

Pre-separation Checklist #11c(1)(d) Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES)

Have you heard of or used DANTES? It stands for the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support. Let's talk about this program and how it can benefit you.

DANTES has traditional and non-traditional education opportunities. They offer several different programs such as:

- Certification Programs
- Command Career Counselor Support Programs
- Distance Learning Programs
- Tuition Assistance Programs
- Examination Programs
- Higher Education Programs
- Reserve Component Programs
- Troops to Teachers
- Scholarships for Severely Injured Service Members

DANTES is the home of the College Level Examination Program, also known as CLEP and the Service Member Opportunity College or SOC.

CLEP provides students of any age with the opportunity to demonstrate college-level achievement through a program of exams in undergraduate college courses. There are 2,900 colleges that grant credit and/or advanced standing for CLEP exams.

By taking one or more CLEP exams, students can get college credit for what they already know, which saves tuition dollars and time. CLEP helps satisfy a proficiency requirement.

SOC was created in 1972 to provide educational opportunities to Service members, who, because they frequently moved from place to place, had trouble completing college degrees. Today SOC is a consortium of more than 1800 colleges and universities that provides educational opportunities for Service members and their families. The contract is managed for DoD by the DANTES program.

Interested military students should first enroll in an associate, bachelor, or graduate-level degree program at a participating school campus, their military installation, or at armories within the United States and overseas. SOC coordinates associate and bachelor's degrees in a variety of curriculum areas for the Army (SOCAD), Navy (SOCNAV), Marine Corps (SOCMAR), and Coast Guard (SOCCOAST). These degree programs are offered by colleges and universities and are accessible to Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard installations worldwide. Within each curriculum or degree network, member colleges agree to accept each other's credits in transfer. If Service members and their family members are in isolated locations, they won't be left out. They can take courses via "distance learning" methods using the Internet, correspondence, computer, or video.

The last item I want to discuss is the DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSSTs) program. This is an extensive series of examinations in college subjects that are comparable to the final or end-of-course examinations in undergraduate courses. The American Council on Education, or ACE, recommends 3 semester hours of credit per test. DANTES funds DSST testing for eligible Service members and personnel at DANTES military test centers.

For more information on DANTES, mark “yes” and in the referred to column you might want to write “website,” or the base education office.

If you don’t need any further information on this topic, mark “no” in the box provided.

Pre-separation Checklist #11c (1)(e)
U.S. Navy Credentialing On-line

The Credentialing Opportunities On-line website is designed for Navy personnel. It explains how you can meet civilian certification and license requirements related to your rating, job, designator, and occupation.

You can use COOL to:

- Get background information about civilian licensure and certification.
- Identify licenses and certifications relevant to your military rating.
- Learn how to fill gaps between military training and experience and civilian credentialing requirements.
- Learn about resources available to you to help gain civilian job credentials.
- Explore financial assistance.

For more information on COOL, mark “yes” and in the referred to column you might want to write “website.”

If you don’t need any further information on this topic, mark “no” in the box provided.

Pre-separation Checklist #11d TurboTAP

I have already mentioned the DoD TurboTAP web site at <http://www.TurboTAP.org> when I addressed item 11c(1) – Licensing, Certification and Apprenticeship Information .

TurboTAP It is a comprehensive web portal for separation and retirement related issues and provides a great deal more information and resources beyond credentialing. This website provides links to resources for money management, veterans' benefits, education and training assistance and a multitude of other sources for information. TurboTAP also provides information on health care and links visitors to the various service transition websites for service specific information and resources.

TurboTAP.org hosts the acclaimed DoD Career Decision Toolkit which allows individuals to experience interactive assessments, teaching and training tools, plus thousands of resources designed to assist military personnel and family members plan a successful transition from military service. The site also provides registration opportunities for virtual learning opportunities on a multitude of transition related topics. You should definitely check "yes" on this block and in the "referred to" column, put "website" and then visit www.turbotap.org

If you don't want to have access to this information, or aren't interested, check "no."

**Pre-separation Checklist #11d(1)
Employment Hub**

The Employment Hub is a resource available to you if you are ready to start your job search process before you attend the DOLEW . It like doing advanced research before you attend class. This hub helps you translate military skills and experience into civilian terms, helps you build a resume and search for jobs. It also provides essential interview tips. In addition, the employment hub serves as a resource to link you with job search websites and databanks.

For more information, mark “yes” and in the referred to column you might want to write “website.”

If you don’t need any further information on this topic, mark “no” in the box provided.

Pre-separation Checklist #11d(2)

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: Inform Service members that Hire Vets first is obsolete, check N/A.

Pre-separation Checklist #11d(3) State Job Boards

Each State has a state job board. These job boards, which are typically electronic, have job postings and are found on the specific state website. Employers can search for job applicants using their state site and you can post your information, such as a job experience profile and/or resume, directly on most state job board sites. These website job boards serve as a place where individuals seeking employment and businesses seeking employees can be matched up and brought together to fit each other's needs. These are free resources to employers and to you. To explore state job boards go to:

www.careeronestop.org/jobsearch/cos_jobsites.aspx and select the specific state.

For more information, mark "yes" and in the "referred to" column you might want to write "website."

If you don't need any further information on this topic, mark "no" in the box provided.

Pre-separation Checklist #11d(4)
DOL REALifelines (Recovery & Employment Assistance Lifelines)

The Department of Labor's Recovery and Employment Assistance Lifelines (REALifelines) provides veterans and transitioning Service members who have been wounded and injured as a result of the War on Terrorism, and their family members, with the resources they need to successfully transition to a rewarding career.

Developed by the U.S. DoL's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), the REALifelines Advisor provides valuable information and access to contact information for one-on-one employment assistance and online resources to assist wounded and injured transitioning Service members and veterans in their reintegration into the civilian workforce.

While this site is primarily intended for use by wounded and injured transitioning service members, it offers extensive information and resources that can benefit *all* veterans.

If you have been injured or wounded while on active duty or if you are a family member who needs assistance, please mark "yes" and write this phone number: 1-866-487-2365, in the "referred to" column. That number will connect you with a REALifelines representative and get you the assistance you deserve.

Pre-separation Checklist #11e Public and Community Service Opportunities (PACS)

The purpose of the Public and Community Service Employment block is to encourage and assist you and your spouse to register for and enter public and community service employment.

You can put your military training and skills to greater use continuing your service at the National, state, and local levels. Military service has prepared and equipped you with unique experiences possessed by only a small percentage of the American population. While planning for your transition options, consider non-profit, public and community service organizations such as schools, hospitals, law enforcement agencies, social service agencies and many more for employment opportunities.

This unique career field enables you to lend your military training to help address compelling community issues and challenges in education, public safety, health and human services, the environment, and more. Opportunities may include efforts to tutor children and adults, rehabilitate housing for low-income families, immunize children against preventable diseases, respond to natural disasters, mentor young people, help persons with disabilities and the elderly maintain their independence, and manage after-school programs for social and academic enrichment, to name a few.

At the federal government level, extraordinary efforts are being made to attract trained military talent into the federal workforce. Transitioning Service members (i.e., soon-to-be veterans) have technical skills in areas of critical importance, and many also already have security clearances required for some federal positions.

There are as many reasons to serve as there are people who serve--from solving problems in your community to sharing your skills to serving your country. If you are interested in continuing to serve America, you are encouraged to explore public or community service options.

For more information, mark "yes" and in the referred to column you might want to write transition office or state employment service office or visit www.nationalservice.gov or www.serve.gov for more information.

If you don't need any further information on this topic, mark "no" in the box provided.

Pre-separation Checklist #11f

Teacher and Teacher's Aide Opportunities/Troops to Teachers

Did you know that over 15,000 of your fellow Service members have successfully transitioned to a second career as public school teachers through the Troops to Teachers (TTT) program? Your leadership, planning, and organizational skills are the very skills teachers need to be successful.

Troops to Teachers offers military personnel, active or reserve, assistance in pursuing a new career in public education as teachers. Qualified personnel may be eligible for a stipend to help pay for the cost of a teacher certification program or receive a bonus to teach in a "high needs" school.

The basic requirement for the academic program (e.g., Math, Science, or History) is that you must hold a baccalaureate or advanced degree from an accredited institution at the time of application. However, if you haven't completed your degree, but plan to do so once you leave the Service, you can still provisionally enroll now and start your active participation once you graduate.

If you are interested in teaching in the vocational or technical field, you need a minimum of one year of college (or the equivalent – use your SMART or ARTS transcript) with six years of experience in a vocational or technical field, or meet the state vocation/technical instructor certification requirements if they are different.

Although all individuals whose last period of service is characterized as honorable can receive counseling and assistance from a state TTT office, to be eligible for financial assistance participants must have:

1. Retired from any component, or
2. Separated with six or more years of creditable service towards retirement, or
3. Separated with a service-determined physical disability.

More detailed eligibility criteria and application procedures may be found on the Troops to Teacher home page: www.proudtoserveagain.com or http://www.dantes.doded.mil/Sub%20Pages/TTT/TTT_Main.html. These websites are on your form.

You owe it to yourself to consider teaching. It is not an easy career but is one of immense satisfaction that allows you to continue your experience of service to the nation.

If you are interested, check "yes" and write the website or base education office contact information in the "referred to" column. One of the Troops to Teachers state managers will contact you and assist you through the process.

If you aren't interested, simply check "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #11g Federal Employment Opportunities

Another option available to you after you leave the service is working for the federal government. Let's spend a moment discussing the information you need to know about federal employment opportunities.

There are three main ways to acquire a federal position:

- Merit promotion,
- Special Hiring Authorities, and
- Competitive Appointment.

The Merit Promotion access method is through the Veterans' Employment and Opportunities Act (VEOA). We will cover additional special hiring authorities later in the checklist when we cover veterans' preference for federal positions.

Veterans have access to Merit Promotion positions through VEOA. How this works is that a veteran can apply to a merit promotion announcement that is open to candidates outside the agency, but not open to the general public like a competitive appointment. Thus the veteran competes against other prior civil-service candidates only. A veteran given a VEOA appointment will be given a career or career conditional appointment in the competitive service.

To be eligible you must have separated under honorable conditions and be a preference eligible or veteran separated after substantially completing 3 years of continuous active duty service (veterans released in close proximity to the 3 year tour are considered eligible).

If you are interested and eligible for this access program, you should seek out agency merit promotion announcements open to candidates outside the agency. Applications should be submitted directly to the agency. Please note, veterans who have career status or are reinstatement eligible are not eligible for VEOA appointments.

For more information, mark "yes" and in the "referred to" column write "civilian personnel" or "family support center" for more detailed information. Or you can go to www.fedshirevets.gov/ for on-line assistance and contact information.

If you don't need any further information on this topic, mark "no" in the box provided.

Pre-separation Checklist #11g(1)
USAJOBS

USAJOBS is the official job site of the United States Federal Government. It serves as the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) website. With USAJOBS, you can search for federal jobs and verify if you qualify for veteran preference points and other federal benefit programs. It also includes helpful information on how to submit an application packet.

For more information, mark “yes” and in the “referred to” column write “website.”
www.usajobs.gov

If you don’t need any further information on this topic, mark “no” in the box provided.

**Pre-separation Checklist #11g(2)
Go-Defense**

If you are interested in a career in national defense this website will be very helpful. It includes many levels of employment ranging from entry level to executive positions as well as non-appropriated fund jobs. Additionally, this website has links to Department of Defense agency websites.

For more information, mark “yes” and in the “referred to” column write this web site:
<http://godefense.cpms.osd.mil>.

If you don't need any further information on this topic, mark “no” in the box provided.

Pre-separation Checklist #11g(3) Veterans' Preference in Federal Employment

In order to receive preference for a federal job, you must have been discharged or released from active duty in the Armed Forces under honorable conditions (i.e., with an honorable or general discharge).

A "point system" is used to determine veterans' hiring preference:

Five-point preference

Five points are given to honorably separated veterans who have served more than 180 consecutive days of active duty before October 14, 1976 (including service during training under the six-month Reserve or National Guard programs), or during any war or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized (such as Desert Shield/Storm) and served continuously for 24 months or the full period called or ordered to active duty (including for training). Retired members of the Armed Forces at or above the rank of Major or Lieutenant Commander are no longer eligible for the five-point preference. Their preference is contingent upon a disability.

Ten-point preference

Ten points are given to disabled veterans and veterans who are awarded the Purple Heart and honorably separated. The point system program is administered by OPM. The VA issues letters to OPM indicating the degree of disability for veterans' preference purposes. Hiring preference is also granted to the spouse of an unemployable disabled veteran, the unmarried widow or widower of a veteran, or the mother of a deceased or disabled veteran. Any federal agency personnel officer can give you more information on the point system.

If you are currently in the service, you could qualify for 5 preference points based on the information that is contained in your application. To be entitled to preference you must produce a DD Form 214 prior to applying for this program.

Military retirees, who are at or above the rank of major, are not entitled to preference unless they are a 30% or more disabled veteran.

Reservists who are retired from the Reserves but are not receiving retired pay are not considered "retired military" for purposes of veterans' preference.

You need to check with your local human resources department or visit Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at www.fedshirevets.gov/job/vetpref/index.aspx to determine if you are preference eligible.

If you believe that you have not been properly accorded your rights, you have several different avenues of complaint. This will depend on the nature of the complaint and your veteran status. You may file a complaint with the Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) at:

www.dol.gov/elaws/vets/vetpref/agency.htm. If VETS is unable to resolve the complaint within 60 days, the veteran may appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board at: <https://e-appeal.mspb.gov/>.

For more information, mark “yes” and in the “referred to” column and write down one of the resources that I have mentioned.

You can utilize the OPM site at: www.fedshirevets.gov/job/vetpref/index.aspx.

If you don’t need any further information on this topic, mark “no” in the box provided.

Pre-separation Checklist #11g(4) Veterans Federal Procurement Opportunities

This section of the checklist will be beneficial if you are interested in starting your own business. In 1999, the Small Business Development Act set an annual government wide goal that three percent of all prime contract/subcontract awards should be given to small businesses owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans each fiscal year,. This automatically gives you an advantage over other small businesses when competing for government contracts.

In addition, there is an Executive Order, number 13360, which requires federal procurement officials and prime contractors to provide small businesses owned and controlled by veterans or service-disabled veterans with the maximum possible opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts awarded by any federal agency, including subcontracts.

Service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses are awarded government contracts through a sole-source or a set-aside award based on competition that is restricted to these firms. To find the competitive procurement announcements visit www.fbo.gov. Before the award of a contract, the veteran owned company must be registered in the Central Contractor Registration system at www.ccr.gov.

There is a Mentor-Protégé Program offering substantial assistance to you if you are a small disadvantaged business. Be sure to check out what is available through the SBA.

If you want more information on this topic, check “yes” and in the “referred to” column write in “SBA.gov.”

If you aren’t interested in learning more about federal procurement opportunities, check “no.”

Pre-separation Checklist #11g(5) Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Special Hiring Authorities

There are several ways to get a federal job. One way is by utilizing a Special Appointing Authority for Veterans which is a noncompetitive appointment. Eligibility under these types of special authorities gives you a very significant advantage over others because you do not compete outside the special authority category.

As an example of how this works, say an agency has two candidates qualified for a particular position. The agency can simply appoint the eligible veteran (using a special hiring authority) to the position for which the veteran is qualified. Use of these special authorities is up to the discretion of the agency.

To receive special appointing authorities you must have been discharged or released from active duty in the Armed Forces under honorable conditions (i.e., with an honorable or general discharge).

We are going to talk about two authorities. First, the Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) and second the 30 percent or more disabled veteran authority.

VRA

The Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) is a special authority where agencies can appoint an eligible veteran without open competition. Here is how it works. Any military service is considered qualifying for GS-3 or equivalent. To be eligible for VRA, veterans may be appointed to any position they are qualified for, up to GS-11 or equivalent.

If the veteran has 2 years of satisfactory employment, the veteran is then converted to a career-conditional job. Note, however, that a veteran may be given a noncompetitive temporary or term appointment based on VRA eligibility. These appointments do not lead to career jobs.

Once on-board, VRAs are treated like any other employee within the organization and may be promoted, reassigned, or transferred.

Eligible veterans include:

- (a) Disabled veterans; or
- (b) Veterans who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during a war, or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized; **or**
- (c) Veterans who, while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces, participated in a United States military operation for which an Armed Forces Service Medal was awarded; **or**
- (d) Recently separated veterans.
- (e) Veterans claiming eligibility on the basis of service in a campaign or expedition for which a medal was awarded must be in receipt of the campaign badge or medal.

You should contact directly the federal agency personnel office where you are interested in working to find out about VRA opportunities.

30 Percent or More Disabled Veterans

If you are 30% or more disabled, you may be given a temporary or term position for which you are qualified. Unlike VRA however, there is no grade limitation. If you then have a satisfactory performance, you may be converted at any time to a career-conditional appointment.

You should contact the federal agency personnel office in the location where you are interested in working to find out about opportunities. You must submit a copy of a letter dated within the last 12 months from the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Department of Defense certifying receipt of compensation for a service-connected disability of 30% or more.

If you want more information on this topic, check “yes” and in the “referred to” column write in “OPM.gov.”

If you aren’t interested in learning more about this topic, check “no.”

Pre-separation Checklist #11h

Hiring Preference in Non-Appropriated Fund (NAF) Jobs

The purpose of this section is to let you know that you might be eligible for a one-time preference for a Non-Appropriated Fund job.

NAF jobs are found on military installations, as well as at Departments of Transportation and Veterans Affairs activities. NAF positions are filled by employees who work in three areas of the civilian work force: the career executive force; general work force; and entry level workers. They may be skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled and may even be foremen or supervisors.

How do you determine if you are eligible for the hiring preference? You need one of the following:

- you are an involuntary separate and have an honorable discharge with the SPD code that provides transition benefits, or
- you are separating with a special separation benefit, or
- separating with the voluntary separation incentive.

Keep in mind that this is a one-time preference for you and your family members for NAF positions you, or they, are qualified to perform.

If you don't know your specific SPD (Separation Program Designator) code, you may want to visit the personnel office for more information. This is the code placed in block 26 of the DD Form 214 and the narrative reason for the SPD code is in block 28.

If you are interested in more information on NAF jobs and the preference, check "yes" in block 11h, and write in "Civilian Personnel/Employment Office or the NAF Personnel Office" or this website: (www.cpms.osd.mil/nafpo/nafpoemploy_links.aspx) in the "referred to" column.

If you are not eligible or aren't interested in a NAF position, simply check "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #11i

State Employment Agencies

Once you leave the military, there are state employment agencies to assist you in finding a job. But they provide a lot more than just job assistance. These centers offer you the best chance of finding employment. Veterans who use these centers receive priority for job referrals, testing, counseling and other services. If you have not yet been to a state employment agency, I would strongly encourage you to go and take advantage of all the services that are available to you. Services and benefits vary from state to state, and in most states you can register with the employment agency on-line.

The state employment agencies and one-stop career centers have Veteran Employment Representatives specifically there to assist you in a wide-range of employment issues. The Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists exclusively serve veterans. Their main focus is on veterans who have barriers to employment and are in need of intensive services. There are also Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) who only work with veterans. They provide employment, training and placement services directly to veterans. LVERs also conduct employer outreach.

The American Job Centers website has a resource that can help you identify potential careers using your current occupation. By selecting a career on myskillsmyfuture.org, you can explore training, compare skills banks, examine typical job duties and technology, and search employers and jobs. This site also provides information about the field and current labor market information for the career selected.

In order to locate your nearest state employment office, use the telephone directory or visit the service locator website at www.servicelocator.org.

I recommend you check "yes" in this block and write in the website "servicelocator.org". You never know when you may need assistance.

If you aren't interested in more information, check "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #11i(1) American Job Centers

Let's now talk about where the veterans' representatives are located. American Job Centers are designed to provide a full range of assistance to any and all job seekers under one roof. These centers were established under a program called the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) which I will explain later. The centers offer employment-related services where you can visit a center in person or in most states connect to the center's information through PC or kiosk remote access.

One-stops are designed to be conveniently located in the community and provide a wealth of information to all, including persons with disabilities and persons with limited English-speaking ability.

Another reason for visiting an American Job Center is that it connects you to employment, education, and training services provided through local, state, and federal programs. These centers are a statewide network and offer a variety of services.

www.careeronestop.org is also beneficial in finding career information. This site has a resource that will help you identify potential careers using your current occupation. By selecting a career on myskillsmyfuture.org, you can explore training, compare skills banks, examine typical job duties and technology, and search employers and jobs. This site also provides information about the field and current labor market information for the career selected.

If you are interested in learning more, check "yes" and in the "referred to" column write down the contact information. You can find an American Job Center by calling the toll-free help line at (877) US-2JOBS or by using the website at www.servicelocator.org or the site listed on the DD Form 2648 which links you to state specific sites.

If you don't want any further information, check "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #11i(2) Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

The purpose of this section is to make you aware of the training opportunities available through the Workforce Investment Act.

The Workforce Investment Act is administered by the U.S. Department of Labor and focuses on preparing individuals to enter the workforce. This Act provides training and education to meet the needs of businesses looking for skilled workers, and also assist job seekers and those who want to further their careers. The basis of the program is to locally manage a program that is conveniently accessible to the community.

Local boards determine which areas need training and employment. Customers who take advantage of WIA choose the training programs that best benefit their personal situation and control their own career development by accessing core employment services. Core services are available to all adults with no eligibility requirements. Intensive services are available for unemployed individuals who are not able to find jobs through core services alone.

Core services include job search and placement assistance, labor market information, initial assessments, information about assistance and follow-up services. Intensive services include a more comprehensive assessment, development of individual employment plans, group and individual counseling, case management, and short-term pre-vocational assistance.

WIA services and information are available through the One-stop Career Centers.

If you would like to know more about WIA, check “yes” and write down these websites, or the local One-stop we identified in block 11i(1). The websites are:
www.doleta.gov/programs/factsht/wialaw.cfm and
www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/wia/act.cfm

If you don't need any further information on WIA, check “no.”

Pre-separation Checklist #11j(1)

Small Business Administration and the SBA Patriot Express Loan

The purpose of this block is to explain the Small Business Administration and the National Veteran's Business Development Corporation.

The SBA provides specific programs for Veterans, Service-Disabled Veterans, and Reserve and National Guard Members, and they offer a full range of entrepreneurial support programs to every American, including Veterans.

SBA has special, established loan and Surety Bonding programs for Veterans and Reservists, government procurement programs for Veterans across government, established Veterans Business Development Officers in every SBA District Office, and implemented special District Office outreach, counseling and training at more than 1,500 Small Business Development Centers, SCORE Chapters, and Women's Business Centers and on line through SBA's website.

SBA's programs now include financial and federal contract procurement assistance, management assistance, and specialized outreach to women, minorities and armed forces veterans. SBA has become the government's most cost-effective instrument for economic development.

The Service Corp of Retired Executives (SCORE) are the "Command Career Counselors of America's Small Business Owners," SCORE is a national association dedicated to helping small business owners form and grow their businesses. SCORE is a volunteer organization of active (Active Corp of Executives – ACE) and retired business people who offer assistance to individuals starting or operating small businesses. They offer low-cost educational seminars and free one-on-one counseling. SCORE has chapters all over the United States as well as in U.S territories. SCORE is a partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

Patriot Express Loan Initiative

There are several financial assistance and loan programs through the SBA. The most popular program for military personnel is the Patriot Express Loan.

The Patriot Express Loan is designed to support and assist those in the military community wanting to establish or expand their small businesses. This loan is offered by SBA's network of participating lenders nationwide and features our fastest turnaround time for loan approvals by streamlining documentation and processing. Loans are available to businesses where the veteran is at least 51% owner. The loan amount is for up to \$500,000 and qualifies for SBA's maximum guaranty of up to 85 percent for loans of \$150,000 or less and up to 75 percent for loans over \$150,000 up to \$500,000. For loans above \$350,000, lenders are required to take all available collateral.

The Patriot Express Loan can be used for most business purposes, including start-up, expansion, equipment purchases, working capital, inventory or business-occupied real-

estate purchases. Patriot Express Loans feature SBA’s lowest interest rates for business loans, generally 2.25 percent to 4.75 percent over prime depending upon the size and maturity of the loan. The local SBA district office will have a listing of Patriot Express lenders in the area.

If you would like more information on SBA or the Patriot Express Loan, check “yes” and write in the “referred to” column www.sba.gov.

If you don’t need any more information on this topic, check “no.”

Pre-separation Checklist #11j(2)
National Veteran's Business Development Corporation

The purpose of this item is to make you aware of the advantages veterans are afforded in small business endeavors. The National Veteran's Business Development Corporation is a congressionally mandated program which started in 2001 to achieve compliance with the three percent goal of procurement for disabled veterans.

The corporation, which will be utilizing both public and private monies, received \$3.9 million from the Federal Office of Management and Budget to expand and reinforce monetary assistance to veterans in small business. It also established a Task Force for Veterans Entrepreneurship.

For more information on this corporation, check "yes" and write: www.veteranscorp.org/ on your form.

If you don't require any further information, check "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #11k Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)

The purpose of this block is to provide you with some general information about USERRA, your employment rights, and where to seek additional assistance.

The Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) administers USERRA. VETS provides assistance to individuals who experience problems with their civilian employment related to their military service and provides information to employers about reemployment rights.

Here is how it works. Let's say, for example, you leave your job to join the military, or you are called up for active duty in the guard or reserves and need to leave your job. When you return, you may have reemployment rights to your job with your previous employer. Or, another example might be that you are being discriminated against by an employer who is reluctant to hire you because of your military commitment. This law protects you in those circumstances. But it's more complicated than that. USERRA clearly establishes that reemployment protection does not depend on the timing, frequency, duration, or nature of your service as long as the basic eligibility criteria are met.

Basic eligibility includes:

- character of service,
- initial obligation/duration of service,
- advance notice and
- timely reapplication.

And this applies not only to active duty, but also the guard and reserves.

USERRA also provides that returning service-members are reemployed in the job that they would have attained had they not been absent for military service. It's called the "escalator" principle, and they are hired back with the same seniority, status and pay, as well as other rights and benefits determined by seniority. The law requires that reasonable efforts (such as training or retraining) may be made to enable the returning service member to refresh or upgrade his or her skills to help them qualify for reemployment.

The time period an individual has to apply for reemployment or report back to work after military service is based on time spent on military duty.

USERRA also requires that Service members provide advance written or verbal notice to their employers for all military duty unless giving the employer notice is impossible, unreasonable, or precluded by military necessity.

USERRA also provides protection from discrimination. If you are a past or present member of the uniformed service, have applied for membership in the uniformed service, or are obligated to serve in the uniformed service, then an employer may not deny you initial

employment, reemployment, retention in employment, promotion, or any benefit of employment because of this status.

But don't take this situation on by yourself. There is someone available to help you. The Department of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) provides assistance to all persons having claims under USERRA. USERRA protects civilian job rights and benefits for veterans and members of reserve components. The Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve is a great resource for information. Their website is <http://esgr.gov>.

For more information, mark "yes" and contact the Veterans' Employment and Training Service office listed in the phone book in the United States Government under the Labor Department or visit: www.dol.gov/vets.

If you don't want any more information on USERRA, check "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #111

Priority of Service

Priority of service (POS) means that you, as a veteran, and eligible spouses are given priority over other non-covered (or ineligible) persons for any Department of Labor funded programs. That means any employment, training, and placement services available through the Department of Labor.

This is how it works. If you go to an Employment Service office or American Job Center office as we discussed earlier, you go to the head of the line. If the resources are limited, lack of training dollars for instance, you would receive access to those services instead of other applicants.

Federal law requires all states to develop policies for the delivery of priority of service in their state workforce plan.

The workforce system and other Department of Labor programs must enable veterans and eligible spouses to identify themselves at the point of entry to the system or program, and veterans and eligible spouses must be given the opportunity to take full advantage of the priority.

To be eligible for priority of service, you must be a veteran or eligible spouse. The veteran definition for POS means a person who served at least one day in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

If you would like more information on priority of service, check “yes” and write down the website: www.servicelocator.org to locate your nearest office or you can write down the office address, if you know it.

If you don't need any further information on priority of service, check “no.”

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: After Command Career Counselor completes explaining item 11I, Command Career Counselor will provide the following new information. Command Career Counselor will inform Service members that this information is not currently an item on the Pre-Separation Checklist, but will be added in the near future.

- (1) Volunteer Service: If you are unemployed and looking for a job, you should consider doing volunteer work to improve your employment prospects and stay engaged in your job field of choice. Consider choosing a volunteer opportunity based on your skills, experience and employment objectives – in addition to building experience for your resume, you may be able to find work for the organization. Volunteerism can also help you network with business leaders, which can lead to other employment opportunities. If you do not have the experience you want for the job you want, or you may shift to a new field of work that does not match well with your military experience, look for a volunteer opportunity that offers a chance to learn new skills, as well as gain insight into the nature of the work you are interested in pursuing. For example, volunteer in a hospital or in a care facility if you think you might like to be a care provider or work in the medical field. Lastly, by volunteering, you are also using your leadership skills and giving back to our community as a civic leader while gaining skills, experience and references that you can add to your resume. You can look for volunteer opportunities in your community on sites like www.serve.gov. If you are over the age of 55, there is a national program with over 350,000 volunteers called SeniorCorps that may be of interest. You can visit their site at www.seniorcorps.gov.

- (2) AmeriCorps – A federal and state non-profit stipended national service position. AmeriCorps provides another wonderful opportunity for improved full-time employment prospects, while removing some of the economic barriers to civically minded community service. AmeriCorps members provide a range of services including employment placement, behavioral health counseling services, community rehabilitation and reintegration projects, homeless veteran support and financial literacy, and tutoring children of deployed Service members. AmeriCorps is made of several different programs, but all of them offer an opportunity to work in your communities, and help lead them in finding or providing solutions to unique social service or environmental challenges. AmeriCorps members work with a non-profit or a state agency to improve their capacity to meet this community need, or perform direct services themselves. Working for AmeriCorps gives you the opportunity to apply skills and ideals towards helping others and meeting critical needs in the community. The length of your service in your community of choice will vary, and can be as short as three months, or as long as a year or more with an extended service tour. Fulltime AmeriCorps members receive a very modest living allowance, health care benefits, and childcare assistance. For more information about AmeriCorps and eligibility go to <http://www.americorps.gov>.

Pre-separation Checklist #12a Permissive Temporary (PTDY) and Excess Leave

Permissive TDY (PTDY) and Excess Leave may be authorized for the purpose of job search and house hunting activities that facilitate the relocation to civilian life. This section applies only to a well-defined group of eligible personnel and will provide you with information on what the rules say about the amount of time allowed if you are planning to relocate. You can request excess leave or PTDY/TAD, but not both. Granting PTDY (or excess leave) is subject to mission requirements and approval of the unit commander.

The purpose of this program is to authorize you time away from your assigned duties to assist you with the types of things you'll need to do in your transition. It allows you the time to look for a job and go house hunting so you don't have to take leave. There are certain restrictions about returning to your separation site and you need to check with your command and personnel office for details.

As I mentioned, you have the option of taking either one of these leave types. I would recommend PTDY because excess leave is not a duty status and should only be used in rare circumstances. Excess leave is not available for retirees.

For you to be eligible, you must have separated with an SPD code that provides transition benefits. If you do not know your SPD code and what benefits you are eligible for, check with the personnel office for specific information on your SPD code.

Individuals who are eligible include:

- Members who involuntarily separated under honorable conditions(including VSI and SSB);
- Retiring individuals (including transfer to the fleet reserve and disability retirements);
- Members who are being discharged for medical reasons. Certain conditions apply, but you may be eligible upon receipt of separation;

Service members who separate at the end of a normal term of service are not eligible.

Time Frames:

No more than 30 days Excess Leave can be granted.

If you are a retiree or separating with an SPD code that confers transition benefits you may take up to 20 days PTDY for job hunting, house hunting, or other relocation activities.

If you are stationed overseas (or if you are a non-CONUS resident not stationed at your home of record) you may take up to 30 days PTDY.

If you are overseas and you have a legal residence in the States and you plan to return to your home state after involuntary separation or retirement, you may be authorized up to a

total of 30 days transition PTDY. The domicile is defined as your home of record, or the place from which you were called-up or ordered to active duty, the place of first enlistment, or your place of permanent legal residence.

If you are overseas and not planning to return to your OCONUS domicile after involuntary separation or retirement, then you may only receive a maximum of 20 days transition PTDY authorization.

There are some rules you need to be aware of when it comes to PTDY:

- You cannot combine it with liberty weekends, special liberty, or holidays, to extend the period of actual job/house hunting activities beyond the days authorized.
- It can also be taken in conjunction with chargeable leave at no cost to the government.
- It may be taken in conjunction with terminal leave immediately upon completion of all separation processing.
- You can take the PTDY all at once, or in increments, except in cases of disability retirement or separation in which time constraints dictate that it is taken all at once, or not at all.

If you desire more information on PTDY and excess leave, mark “yes” and write down “personnel office” in the ‘referred to’ section. More information is also contained in the Pre-Separation Guide, located at www.TurboTAP.org.

If you do not need any additional information, mark “no.”

Pre-separation Checklist #12b Travel and Transportation Allowances

The move accompanying your separation/retirement is different from the other ones you've done in the military.

As a separating member you are authorized travel and transportation allowances from your last duty station to your home of record (HOR) or place entered active duty (PLEAD).

If you are retiring, you are authorized travel and transportation allowances from your last duty station to a home of selection (HOS) anywhere in the United States, or to a home of record, or to the place you entered active duty outside the United States.

Some individuals get confused between the home of record (HOR) and home of selection (HOS). The HOR is the location declared as home of record. The HOS is any destination within the United States.

Eligible retirees and certain involuntary separatees (e.g., with separation pay and at least eight years continuous active duty) are authorized storage and shipment of household goods for up to one full year. Household goods may be shipped to:

- Any destination within the United States.
- Home of record outside the United States: home of record is the place lived when they entered the military.
- The place outside the U.S. from which they were initially called to active duty.

All other separatees are authorized storage and shipment of household goods up to six months. Items may be shipped to the location in which they collected separation travel pay.

Travel must be completed within established time frames. If you are separating with less than eight years of service, or being discharged under adverse conditions, you are eligible to request shipment of household goods and a six months storage of household goods and home of record move.

Separated members must complete travel within 180 days. Retirees must complete travel within one year after separation/retirement. In limited circumstances, you may be allowed an extension of the time limit to move. To request an extension visit the transportation office for more information.

In some circumstances, you may be able to extend your stay in military housing for up to 180 days after separation. These extensions are allowed for individuals who are eligible involuntary separatees, or a Selected Early Retirement Board (SERB) retiree. Be aware that you will have to pay a rental rate and that housing is available on a space permitting basis. Contact the Base Housing Office for more information.

Storage time frames are similar to moving timeframes. Household Goods (HHG) may be moved to the HOR/HOS. The HHG must be turned over to the transportation officer within the 180 days/one year time limit. HHG may be stored for up to 180 days for separatees and one year for retirees.

There are additional guidelines on transportation and allowances. You are strongly encouraged to contact the Personal Property or Transportation office to schedule a personalized appointment with an expert in this area.

One last thing that we need to discuss is the Department of Defense Dependents School Extension. Subject to Status of Forces Agreements overseas, and providing each child has completed the 11th grade by the Service member's date of separation, extensions may be granted for dependents of Service members who are involuntarily separating from active duty. They must meet the criteria outlined in US Code Title 10 1141, Involuntary Separation Pub. L. No. 101-510, or be separated due to a medical condition.

There are lots of resources for additional information on this topic. If you want more information mark "yes" in the box on 12b. Then write in one of the resources I already mentioned. Also, here are some more that you may want to write on your DD 2648. You can write the Family Center for the Base Relocation Assistance Program or the website: www.militaryonesource.com, or you can look at the Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR) website at: <https://secureapp2.hqda.pentagon.mil/perdiem/>. Additionally, MILPERSMAN 1320-220 has information as well as the DoDI 1332.36 – Overview of PCS Travel and Transportation Allowances Table, or you can call the DoD Education Activity Office at 1-703-588-3104.

If you do not need any additional information on this, mark "no" in block 12b.

Pre-separation Checklist #13

Contact Information for Housing Counseling Assistance

This subject is really three-fold. It encompasses military housing, rental property and HUD.

If you live in government quarters, you must arrange a time for a member of the housing staff to come and perform a pre-inspection and explain the requirements for cleaning and vacating quarters, as well as options available to get this accomplished.

If you are moving from a rental property, notify the landlord as soon as possible. The Housing Office can assist you if any problems arise in conjunction with your military separation.

Lastly, you may have heard of HUD. It stands for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Its mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities, free from discrimination, and provide quality affordable homes, all with the goal of improving quality of life for everybody.

The HUD website is listed on the 2648 and it is a great resource which provides a listing of state resources and a variety of program offices for assistance. There is information on such things such as:

- avoiding foreclosure
- financing home improvements
- buying and selling a home

The HUD Veteran Resource Center (HUDVET) has a wide variety of HUD homeless assistance programs and services for veterans. HUDVET also helps with some of the tougher issues veterans can encounter such as combat domestic violence, runaway youth, and affordable housing individuals with disabilities.

If you want to explore some options and information from HUD, mark “yes” in block 13 and either write “website” or the VA care line number which is 1-877-424-3838. Or if your issues are around military housing, you can write “housing office.”

If you don’t desire any further information, mark “no.”

Pre-separation Checklist #14a

Education Benefits (Post 9-11 GI Bill Chapter 33), (Montgomery GI Bill Chapter 30), (Veterans Educational Assistance Program), (Vietnam-era, etc.)

This section of the DD Form 2648 deals with your educational benefits. You are **REQUIRED** to attend the Veterans Benefit Briefing before separation. Let me tell you a little about the education programs that may be available to you.

It is important for you to know that education programs are affected by your contract and the time you served. You should check with your education center to learn more about your educational benefits as early as possible.

There are several programs administered by VA to provide financial assistance for educational benefits. This includes:

- enrollment into degree programs,
- entrepreneurship training,
- technical and vocational programs,
- correspondence courses,
- on-the-job training,
- apprenticeship programs,
- flight and high-tech training,
- certain entrance exams, and
- licensing and certification tests

Programs must be approved, usually by a state-approving agency, for VA purposes, before VA education program benefits are paid.

The base education office has a lot of resources for you. One resource is the Application for the Evaluation of Learning Experiences during Military Service, or the DD Form 295. This form assists post-secondary civilian educational institutions in evaluating and awarding academic credit for your military education and training.

The Veterans Education Assistance Program, or VEAP, was a program where members elected to make contributions from military-pay to participate. These benefits were used for a degree, certificate, correspondence, apprenticeship/on-the-job training programs, and vocational flight training programs. In certain circumstances, remedial, deficiency, and refresher training was also available.

Information on the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) and other veterans' educational benefit programs is also available at the education center. In addition, the center provides additional services and testing that will assist you with your transition.

When it comes to formal educational benefits, you should know that the MGIB requires an honorable discharge and Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) requires a discharge other-than-dishonorable to be eligible for the education benefit.

I will provide you with general program information on the Post 9-11 GI Bill, the Montgomery GI Bill, and Veterans Educational Assistance Program, but for in-depth information you will need to go to the veterans benefit briefing or visit the base education office, or research the programs on-line.

So, let's get started. The Post 9/11 GI Bill provides financial support for education and housing to individuals with at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001, or individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days. As I mentioned before, to receive this benefit, individuals must have received an honorable discharge to be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

As of August 1, 2009, the Post-9/11 GI Bill is effective for training. Approved training under the Post-9/11 GI Bill includes:

- graduate degrees,
- undergraduate degrees, and
- vocational/technical training

All training programs must be offered by an institution of higher learning (IHL) and approved for GI Bill benefits. Additionally, tutorial assistance, and licensing and certification test reimbursement are approved under the Post- 9/11 GI Bill.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill will pay your tuition based upon the highest in-state tuition charged by a public educational institution in the state where the school is located. The amount of support that an individual may qualify for depends on where they live and what type of degree they are pursuing. For more expensive tuition, a program exists which may help to reimburse the difference. This program is called the "Yellow Ribbon Program".

The Post 9-11 will pay tuition and fees (directly to the school, not to exceed the maximum in-state tuition & fees at a public IHL), monthly housing allowance (based on the Basic Allowance for Housing for an E-5 with dependents at the location of the school), and an annual books and supplies stipend of \$1,000. It also includes a one-time rural benefit payment for eligible individuals. For those attending foreign schools, (schools without a main campus in the U.S.) the BAH rate is fixed.

This benefit is payable only for training at an IHL. Obviously, if you are enrolled exclusively in online training you will not receive the housing allowance. Also, if you are on active duty, you will not receive the housing allowance or books & supplies stipend. This benefit provides up to 36 months of educational benefits and generally, benefits are payable for 15 years following your release from active duty. This allows you to take advantage of this benefit well after your transition!

To be eligible for 100% of the benefit, you must have served a total of 36 months of active duty service. For those who served fewer than 36 months, the percentage of the benefit ranges from 40% to 90%.

If you were released for a service-connected disability after at least 30 days of continuous service, you will also be eligible for benefits for 15 years. The Post-9/11 GI Bill also offers some people the opportunity to transfer their GI Bill to dependents.

For the first time in history, if you enrolled in the Post-9/11 GI Bill program you will be able to transfer unused educational benefits to your spouse or children starting Aug. 1, 2009, if you meet certain criteria.

In order to transfer educational benefits to a family member, military members must make an irrevocable election from their existing educational program to the Post 9/11 GI Bill. This transfer can ONLY be made while serving in the Armed Forces WHILE ON ACTIVE DUTY (as in before retirement or separation). Additionally, the military member must be on active duty on 1 Aug 09, have served a minimum of 6 years and be willing to agree to an additional active duty service commitment. ONCE RETIRED OR SEPARATED FROM THE MILITARY, MEMBERS ARE NO LONGER ELIGIBLE TO TRANSFER THEIR EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS. Full details about transferability can be found in the Frequently Asked Questions section of: www.gibill.va.gov.

The next education benefit we will discuss is the Montgomery GI Bill or MGIB. Under MGIB, individuals who have enrolled in and paid \$100 per month for 12 months; are then entitled to receive a monthly education benefit once they had completed a minimum service obligation. MGIB requires an Honorable Discharge, and a high school diploma or GED, or in some cases 12 hours of college credit. MGIB provides up to 36 months of education benefits to eligible veterans.

Other education resources worth mentioning are the SMART, AARTS and CCAF website resources. The SMART stands for Sailor and Marine American Council on Education (ACE) Registry Transcript, AARTS stands for Army American Council on Education (ACE) Registry Transcript Service. The Air Force program is a little different and it is called the CCAF which stands for Community College of the Air Force. These programs suggest college equivalency credit for military training and service duties. You should download your transcript and have the education office assist you in reviewing the credit possibilities.

For the different services, you need to visit different websites. For SMART, AARTS and CCAF website resources:

- The American Council on Education: www.acenet.edu
- Army: <https://aartstranscript.army.mil/>
- Marine/Navy: <https://smart.navy.mil>
- Air Force: www.au.af.mil/au/ccaf/

For more information on the education programs, you should mark “yes” in the block and in the “referred to” column, write one of the following:

- VA GI Bill Website at: www.gibill.va.gov
- GI BILL answer desk at: 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551)

- Veterans Benefit Briefing
- Base Education Office

If you don't want any further information, mark "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #14b

US Department of Education Federal Aid Programs

In an earlier section, I pointed out the education benefits you can receive through the military. However, it is important for you to know that there are other financial aid programs you can take advantage of as well. One is the Federal Student Aid Program which fall under an office in the U.S. Department of Education.

The Federal Aid program (authorized under the Higher Education Act) includes grants, loans and work-study programs. These federally funded loan programs partner up with postsecondary schools and financial institutions to help provide money for college to eligible students and families.

The program provides information on:

- obtaining aid (including using technology to submit applications)
- filling out financial aid applications
- rules and regulations
- student loan accounts

It is important to note that Veterans' educational benefits can still be used in conjunction with Federal Student Aid.

Additionally, there is a Veterans Upward Bound Program available to help you refresh your academic skills so you can successfully complete your college program.

If you want more information on Federal Aid, mark "yes" in block 14b and write "website" in the "referred to" column.

If you don't want any further information, just mark "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #14c

Other Federal, State, or local education/training programs and options

Now that we've talked about military education benefits and Federal Student Aid, let's focus on additional education options you may want to take advantage of during your transition.

As I mentioned earlier, it's important to visit the base education office. This center has professional Command Career Counselors that can give you good advice on the educational opportunities available to you along with the processes needed to get there. Those processes can include learning about the different undergraduate, graduate, or certificate programs there are and the options you have through military programs. These programs include a variety of services, such as:

- college-level testing
- professional military education
- veterans' benefits
- tuition assistance
- financial aid
- deferments
- distance learning

Testing can be an important initial step in determining your career path and some colleges and universities may require test results as part of the application packet. Prior to departure from military service, I encourage you to take advantage of the staff at the base education office.

I would suggest that you check "yes" on block 14c and write down the "Base Education Office" in the "referred to" section.

If you don't want to learn anymore about educational opportunities, mark "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #15a

Information on availability of Healthcare and Mental Health Services

The next several sections deal with all the health care options that are available for you and your family. The best way to get all of this information explained to you is to attend the Veterans Benefit Briefing and talk to a TRICARE representative. They can tell you specifically what you are eligible for and how long that coverage will last. Medical coverage can be very expensive, so it is important you are aware of what is available to you so that you can make the best choice for your own unique situation.

One service available to you is the DoD Mental Health Self Assessment Program. This is a mental health and alcohol screening and referral program provided for military families and Service members affected by deployment and mobilization. It is a voluntary and anonymous program offered online, by phone, and through special events held at installations and reserve units. Anonymous, self-assessments are available for depression, bipolar disorder, alcohol use, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and generalized anxiety disorder. Individualized results and military health resources, including TRICARE, Vet Centers and Military OneSource are provided at the end of every assessment.

Now let's talk about coverage through the Department of Veterans Affairs. For coverage through VA, there are several different requirements. We are going to discuss 3 main types of VA coverage for your transition.

- A Combat Veteran discharged from active duty on or after January 28, 2003. You can receive enhanced enrollment placement for five years after the date you leave the service.
- An activated Reservists or member of the National Guard who served on active duty in a theater of combat operation after November 11, 1998, and left service under any conditions other than dishonorable. If you enroll with VA under the Combat Veteran Authority, you may be able to keep enrollment eligibility even after the five year period ends.

Suicide Resource For Veterans, Families and Friends

The Veterans Crisis Line is available for veterans and their families and friends, who may be the first to realize a Veteran is in emotional distress, to reach out for support when issues reach a crisis point, even if it is not a suicidal crisis. The Veterans Crisis Line is a toll-free, confidential resource that connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified caring Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) responders. Veterans and their loved ones can **call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1**, chat online at www.VeteransCrisisLine.net, or send a text message to 838255 to receive free, confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, even if they are not registered with the Department of Veterans Affairs or enrolled in VA health care.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: Command Career Counselor will hand out the Veterans Affairs Fact sheet, “Make the Connection” and a Veterans Crisis Line card to each Service member and dependent in the class.

For more information on this, check “yes” in block 15a. I would remind you that when you attend the Veterans Benefit Briefing you will have the opportunity to talk with a professional from VA in more detail on benefits, programs and resources available through the VA that you need to be aware of. You can write that in the “referred to” column, or you can put the VA website which is: www.va.gov or the VA 1-800 number: 1-800-827-1000 in the referred to column for future reference.

Additional resources and personalized coaching can be located at www.health.mil/inTransition/default.aspx

Pre-separation Checklist #15a(1) Transitional Healthcare Benefit/TRICARE

This block is for individuals who are eligible for transitional health care. This is a benefit through TAMP, the Transitional Assistance Management Program.

This program is called “transitional” because it offers TRICARE-like benefits for a limited time (180 days) which allows time for you and your eligible family members to enroll into TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) or other medical insurance programs. You will pay quarterly premiums and deductibles for any care you may need during that period. When you leave active duty you are eligible for TAMP if you meet the eligibility criteria. Eligibility for transitional healthcare, also referred to as Transitional Assistance for 180 days (TA-180), is not automatic as individuals must meet one of the six qualifying criterion as described below.

To be eligible for the 180 day transitional medical and dental benefits, you must be:

- (1) involuntarily separated from active duty with an SPD code that designates transitional benefits; or
- (2) a member of the Reserves separated from active duty after serving more than 30 days in support of a contingency operation; or
- (3) separated from active duty after being involuntarily retained on active duty in support of a contingency operation; or
- (4) separated from military service following a voluntary agreement to remain on active duty for one year or less in support of a contingency operation.
- (5) a member who receives a sole survivorship discharge; or
- (6) separated from active duty and agree to become a member of the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve or a reserve component. NOTE: In this instance, a member may not have a qualifying Separation Program Designator (SPD) code that conveys TAMP benefits. The member must work with their gaining Reserve unit to obtain this transitional benefit. The Reserve unit must update the member’s Selected Reserve status in the Military Personnel Data System (MilPDS) for the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). DEERS conveys the transitional healthcare based on the MilPDS Selected Reserve update as the TA-180 is reflected on the ID card for qualifying members and family members.

Transitional health care is not an automatic TRICARE benefit. You must make sure that you and your family members are enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). While you are on active duty you may verify or update DEERS information for yourself or your family members by contacting or visiting a local identification (ID) card issuing facility. To locate the nearest personnel office or ID card facility, search the DEERS Web site at <http://www2.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/>

Be aware that if you are now enrolled in TRICARE Prime, you will be automatically dis-enrolled once you separate from active duty. This is why it’s important to continue TRICARE Prime during your transitional health care period. You and your family members

must contact the TRICARE regional managed care support contractor, or local TRICARE service center, to re-enroll in TRICARE Prime.

Your TRICARE Prime coverage continues as long as you and your family members re-enroll in TRICARE Prime. If you don't re-enroll or if Prime is not available, coverage will be under TRICARE Standard during your transition. You should visit the TRICARE Website 'Plan Wizard' www.tricare.mil/mybenefit to receive specific benefits based on your status and to learn more about the three TRICARE options for retirees. This site allows you to enter specific information, ask questions, and explains the services.

Dental Coverage During TAMP

During TAMP, dental care is provided on a space-available basis in military dental treatment facilities. However, you need to know that space-available dental care is very limited.

If you want more information on transitional health care, check "yes" and write in either the family support center, TRICARE representative or the website:
www.tricare.mil/mybenefit.

If you don't need any further information, check "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #15a(2)

VA Health Administration

Next we are going to talk about the VA Health Administration. The Department of Veterans Affairs has the overall responsibility to provide information and administration of the benefits you have as a veteran.

As a transitioning Service member you will be going to the Veterans' Benefits Briefing and have the opportunity to talk with a Veteran Benefits Command Career Counselor to get specific information that is important to YOU! As you prepare to transition, if you have not registered for eBenefits, then you will have to do so today, at the end of this Pre-separation Counseling session. eBenefits is a portal, or central location for Veterans, Service Members, and their families to research, find, access, and, manage their benefits and personal information, both clinical and benefit based information. It contains a personalized workspace called My Dashboard that provides quick access to eBenefits tools.

Using eBenefits tools, you can complete various tasks. You can apply for benefits, download your DD 214, and view your benefits status, in addition to other actions as needed. This workspace is available to you once you have created an eBenefits account.

COMMAND CAREER COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: Command Career Counselor may want to remind class that he/she mentioned eBenefits registration earlier during Part I of Pre-separation Counseling. This could be an opportunity to give them a "gentle reminder" that they will have to verify they have an account at the end of the class and those who don't will have to register and get their account before they depart. .

You have probably heard about VA compensation and pension. First, is the VA's disability compensation. This is a tax-free benefit paid to a veteran because of injuries or diseases that happened while on active duty, or were made worse by active military service. The veteran must have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

VA Pension is different. This is a benefit paid to veterans with low income and who are permanently and totally disabled, or are age 65 and older. You must have 90 days or more of active military service, at least one day of which was during a period of war.

All veterans are potentially eligible for VA health care. It is important that you talk to a VA representative to determine your individual eligibility.

As I stated earlier, you will attend the VA Benefits Briefing where you will receive more detailed information on the VA Health Administration. If you want more information, check "yes" and then write VA benefits Briefing, or the website for the VA, which is: <http://www.va.gov>. You could also put the toll free number: 1-800-827-1000.

I would recommend checking "yes" and putting your eBenefits log-in in the "referred to" column, so you have that log-in readily available in case you forget it.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer have the option of checking the “NO” on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #15a(3) VA Vet Center

When you transition, it is very important for you to be aware of all the services that are available to you and your family. That is why we are talking about the VA Vet Centers. The Vet Centers are known for their quality readjustment counseling services provided in a caring manner to assist you and your family toward a successful post-war adjustment in or near your respective communities. The Vet Center also offers bereavement counseling.

Vet Centers serve you and your family by providing a variety of quality care that includes professional readjustment counseling, community education, outreach to special populations, and the brokering of services with community agencies. It also provides a key access link between the veteran and other services in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

There are very specific eligibility requirements to receive service from a Vet Center. You should either visit the Vet Center, or look on-line at the website I'll give to you in a minute, to see if you are eligible for services.

If you want to go to the website for more information, it is: www.va.gov/rcs. The website contains a directory of Vet Center locations and additional eligibility criteria. Check "yes" in the block and write down the website.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer have the option of checking the "NO" on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Counseling Checklist #15a(4) State and Local Health Care and Mental Health Services

It is important for you to know that as you transition, there are services available at State and Local Health Care and Mental Health Services.

State departments of health promote public health through policy initiatives, research and service programs. Often, a state's public health administration is combined with the provision of social services. "Health" generally encompasses behavioral and environmental health as well as physical well-being, illness and communicable diseases.

Social service websites may include information and programs dealing with welfare, early childhood development, foster parenting, poverty, juvenile delinquency, sex offenders, aging, public assistance, and rehabilitation. There may also be listings of private social service agencies.

A great resource for more information on what is available in your state is: www.statelocalgov.net. If you would like more information on this topic, check yes, and in the "referred to" column write down the website.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer have the option of checking the "NO" on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #15b

Health care and other benefits to which the member may be entitled under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs

We have talked about transitional health care and the VA Health Administration. Let's now talk about some other health care options available to you. In this section we are going to discuss TRICARE, VA health care and VA dental care.

Let's cover TRICARE first. TRICARE is the Department of Defense's managed health care program available for active duty members, active duty service families, retirees and their families, and other eligible beneficiaries. TRICARE pays a percentage of allowed charges for covered health care services provided by TRICARE authorized providers, after you meet your yearly deductible. TRICARE has a "catastrophic cap" which is the maximum you will have to pay out-of-pocket for covered services.

The Transition Assistance Program managers, at the family support center, will ensure you have the information you need concerning the availability of mental health services and the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety disorders, depression, suicidal ideations, or other mental health conditions possibly from service in the armed forces.

You should know that health care is not an automatic TRICARE benefit. You need to make sure that you and your family members are enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). You can update DEERS information by contacting or visiting a local identification (ID) card issuing facility. To locate the nearest personnel office or ID card facility, sponsors may search the DEERS Web site at www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/.

If you and your family are enrolled in TRICARE Prime you will be automatically disenrolled when you separate. To continue TRICARE Prime, you must contact the TRICARE regional managed care support contractor, or your local TRICARE service center, and re-enroll in TRICARE Prime. TRICARE Prime coverage continues as long as you and your family re-enroll in TRICARE Prime. If you do not re-enroll or if Prime is not available, you will be covered under TRICARE Standard. You should visit the TRICARE Website "Plan Wizard" www.tricare.mil/mybenefit to receive specific benefits based on your status.

It is also important for you to know that dental care insurance currently provided by the Department of Defense does not continue after separation. The VA provides a one-time dental care for veterans who apply within 90 days after separation. However, you will not receive dental care if the military provided a dental examination and treatment within 90 days prior to your separation.

The TRICARE Retiree Dental Program, or TRDP, offers comprehensive, cost-effective dental coverage for retirees and eligible family members. You can learn more about the program at: www.trdp.org/

TRICARE medical and dental benefit information is available on the TRICARE Web site at www.tricare.osd.mil. If you require additional information on TRICARE visit a TRICARE

service center or Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance Coordinator (BCAC) at the local military treatment facility.

If you are planning to receive civilian health care under TRICARE, I encourage you to check “yes” in block 15b and talk with the regional or program contractor. You can also visit with a Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance Coordinator (BCAC)/Health Benefits Adviser (HBA) at the nearest MTF, your nearest beneficiary service office, a TRICARE Service Center (TSC), or your Primary Care Manager (PCM) before you seek care.

For a complete list of states in each region, visit www.tricare.osd.mil.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer have the option of checking the “NO” on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #15b(1) VA Health Care

Your eligibility for most VA health care benefits is based on active military service and discharges that are other than dishonorable . VA provides a broad range of medical, surgical, readjustment counseling and rehabilitative care to veterans.

VA provides a Medical Benefits Package, which is a standard enhanced health benefits plan, available to all enrolled veterans. This plan emphasizes preventive and primary care, and offers a full range of outpatient and inpatient services within the VA health care system.

VA maintains an annual enrollment system to manage the provision of quality hospital and outpatient medical care and treatment to all enrolled veterans. A priority system ensures that veterans with service-connected disabilities and those below the low-income threshold are able to be enrolled in VA's health care system.

I mentioned before that all veterans are potentially eligible for health care. Eligibility for most veterans' health care benefits is based solely on active military service in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, or Coast Guard (or Merchant Marines during WW II). To be eligible, the individual needs to be discharged under other than dishonorable conditions. Also, health care eligibility is not just for those who served in combat and veteran's health care is not just for veterans who have service-connected injuries or medical conditions.

Reservists and National Guard members who were called to active duty by a Federal Executive Order may qualify for VA health care benefits. Returning Service members, including Reservists and National Guard members who served on active duty in a theater of combat operations have special eligibility for hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care for two years following discharge from active duty.

The best thing you can do for yourself and your family is to attend the Veterans Benefit Briefing. At this briefing you will learn about service-connected disabilities and non-service connected disabilities and how that impacts your cost and access to VA medical services. I have mentioned this briefing several times already and you can see how many of your benefits are explained in detail at this session. I strongly encourage you to attend. If you want more information on this topic, mark "yes" and either put the briefing or the VA website, www.va.gov, in the "referred to" column.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer have the option of checking the "NO" on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #15b(2)
VA Dental Care

Next we are going to discuss the VA Dental Care option. Outpatient dental benefits are provided by VA according to the law. Dental eligibility criteria in some cases are quite extensive and in other cases very limited. The VA website provides fact sheets on VA Medical Care and Dental Treatment. www.va.gov

If you want specific dental care information, visit that website. Check “yes” in block 15b(2) and write in the website, or the VA health care benefits toll-free number: 1-877-222-8387.

Pre-separation Checklist #16a Continued Health Care Benefits Program

We have talked about the type of health care that is available to you if you meet the eligibility criteria. If you aren't eligible for any of those types of coverage, and you separate from the military voluntarily, you are not eligible to use any of the military treatment facilities or TRICARE. That's where the Continued Health Care Benefits Program (CHCBP) comes into play.

CHCBP is temporary health care coverage that you are eligible to purchase for a period of 18 months, including pre-existing conditions coverage. This program is premium-based health care that is similar to, but not part of, TRICARE and is administered by Humana Military Healthcare Services.

The CHCBP program extends health care coverage to you when you lose your military benefits. It is available to you and your family, certain un-remarried former spouses, and children who lose military coverage.

To obtain this coverage, you must enroll and pay premiums to the CHCBP within 60 days after your separation from active duty (if you don't have TAMP benefits) or the loss of eligibility for military health care.

Many employer programs require continuous health care coverage or may deny coverage for pre-existing conditions. By purchasing CHCBP, it acts as a "bridge" between military health benefits and a new job's medical benefits. This allows you and your family to receive continuous medical coverage.

It is important that you research your different health care options. CHCBP may be the best option for temporary health care coverage. However, participation is completely optional. If you want coverage, you are required to purchase coverage.

A common question, with regards to separation, is what about pregnancy? The best option for any service member separating who is pregnant or whose spouse is pregnant is to talk to a representative at the military treatment facility. Make sure you know your coverage.

You may also want to look at the Service regulations that cover this topic. Regardless of your situation, you should ask your service personnel office and military treatment facilities for detailed information about health care provisions and application procedures. Also, you need to know that application does not constitute approval. Each application is evaluated on individual merit.

If you want more information on CHCBP, check "yes" and write in Military Treatment Facility. You can also visit www.humana-military.com or call the Tricare Customer Service at 1-800-444-5445.

If you don't need any further information on this topic, mark "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #16b

Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI)

In the next sections, I am going to cover the different types of life insurance available to you and your family. You can see on the form 16b through 16h are all the types of life insurance options. The first one we are going to cover is the one you are probably most familiar with, Veterans' Group Life Insurance, or VGLI.

While you were on active duty, you had the Service members' Group Life Insurance (SGLI). SGLI will continue to cover you for the first 120 days after separation. Following expiration of this coverage extension under SGLI, you have to make your own arrangements for life insurance. At this time, you will be given the opportunity to convert your SGLI to VGLI offered by the VA.

To convert SGLI to VGLI, you must submit an SGLV 8714 Application for Veterans' Group Life Insurance to the Office of Service members' Group Life Insurance with the required premium. You have to do this within one year and 120 days from your discharge. However, if you submit your application within 120 days of discharge you do not need to submit evidence of good health. If you apply after the 120-day period you must submit evidence of good health.

VGLI coverage is renewable term insurance and is issued in multiples of \$10,000, up to a maximum of \$400,000. However, your VGLI coverage amount cannot exceed the amount of SGLI you had at the time of separation. Individuals do have an opportunity to increase VGLI coverage by \$25,000, once every 5 years.

VGLI policyholders can convert their VGLI to an individual commercial life insurance policy at any time.

If you want more information on VGLI, check "yes" in the block on 16b. For more information you can visit the VGLI web site at: www.insurance.va.gov or www.insurance.va.gov/sgliSite/VGLI/VGLI.htm. There is additional information on the TurboTAP website at: www.turboTAP.org. You can also speak to your personal financial management specialist on base.

Write one of these resources in the "referred to" column.

COMMAND CAREER COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer have the option of checking the "NO" on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #16c

Service members' Group Life Insurance (SGLI)

SGLI is low cost group life insurance if you fall under one of the following Service members categories:

- On active duty
- Ready reservists
- Members of the National Guard
- Members of the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Public Health Service
- Cadets and midshipmen of the four service academies, and
- Members of the Reserve Officer Training Corps.

If you decide to receive SGLI coverage you will have two options available to you once you are released from service. The first one is that you can convert your full-time SGLI coverage to term insurance under the Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) program. The other option is to convert your coverage to a permanent plan of insurance with one of the participating commercial insurance companies.

There is a SGLI Disability Extension that allows Service members who are totally disabled at time of their discharge to retain the same Service members' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) coverage they had while in the service at no cost for up to two years after they leave the military. The SGLI coverage is available in \$50,000 increments up to the maximum of \$400,000.

For more information on this program visit
www.insurance.va.gov/sgliSite/SGLI/sglidisabled.htm

Also, if you are interested in making changes to your basic SGLI or Family SGLI coverage contact your personnel office. If you need information on SGLI and Family SGLI premium payments and refunds, contact your Flight, Payroll and/or Finance Office.

In addition, Service members and their beneficiaries should call, e-mail, or write the Office of Service members' Group Life Insurance (OSGLI) for pending SGLI or Family SGLI claims.

If you want more information on this topic, check yes and write in either www.va.gov, or the website I gave you earlier in the "referred to" box.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer have the option of checking the "NO" on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #16d

Traumatic Injury Protection under Service members' Group Life Insurance (TSGLI)

Another type of life insurance that may be available to you is the Traumatic Injury Protection Program under Service members' Group Life Insurance, or TSGLI.

The TSGLI program is what is known as a "rider" to the Service members' Group Life Insurance (SGLI). The TSGLI rider provides payment if you were severely injured (on or off duty) as the result of a traumatic event and suffer a loss that qualifies for payment under TSGLI.

Every service member who has SGLI also has TSGLI effective December 1, 2005. This coverage applies to those of you who are active duty members, reservists, National Guard members, performed funeral honors duty and those in a one-day muster duty. TSGLI coverage is automatic for those insured under basic SGLI and cannot be declined.

This benefit is also provided retroactively for you if you incurred severe losses as a result of a traumatic injury in Operation Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom between October 7, 2001 and December 1, 2005.

Effective October 1, 2011, TSGLI will be payable for all qualifying injuries incurred during the period of October 7, 2001 to November 30, 2005, regardless of where they occurred, and regardless of whether the member had SGLI coverage at the time of injury. The Veterans' Benefit Improvement Act of 2010 removes the requirements that injuries during this period be incurred in Operations Enduring or Iraqi Freedom.

TSGLI payments are designed to help traumatically injured Service members and their families with financial burdens associated with recovering from a severe injury. TSGLI payments range from \$25,000 to \$100,000 based on the qualifying loss suffered. TSGLI payments have no impact on the amount of SGLI payable.

If you want to learn more about TSGLI, or want to make a claim, check "yes" in block 16d and write in the VA website at www.va.gov, or use www.turboTAP.org. You can also contact the Office of Service members' Group Life Insurance by phone at 1-800-419-1473 or by email at osgli.claims@prudential.com. If you want the specific military branch contact information, come and see me after and I can provide that information to you.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer have the option of checking the "NO" on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #16e

Family Service members' Group Life Insurance (FSGLI)

The Family Service members' Group Life Insurance, or FSGLI, is another program administered by the OSGLI and is supervised by VA. This program extends coverage to spouses and unmarried dependent children of members insured under the SGLI program.

FSGLI provides life insurance protection only in the case of death. It does not provide payments for disability or other supplementary benefits. FSGLI is a service members' benefit, and the member is the beneficiary of the policy. In addition, FSGLI has no cash, loan, paid-up or extended insurance values and does not pay dividends.

What the FSGLI plan does is provides up to a maximum of \$100,000 of life insurance coverage for spouses, not to exceed the amount of SGLI you already have, and \$10,000 for dependent children. Spousal coverage is issued in increments of \$10,000.

If you decide to decline family coverage for a spouse or elect an amount less than the maximum amount available, you may later apply for coverage or increase the coverage up to the \$100,000 maximum, or the amount of SGLI held by the insured member, whichever is less. Proof of spouse insurability (proof of good health) will be required in these cases.

A good thing about FSGLI is that it can be converted into a Commercial Insurance Policy. But, the time frame to do this however is 120 days from the separation date.

If you want more specific information on FSGLI, mark "yes" and write down the VA website at www.va.gov, www.turboTAP.org or www.insurance.va.gov.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer have the option of checking the "NO" on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #16f

Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI)

The Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) program was established to meet the insurance needs of certain veterans who have a service connected disability. S-DVI is available in a variety of permanent plans as well as term insurance. Policies are issued for a maximum amount of \$10,000.

You can apply for S-DVI if you meet the following 4 criteria:

1. You were released from active duty under other than dishonorable conditions on or after April 25, 1951
2. You were rated for a service-connected disability (even if only 0%)
3. You are in good health except for any service-connected conditions
4. You apply within 2 years from the date VA grants your new service-connected disability.

Under certain conditions, the basic S-DVI policy provides for a waiver of premiums if the veteran has a total disability. The Veterans' Benefits Act of 1992, provided for \$20,000 of supplemental coverage to S-DVI policyholders. Premiums may not be waived on this supplemental coverage.

If you want more information on S-DVI, you need to attend the VA benefits briefing, or visit www.va.gov. Write one of these in the "referred to" column on the form and check "yes" in the block.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer have the option of checking the "NO" on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #16g Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI)

The Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI) is a mortgage life insurance program designed to pay off the home mortgages of disabled veterans and Service members in the event of their death.

VMLI provides up to \$200,000 mortgage life insurance payable to the mortgage holder in the event of the veteran's death. The amount of coverage will equal the amount of the mortgage still owed, but the maximum can not exceed \$200,000. VMLI is decreasing term insurance which reduces as the amount of the mortgage reduced. VMLI has no loan or cash values and pays no dividends.

You must be a recipient of the Specially Adapted Housing Grant from VA to be eligible for VMLI. When you receive a grant for the purchase of a home through Specially Adapted Housing you will be advised by a person from Loan Guaranty of your eligibility for VMLI. They can assist you in completing the application.

Again, I advise you to attend the Veterans Benefit Briefing since there is a lot of information as you can see, but if you want more information check "yes" and write in VA briefing or www.va.gov.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer have the option of checking the "NO" on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #16h
VA Life Insurance

This is an important reminder of all the insurance benefits you have earned and are available to you and your family. These VA life insurance programs were specifically developed to provide insurance benefits to you if you are not able to get insurance from private companies because of the extra risks involved due to your military service, or if you have a service connected disability. During the transition, you need to do research on Veterans Group Life Insurance and others in order to select the most appropriate plans for you.

Check “yes” in this block and write down “research” and “attend VA briefing” for more information.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer have the option of checking the “NO” on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #16i
Transitional Health Care Benefit

The best way to get information tailored to your particular circumstances is to attend the Veterans Benefit Briefing and talk to a TRICARE representative. They can tell you specifically what you are eligible for and how long that coverage will last. Medical coverage can be very expensive, so it is important you are aware of what is available to you so that you can make the best choice for your situation.

For more information on this, check “yes” in block 16i. You are encouraged to ask questions when you attend the Veterans Benefit Briefing. Recommend you write in the “referred to” column, the VA website which is: www.va.gov or the VA 1-800 number which is: 1-800-827-1000.

Check “no” if you don’t need or want any further information.

Pre-separation Checklist #17a Financial Management

Block 17 and all of the subsections under this block deal with financial information and resources. It's important that you are aware of the financial resources that are available to help you during this transition.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: as I told you earlier today, I will go over the Career Readiness Standards each of you must meet before separating after we complete going through the checklist. Let me pause and mention to you at this time, that one of the Career Readiness Standards you must develop and produce is a 12-month post separation budget. You will develop your 12-month post-separation budget when you attend the Financial Planning Seminar class which is part of the Transition Core Curriculum you will all be going through later in the transition process.

Unless you have a career already lined up, it could take some time to find a job. Careful financial planning is the key to managing a limited income. There are courses offered at the FSC, along with Command Career Counselors who can assist you with doing some financial management planning. If you are a Guard or Reservists and are not located near a military installation, Military OneSource can offer assistance with financial management by contacting 1-800-342-9647 or www.militaryonesource.com

There are personal financial management specialists and subject matter experts on these topics available at the Military & Family Support Centers and other locations on the installation. If you want to research some of the financial information on your own, you can use military.com, tsp.gov or www.defenselink.mil/militarypay. I suggest you write these down on your DD 2648 now. Also, the Service member's Civil Relief Act provides a wide range of protections for individuals on active duty.

If you are considering separating from the military prior to retirement, you need to carefully compare your current benefits to what is available in the civilian sector. These benefits include paid days off, paid holidays, enlistment bonuses, tax-free portions of pay, retirement age, pension plans, health care and retirement health care plans. There are excellent resource tools and planning material located in the DoD Career Decision Toolkit available at www.TurboTAP.org

Let's talk about the Thrift Savings Plan or TSP. This is a retirement/savings plan with the purpose of providing retirement income. It involves a defined contribution plan that is similar to a 401K retirement program. The retirement income received from a TSP account will depend on how much you will have contributed during your working years and the earnings those contributions generated. In addition, unlike participation in the uniformed services retirement system, participation in the TSP is optional.

The amount that is contributed into the plan and the earnings you receive belong to you, even if you do not serve the 20 or more years ordinarily required to receive uniformed

services retirement pay. If you have a vested account balance of \$200 or more after leaving military service, you can leave the money in the TSP until later, or you can withdraw the account at anytime. If you have less than \$200, TSP will automatically send a check for the amount and close the account.

There are two types of post-separation withdrawals; a partial and a full withdrawal.

1. A partial withdrawal is taking out \$1,000 or more and leaving the rest in the account until withdrawing at a later date.
2. A full withdrawal can be made in three options: a single “lump sum” payment, series of monthly payments or a TSP life annuity. There are withdrawal deadlines you need to be aware of. If you have a TSP account and are interested in withdrawing from your contributions you need to see the TSP representative on base, or go to www.tsp.gov.

Another topic you should know about is the Survivor Benefit Plan, or SBP. SBP is specifically for retirees and all active duty military members are automatically covered under SBP at the full amount while on active duty. This changes upon separation and retirement.

Basically, when you die, your retirement pay stops. This means that the survivors will be left without a substantial income source. SBP is an optional insurance plan that will pay the surviving spouse a monthly payment, or annuity, to help make up for the loss of retirement income.

There are, of course, alternatives to SBP such as investments, or permanent and term life insurance. You and your spouse are equally responsible for the SBP decision. The member may not reduce or decline spouse coverage without the spouse’s written consent. Coverage may be selected for a former spouse or, if the member does not have a spouse or children, they may be able to cover an “insurable interest” (such as, a business partner or parent). Single Service members must also make this election.

Election of SBP is an important financial decision and should be considered carefully. The spouse will be required to sign the SBP Election Form and should be included in the decision making process. If you are divorced, review your Divorce Decree to determine if the court requires you to elect coverage

Failure to accept or decline coverage will result in your being automatically covered at the full retirement pay amount. There are many resources to help you make informed decisions about this plan, including talking to the Legal Office and the Family Service Center Financial Command Career Counselor.

Participants in the SBP will be required to pay a monthly premium for this plan. SBP Premiums and benefits are based on the “base amount” or benefit level elected.

As you can see, getting as much information as possible about your financial management plan is one of the most important aspects of your separation from the military. I would strongly suggest that you check “yes” on block 17a and write in financial specialist, www.tsp.gov, or the Thriftline at 1-877-968-3778, www.military.com or www.militaryonesource and learn more about your particular financial situation.

Pre-separation Checklist #17b

Separation Pay

A topic you are certainly going to be interested in is separation pay. Public Law and Assistant Secretary of Defense policy established separation pay to monetarily assist certain involuntarily separated or released members from active duty.

Separation pay eligibility and amounts are determined by the type of separation. The specifics on eligibility varies greatly from person to person and based on Separation Program Designator (SPD) codes. Your Personnel Office can provide more details on your particular eligibility.

Personnel medically separated for a disability incurred in a combat zone or from combat-related operations may be entitled to an enhanced disability separation pay. For more information contact the administration/personnel office.

You may also be eligible for final pay at separation that would include any earned entitlements and pay for accumulated leave. That amount will be reduced by any outstanding balances on advance pay you may have received, along with unearned bonus recoupment and other debts you've incurred throughout your service. And, of course, they will take out taxes. In addition, some transactions that already may be in process could result in additional payments to you after separation or could also create a debt. You are responsible for repayment of all debts owed the federal government. Specific questions you may have about separation pay issues should be directed to your military personnel office. The actual amount of separation pay is computed by the local finance office.

If you are interested in more information on separation pay, you should check "yes" and you can write in the "referred to" column: personnel office or the regulations that cover separation pay which are: Title 10, Chapter 59, Section 1174, Separation Pay Upon *Involuntary Discharge or Release from Active Duty* or Department of Defense Instruction 1332.29, Eligibility of Regular and Reserve Personnel for Separation Pay.

The Directive-Type Memorandum (DTM) on Implementing Disability-Related Provisions of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008, dated March 18, 2008, contains information on separation pay for those medically separated.

If you don't need any further information, check "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #17c Unemployment Compensation

It is more than likely that you have heard about unemployment benefits. So have you thought about applying for unemployment compensation when you transition? It is interesting that some people see unemployment as a hand-out from the government. What you need to know is that you have earned your unemployment rights – if you are eligible.

Unemployment Compensation for ex-Service members is referred to as UCX. When you separate or, in some cases, retire you may qualify for unemployment compensation. The UCX law provides payment for certain reasons. Different states have different requirements and rules for eligibility. You need to contact the state where you will be looking for work. Receiving unemployment while you are looking for work will help pay bills and provide you some financial stability in case it takes a long time to find a job. Remember, the military has paid into UCX on your behalf.

You will have to file a claim in your state and from there the state workforce agency determines your eligibility.

If you are interested in learning more about unemployment compensation, you need to check “yes” and then write in this website: <http://www.servicelocator.org/>. This website has links to each state where you can locate your specific UCX information

If you do not desire any further information, check “no.”

Pre-separation Checklist #17d

General Money Management

We have talked about assistance and programs and plans that may help with your financial transition. Let's now spend some time talking about your personal finances, such as your general money management, savings and investment. Block 17 is general money management, let's start with that.

Money management encompasses how you handle all of your monetary assets. The basic rule of thumb is to have at least 3 to 6 months of living expenses in a savings account in the event of lost wages (and other emergencies). Although this is in the ideal situation, you may struggle to make ends meet once you are out of the service and find this goal too lofty and unrealistic. Instead, working towards saving \$500 a month may seem more practical and attainable. You need to set a savings goal now and start aiming to reach that goal as quickly as possible. If you are close to your separation or retirement date, this may be very tough to attain.

So let's talk a little about budgeting. You need a tool for reaching financial goals. One tool is using spending plans. These are compilations of your personal financial data and are designed to indicate your financial condition. The two most useful budget statements are a balance sheet and a cash flow statement.

A balance sheet is basically your net worth which describes your current financial status and includes information on what you own (assets), what you owe (liabilities), and what the net result would be if you paid off all of your debts.

A cash flow statement is used to summarize income and expense transactions that have taken place over a specific period of time, such as a month or a year. It tells you where your money came from and where it went.

Next is your income, which obviously includes your work paycheck, but also includes other ways you get money such as a monetary gift for your birthday. Expenses are broken into two categories; fixed or variable. Fixed expenses cannot be changed in the short run. These include rent or mortgage payments, utility bills, auto payments and insurance premiums. Variable expenses are easier to decrease in the short run. They include such items as groceries, clothing, donations, recreation or entertainment, credit card payments and some transportation costs. Your income will most certainly drive your budget; how much you earn vs. how much you spend. You need to look at your fixed income along with your variable and determine items you need in your life and those you can do without for the time being, at least until you earn more money and get more financially stable.

There are many resources available to assist with developing a budget. You can visit the Family Support/Service Centers and meet with financial Command Career Counselors, or can access financial planning on-line. Sites such as militaryonesource.com and TurboTAP.org have more information on budgeting. You are encouraged to explore the on demand interactive courseware on Financial Planning for Transition, contained in the DoD

Career Decision Toolkit. If this would be helpful to you, write it in the “referred to” column on block 17d.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: Command Career Counselors will provide website links to the Family Center’s electronic budget when Services members sign-up for Transition GPS so that members can complete a draft budget as pre-work. Remember, I just told you that you must produce a 12-month post military budget as one of your CRSs. Doing this pre-work will make developing your 12-month post military budget a lot easier than if you wait until you get in class.

Another area of money management is debt management. This is a systematic way to help you become debt-free. It involves spreading the payments over a period of time, and possibly stopping creditors from taking legal action against you. Debt management is based on how much you earn vs. all of your expenses. It is set up for you that if you do get into unmanageable debt by reckless spending, along with other unavoidable reasons, like losing a job, being relocated or separation it can help you in alleviating that problem.

Debt management programs can only help to a certain extent. To remove the debts, you are required to put forth the effort by sticking to a budget, refraining from over spending and stopping the use of credit cards.

Debt management programs, typically offered through the Family Support/Service Centers have been designed and equipped to assist individuals in making their debt repayments in a manageable manner. These programs are not always accessible after your transition. There are scores of companies you can find online who have a lot of experience in helping people handle their debts.

For more information, check “yes” and visit the financial specialist at your command or some of the other resources I mentioned. Make sure you write a resource in the “referred to” column.

If you don’t want or need any additional information, check “no.”

Pre-separation Checklist #17e Personal Savings and Investment

We have talked about budgeting and debt reduction. Now let's discuss savings and investments. I plan to provide an overview of some information, but again I encourage you to talk with an expert about your personal financial situation.

Banks and credit unions offer savings accounts designed to help you reach your short- and long-term financial goals. When opening a savings account you need to look for an FDIC or National Credit Union Association (NCUA) - insured savings account that offers competitive interest rates. It is important to check withdrawal and deposit guidelines as some institutions limit the amount of free transactions available. Savings accounts do not provide a lot of interest earnings on what you deposit into an account. These are set up as a way to deposit money into an account for you to draw out, if needed.

For higher interest earnings, you then need to invest your money into a variety of institutions that can work to make you money. There are four common types of investments.

The first and probably most inexpensive type of investment is a bond, in particular, the U.S. Savings Bond. Companies, cities, states, and even governments sell bonds to help raise money to run their particular institutions.

Second is a Certificate of Deposit, or CD. CDs are issued by commercial banks and savings and loans. A CD is the bank's way of "making money." You typically receive a small yield on your money, about 2-5%, and the more you invest the more you earn.

Stocks are another type of investment. When buying a stock, the purchaser takes an ownership stake in a company. At some point, just about every company needs to raise money. In each case, a company has two choices: 1) borrow the money, or 2) raise it from investors by selling them a stake in the company. Own a share of stock, and the purchaser becomes a part owner in the company, with a claim (however small it may be) on every asset and every penny in earnings (and unfortunately on losses as well). If the profit goes up and the company does well, the investor can make money. If the profit is down and the company has a bad quarter or bad year, then the investor can lose money. Stocks are sometimes a big risk and people have lost a lot of money in them.

The last common type of investment you probably have heard about are mutual funds. A mutual fund has a manager of that fund who pools money together from thousands of small investors and then buys stocks, bonds, or other securities with the money. When contributing money to a fund, the contributor gets a stake in all its investments.

That's just the tip of the iceberg. If you want to know more, check "yes" and then write in the "referred to" column, financial specialist or Family Support Center. The Saveandinvest.org website, sponsored by the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc (FINRA) is also a great location for online education and resources.

If you don't need any more information on savings and investments, check "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #18

Reserve Affiliation

Block 18 covers reserve affiliation. Some in the military are obligated to join the reserves, others will want to affiliate with the reserves, and the rest have fulfilled their obligation and will not be part of the reserve force. This block is to inform you of your own reserve options and obligations.

You may not recall, but for all enlistees, when you first joined the military, if this is your initial enlistment, you agreed to serve a total of eight (8) years. Any part of that service that is not served on active duty must be served in a reserve component, unless you are discharged sooner.

The member must satisfy the obligation by becoming a member of the Ready Reserve in one of the following categories:

Selected Reserve

- You may voluntarily affiliate with the Selected Reserve, either with a National Guard or Reserve unit or a Reserve individual program.
- Upon becoming a member of the Selected Reserves, you may be recalled to active duty in time of war or national emergency. You may also be ordered to active duty involuntarily for up to 270 days, for any single contingency operation, without a declaration of a national emergency.
- You will participate and train as required by the Reserve category to which you belong. For National Guard and Reserve unit programs, this usually means a minimum of one weekend a month and two weeks of annual training per year. For Reserve individual programs, the training requirement may be somewhat less.
- Individual Ready Reserve (IRR)
If you do not affiliate with one of the above programs, your military service branch will automatically or involuntarily assign you to the Individual Ready Reserve.
 - The Individual Ready Reserve consists mainly of individuals who have had training and who have served previously in the active component. Other IRR members come from the Selected Reserve and have some of their military service obligation remaining.
 - IRR members may be involuntarily recalled upon declaration of a national emergency. Otherwise, participation requirements may include an annual day of muster duty to satisfy statutory screening requirements.
 - IRR members may participate in voluntary temporary tours of active duty and military professional development education programs.

If you have served eight years or more of active duty and no longer have a military service obligation you do not have to affiliate with the National Guard or Reserves. However, you may choose to continue military service by affiliating with a Reserve component in one of these categories.

I encourage you to explore the reserve options in the geographic area where you will reside.

If you want more information, check “yes” and you can contact a reserve recruiter on your installation. I can also provide you with specific referral websites by military Service should you desire the information.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: Let me point out that you will have to meet the following CRS: “Completed a continuum of Military Service opportunity counseling (active Component Service members only).

If you don’t need any more information, check “no.”

Pre-separation Checklist #19

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

First of all, you WILL attend the VA briefing. So check “YES” on the form and write in the “referred to” column “attending briefing.”

The purpose of this block is to give you an overview of the role of VA benefits and services. VA has the overall responsibility to provide information and administration of benefits to veterans (Title 38, USC, Chapter 77). We will also discuss the timelines for services and benefits.

The VA eBenefits portal, mentioned earlier, is a one-stop shop for benefits-related online tools and information. eBenefits serves Active Duty Service members, members of the National Guard and Reserves, Wounded Warriors, Veterans, their families, and their caregivers. Proving that you have an eBenefits account is another CRS that you must meet.

eBenefits provides two main services:

1. A catalog of links to other sites that provide information about military and Veteran benefits; and
2. A personalized workspace called *My eBenefits* that provides quick access to eBenefits tools. Using eBenefits tools, you can complete various tasks. You can apply for benefits, download your DD 214, and view your benefits status.

Service Members, Veterans, and their family members can register for eBenefits. Registration gives you access to secure features. It also gives you the ability to personalize features to suit your needs.

All military personnel and veterans with DoD CAC credentials can register quickly and have immediate access to a wide variety of information to assist them in understanding their benefits.

Registration after military separation or retirement may require a visit to a VA service location for credential validation. Avoid the trip. Register while still serving and keep your personal account for life.

You can go to a Veterans’ Benefits Briefing or to a Veteran Benefits Command Career Counselor for more detailed information on your benefits.

Here are some of the programs:

- Compensation and pension (explained in detail in items 15(a)(2) and 20c).
- Education and training (explained more in 14(a)), however, for additional information about these educational programs and others, call toll-free 1-888-442-4551 or visit www.gibill.va.gov.
- Medical care (was explained in 15(a)(2)).

To obtain information about VA health care benefits, call toll-free 1-877-222-8387 or visit www.va.gov/vbs/health.

- Home loan assistance: Eligible veterans may obtain loans guaranteed by VA to purchase or refinance homes, condominiums, and manufactured homes. VA home loans feature a competitive interest rate and lower down payment, or, if the lender agrees, no down payment at all. The VA does not loan the money for a home, instead, eligible veterans must make their own arrangements for loans through the usual lending channels. VA loans are charged a funding fee by VA, with the exception of loans made to compensably disabled veterans and unremarried surviving spouses of veteran who died as a result of service-connected disabilities. The funding fee is based on the loan amount. For additional information, visit www.homeloans.va.gov.
- Insurance (was explained in 16h).
- Veterans Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment: Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) is an employment-oriented program intended for veterans who have a combined service-connected disability rating of 20 percent or more and for certain Service members awaiting discharge due to a medical condition. VR&E helps individuals prepare for, find, and keep suitable employment. For veterans whose disabilities are so severe that they cannot currently consider employment, VA helps them attain as much independence in daily living as possible. Additional information is available at www.vba.va.gov.
- Employment with VA: The Secretary of VA may give preference to qualified covered veterans for employment in VA as Veterans' Benefits Command Career Counselors and Veterans' Claims Examiners. 38 USC 4214(g). The following personnel management website provides information to job seekers on the preference you have as a veteran for federal jobs: www.opm.gov/veterans/jobs.asp.
- <http://www.va.gov>
- <http://www.ebenefits.va.gov>

Pre-separation Checklist #20a Disabled Transition Assistance Program (DTAP)

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: Please be aware that under the re-designed TAP, DTAP will be part of the overall VA Benefits Briefing 1 and 2. But for now, let me give you a brief overview of the DTAP that VA currently provides. Command Career Counselor should confirm with VA which VA Briefing is being conducted at their installation – Legacy VA Benefits Briefing or VA Benefits Briefing I and VA Benefits Briefing II. Command Career Counselor should only address DTAP if it is being presented as the Legacy VA Benefits Briefing. If the installation is doing VA Benefits Briefing I and VA Benefits Briefing II, Command Career Counselor should inform Service members to disregard this block on the form. Let the Service members know the form will be updated in the near future.

The Disabled Transition Assistance Program (DTAP) is to provide information on VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program. This information will be discussed during the VA benefits brief to allow for all Service members to be made aware of DTAP and the VR&E program.

DTAP presentations are generally group sessions that include a comprehensive discussion of VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program and educational/vocational counseling available to separating Service members and veterans. Usually, the VA Regional Office VR&E Officer will coordinate DTAP sessions for those Service members who are hospitalized, convalescing or receiving outpatient treatment for a disability and who are unable to attend a DTAP group session.

- VA Vocational Rehabilitation: The purpose of this program is to provide eligible veterans who have compensable service-connected disabilities all the services and assistance necessary to enable them to achieve maximum independence in daily living. The goal to the maximum extent feasible, is to help these veterans become employable and to obtain and maintain suitable employment. This program has 5 tracks available for individuals who have, or think they have, a disability.
- Resources available - www.vba.va.gov and VA Vocational Rehabilitation

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer has the option of checking the “NO” on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #20b VA Disability Benefits

The purpose of this section is to provide a brief overview of the VA disability benefits. We already covered the general disability benefits in block 15. These benefits through VA encompass disability compensation, vocational rehabilitation, VA health care and dental care.

It is important for you to know that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is responsible for ensuring that if you are a disabled veteran, you receive the proper care, support, and earned recognition that you deserve.

The Disabled Transition Assistance Program (DTAP), block #20, is an integral component of transition because it helps you make informed decisions about your disability as it relates to the VA. It is intended to assist you in filing out an application for vocational rehabilitation benefits as quick and easy as possible to deliver the much needed services to those eligible.

If you want to attend the VA briefing, which I highly recommend, check “yes” and write in the “referred to” column, “attend VA Briefing”.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer has the option of checking the “NO” on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #20c Benefits Delivery at Discharge and Quick Start

If you are separating from active duty within the next 60 to 180 days, Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) can help you receive VA disability benefits sooner. The BDD Program allows you to apply for disability compensation benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) prior to retirement or separation from military service.

BDD is a popular program, available at limited locations in the United States, that allows veterans' self-identified disability claims to be processed six months prior to separation. At BDD sites, Service members can submit VA Form 21-526 and medical documentation to a local VA representative in order to establish their claims. VA schedules necessary specialty appointments and a compensation and pension examination by a VA doctor. Disposition of the claim is projected as a goal of no later than two months after the date of discharge on the 214.

Quick Start allows Service members the opportunity to submit an application for service-connected compensation while still on Active duty, which will speed up the acquirement of VA compensation benefits. Service members with 1-59 days remaining on active duty or full time Reserve or National Guard (Title 10 or Title 32) or Service members who do not meet the BDD criteria requiring availability for all examinations prior to discharge may apply through Quick Start.

You need to call the VA today to start this process.

To apply, you need to submit VA Form 21-526c, Pre-Discharge Compensation Claim, to the nearest VA Regional Office. You can also complete your application on-line at VA's website (www.VA.gov) using the Veterans Online Application (VONAPP) or visit your nearest Regional Office. If you need more assistance you can call the VA toll free number at 1-800-827-1000.

If you are interested in more information on BDD or Quick Start, check "yes" in block 20c, and write one of the resources I mentioned in the "referred to" column. Some other resources for more information are the base Transition Office the VA benefits briefing, www.TurboTAP.org and www.MilitaryOneSource.com.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer has the option of checking the "NO" on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #21 State Veteran Benefits

Many states offer veterans benefits beyond the ones you would already be eligible for through the Department of Veterans Affairs. These additional benefits may include:

- educational grants and scholarships,
- special exemptions or discounts on fees and taxes,
- home loans,
- veteran's homes,
- free hunting and fishing privileges,
- and more

Each state manages its own benefit programs and some states are very extensive, while others are minimal. The website below has a link for each of the individual states that shows the types of veterans benefits your state offers. I would encourage you to take advantage of the benefits you have earned by visiting your State Department of Veterans Affairs.

If you want to learn more about your specific state benefits, check “yes” and write down this website: <http://www.military.com/benefits/veteran-benefits/state-veterans-benefits-directory>, or www.va.gov/landing2_locations.htm.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: the VA Benefits Briefing is now mandatory for everyone; therefore, you no longer has the option of checking the “NO” on this form. The form will be updated to reflect this change.

Pre-separation Checklist #22
Two-year Commissary and Post Exchange Privileges (Eligible Involuntary Separates)

The military commissaries and exchanges are integral elements of the military non-pay compensation and benefit package. The commissary and exchange stores are operated at military installations around the world, and offer the same goods, merchandise and services found in commercial U.S. grocery stores, discount stores and department stores.

Eligible patrons of the military commissaries and exchanges consist of military service and family members on active duty; members of the National Guard and Reserves; military retirees; Medal of Honor recipients; honorably discharged veterans with a 100 percent Service-connected disability; United States civilian employees of the Department of Defense when stationed overseas; and their dependents.

Service members who are involuntarily separated from active duty during the period beginning on October 1, 2007, and ending on December 31, 2012, can continue to use commissary and exchange stores during the two-year period beginning on the date of the involuntary separation in the same manner as members on active duty.

Service members who, upon separation, will be entitled to a DD Form 2, "Armed Forces of the United States Geneva Convention Identification Card (Reserve)," and/or DD Form 1173-1, "Department of Defense Guard and Reserve Family Member Identification Card," are permitted to use Morale, Welfare, and Recreation revenue-generating facilities, e.g. clubs, bowling centers, golf courses, and more.

Those individuals who separated and retired who elect to live in a foreign country may lose commissary and/or Base Exchange privileges due to treaty, Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA), or military base agreements between the United States and host country.

If you need more information on this topic, check "yes" in block #22 and write "Transition Office or Personnel Office" in the "referred to" column on the form.

If you don't desire any further information, check "no."

Pre-separation Checklist #23

Legal Assistance

Military installations have legal assistance offices available to assist you with legal matters such as will preparation, powers of attorney, review of most contracts, debit/credit problems, landlord/tenant issues, family law, tax law and estate planning. All of these services are a no-cost benefit to you for your active duty service.

Legal assistance provides quality legal services regarding personal civil legal matters to eligible persons by educating them regarding their personal legal rights and responsibilities. Legal assistance officers are well-versed in the special issues facing those retiring and separating from military service.

Speak with a licensed attorney before relying on the information contained within a legal assistance website to make a decision or take any action. Contact your local installation legal assistance offices or use the Legal Services Locator to find the nearest military legal office within the continental United States.

Retirees can use the installation legal and financial offices on a space-available basis, and depending on the location, may have to wait to see a representative. The installation legal and financial offices will specify the services available. It is helpful to call as far in advance as possible. Retirees residing overseas may have restrictions on privileges based upon Status of Forces agreements.

If you need more information on this topic, check “yes” in block #23 and write “www.legalassistance.law.af.mil/contnt/locator.php” in the “referred to” column on the form.

If you don’t desire any further information, check “no.”

Pre-separation Checklist #24

Post Government (Military) Service Employment Restriction Counseling

Have you heard about the Post Government Briefing requirement? This is a required briefing for all DOD personnel who leave military service for the private sector. It will give you information on what you can and can't do, career-wise, after leaving the military.

A brief summary of the most common post government employment restrictions includes:

- Personal Lifetime Ban
After leaving government service, you may not represent another individual or company to the government regarding particular matters you worked on while in government service.
- Seeking or Negotiating for Post Government Employment
 - Official Responsibility Two-Year Ban
For two (2) years after leaving government service, you may not represent someone else to the government regarding particular matters that were pending under your responsibility during the last year of government service.
 - Trade or Treaty One-Year Ban
For one (1) year after leaving government service, you may not aid, advise, or represent someone else regarding trade or treaty negotiations that you worked on during the last year of government service.
 - Compensation for Representation to the Government By Others

There are additional restrictions for retired military personnel and reservists' foreign employment.

Since it is required, it is important for you to know that you cannot decline this counseling. Therefore, no blocks exist to allow you the option of checking "YES" or "NO." Contact the installation legal office (Staff Judge Advocate or Command Career Counselor's office) to ensure you receive a post government (military) employment restriction briefing or counseling from an ethics official.

Pre-separation Checklist #25 Individual Transition Plan

All of what we covered can be considered part of your Individual Transition Plan (ITP). This form and the resources, such as www.TurboTAP.org and several of the other places I have mentioned to go for assistance are part of an ITP. There is assistance available to you in your transition and in completing a Transition Plan. The key is planning.

Transitioning is serious business and requires a carefully thought-out Individual Transition Plan. The ITP is your game plan for a successful transition to civilian life. It's a framework used to fulfill realistic career goals based upon your unique skills, knowledge, experience, and abilities.

One of the Career Readiness Standards for your transition is to have a standardized Individual Transition Plan, or ITP. The ITP is your documented personal employment goals, actions, and milestones. Some of you completed an Individual Development Plan (IDP) at your enlistment and the ITP becomes an extension of that original plan as you separate or retire.

The standard ITP for all branches of service includes 6 sections. You have all 6 ITP sections; however, during this session you will complete most of part 1. Based on your personal needs assessment you will need to complete additional sections. Particular sections coincide with the path you take. For example, if you are planning on pursuing further education at a college, you will complete section 5 of the ITP.

The ITP is created by you, to assist yourself each step of the way into your new life. It is a living and breathing document which will not be completed this week. Fortunately, you will not have to do this alone. Fortunately, Transition Assistance/ Office will give you a head start on the development of an ITP. A copy of the Pre-separation Counseling Checklist (DD Form 2648) will serve as an outline and a road map for your plan.

If you want more assistance with an ITP, here are a couple of resources you can write down in the "referred to" column on the form. The TurboTAP.org website I mentioned has an interactive Career Decision Toolkit designed to help you plan your transition. Inside the toolkit, you will discover checklists for success in each of the six learning sections. You can use this checklist or I can also provide you with an interactive timeline. In addition, you can visit the Transition Assistance Office. Check "yes" on block #25.

If you don't need any help with your ITP, or any further information, check "no."

Block 25.b.

Select one by marking the appropriate box with an "X." If "Other" is selected, you must write a description in the space provided below the box.

SECTION V - LANGUAGE SKILLS/REGIONAL EXPERTISE

Block 26.a.

Select one by marking the appropriate box with an "X."

Block 26.b.

Select one by marking the appropriate box with an "X."

SECTION VI – REMARKS

Block 27. MY COUNSELING WAS CONDUCTED 89 DAYS OR LESS BEFORE MY SEPARATION OR RETIREMENT BECAUSE OF: (X one)

Select one by marking the appropriate box with an "X." If "Other" is selected you must write a description in the space provided below the box.

Block 28.a. SERVICE MEMBER SIGNATURE

Self-explanatory.

Block 28.b. DATE (YYYYMMDD)

Enter the numerical date the pre-separation counseling form was signed Year (4 digits) Month (2 digits) Day (2 digits) without dashes (-).

Block 28.c. COMMAND CAREER COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR SIGNATURE

Self-explanatory.

Block 28.d. DATE (YYYYMMDD)

Command Career Counselor enters numerical date the pre-separation counseling form was signed Year (4 digits) Month (2 digits) Day (2 digits) without dashes (-).

Does anyone have any question about any item on the Pre-separation Counseling Checklist at this time?

We have covered a great deal of material and information. Let's take a **XX** minute break. When you return we will do a review of the key take-aways from today's Pre-separation Counseling Session.

PRE-SEPARATION COUNSELING REVIEW

Let's start our review with the Career Readiness Standards (CRSs)

1. As I told you during the Transition GPS overview earlier today, you must meet Career Readiness Standards before you can separate. And, you have to show documentation or evidence that you have met the CRSs.
 - a. So let's go over the CRSs you must meet:

Common CRSs

1. **Complete an assessment of your personal circumstances - DD Form 2648, Pre-separation Counseling Checklist** assesses your personal circumstances and is the document that enables you to identify your individual needs and match information and resource referrals available to you for a successful transition. PLEASE MAKE A NOTE: You must take your DD Form 2648 with you when you attend all future Transition GPS classes as well as when you meet with a Command Career Counselor, or member of your unit's chain of command regarding your transition. **You must also complete Section 1, Block 1 of your ITP, "Personal Assessment."** These two completed documents will show you have completed a personal assessment
2. **Complete 12 month post-separation budget** – We strongly recommend you do pre-work before you attend the Financial Planning Seminar which is part of the Transition Core Curriculum which I explained earlier today. You should check with your transition office at your family center or ACAP Center, to get the link to the electronic budget that will be used in the class. THIS IS A VERY ROBUST BUDGET. You cannot go into the classroom unless you have prepared yourself to do this work. The pre-work will be of great value when you go through the class on Financial Planning Seminar.
3. **ACTIVE COMPONENT SERVICE MEMBERS** -- You are to meet with a Command Career Counselor and document that you were counseled on continuum of military service opportunity. Documentation can be made on your ITP but it has to be verifying by a Command Career Counselor.

4. **MOC crosswalk Gap Analysis** – You will develop your MOC Crosswalk Gap Analysis when you attend the MOC Crosswalk Class which again is part of the 5-day Transition GPS Core Curriculum.
5. **Register on eBenefits** – We will complete that verification today.
6. **Complete the ITP.** At this time, please take out your ITP. I want you to complete the top portion of page 1, Block 1 of your ITP. PLEASE NOTE: You are to attach a copy of your DD Form 2648 to this ITP. Once you completed the top portion of page 1, then read the “TRANSITION PLANNING OVERVIEW” instructions ON page 1 and 2.
 - a. **COMMAND CAREER COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE:** Inform the Service members that they are to take their ITP with them when they attend Transition GPS Core Curriculum classes every day of the week, as well as when they attend the Transition GPS Track and Capstone.
 - b. **REMINDE SERVICE MEMBERS – Their ITP is their roadmap. When they make changes, they should document them on the ITP. They can also put appointments on their ITP in the appropriate section based on the purpose of the appointment.**
 - c. **KEY POINT:** REMIND THEM THAT AS OF TODAY – CONSIDER YOUR ITP LIKE YOUR CREDIT CARD – DON’T GO ANYWHERE WITHOUT IT!!

Employment Career Readiness Standards you must meet:

Complete Assessment Tool – I described earlier what this was for and where you can get it. Can someone tell me how do you get your Services Assessment Tool? ANSWER: www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip

1. **Complete job application package consisting of:**
 - a. Resume (private/federal)
 - b. References (personal/professional)
 - c. Submitted applications (2)

OR

Job Acceptance Letter
2. **DOL Gold Card Certificate** – Download a copy of the DOL Gold Card (looks like a certificate – 8 ½ x 11 document) – Show example.
 - a. **COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE:** Command Career Counselor will explain that Gold Card gets them six months priority services at any American Job Center. They will learn more about this when they attend the DOLEW during the Transition GPS Core Curriculum.

Education & Career Technical Training Career Readiness Standards you must meet:

- 1. Complete Assessment Tool** – This was described to you earlier today. Can someone tell me where do you go to get this assessment tool?

Answer: www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip

Complete a comparison of academic or technical institution choices

- 2. Complete your college, university or technical training application (s)**
- 3. Confirm your one-on-one counseling with a college, university or technical training institution advisor.**

As a result of today's Pre-separation Counseling session, it has been determine which of the three tracks best meets the needs. This is based on your personal needs assessment. How you value your time in this program over the next couple of days, weeks and even months will determine the tools you take forward in your transition.

Based on your personal assessment, you indicated that upon separation you plan to:

- Find a job
- Go back to school (degree completion or technical training)
- Start your own business

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: Command Career Counselor s will now have to schedule Service members for the track they will attend based on the results of the personal assessment.

Let me give you a brief description of the tracks.

Education Track

This track is for those of you who are going into the educational arena. These 2 days help you prepare for college life and re-entering school, transferring credits and experience, researching schools and financial assistance, applications, and campus realities. You will hear a little about voc-ed counseling available through the VA during the VA portion of today's workshop.

Career Technical Track

The technical track is similar to the education track. These 2 days are provided by the VA and will help with reputable technical school selection, benefits and cost analysis of the technical career field and occupational crossover information.

Entrepreneurship Track

This track is designed for those of you who are interested in pursuing your own small business or franchising. The SBA has designed 2 days of special curriculum for interested in these areas. These 2 days explore the personal side of entrepreneurship, like what it takes to start a business, your self-motivation and your vision. This track also covers the

development of a business plan, and sources of capital and financing. It will also give you an opportunity to learn from other business owners.

Finally, let me explain the exemption policy to you and how it works.

EXEMPTIONS/WAIVERS

All transitioning Service members are required to complete the DD2648 Pre-Separation Checklist and attend the VA Briefings. No one can be exempted from attending these two mandatory components of TAP. However, the Department of Defense has established exemptions for participation in Department of Labor Employment Workshop. The exemptions are as follows:

1. Service members retiring after 20 or more years of active federal service in the Military Services.
2. Members of the Reserve Components who are being demobilized or deactivated after serving 180 continuous days or more on active duty. An individual Reserve Component member must:
 - Be able to confirm employment
 - Provide documented acceptance into an accredited technical training, undergraduate, or graduate degree program; or
 - Have previously attended DOL Employment Workshop
3. Service members with specialized skills who, due to unavoidable circumstances, are needed to support a unit on orders to be deployed within 60 days. The first commander in the Service member's chain of command with proper authority pursuant to chapter 47 of Title 10, United States Code (also known as and referred to the "Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ)") must certify on the ITP Checklist any such request for exemption from TAP.
4. Wounded, ill and injured recovering Service members most likely to transition out of active duty, and who are enrolled in the Education and Employment Initiative or a similar transition program designed to secure employment, participate in education, or technical training post-separation.

Service members who qualify for an exemption and elect not to participate in the DOL Employment Workshop must request to be exempted and formally document their decision on the ITP checklist.

COMMAND CAREER COUNSELOR NOTE: at this point of the Pre-separation Counseling session, the Command Career Counselor has to accomplish the following tasks before dismissing the class:

1. Initiate an ITP Checklist for each individual Service member in the class.
2. Document on each individual ITP checklist which Service member meets the criteria for exemption and chose be exempted from DOLEW and any of the Core Curriculum (except VA Benefits Briefing). NOTE: Exemption from the Core Curriculum (except VA Benefits Briefing) still requires the Service member to meet CRSs.
3. Verify each person has an eBenefits account and document their ITP accordingly.

4. Save the data and submit it to DMDC real time but no later than the next business day.
5. Those Service members in the class who meet the following exemption criteria:
 - o Service members with specialized skills who, due to unavoidable circumstances, are needed to support a unit on orders to be deployed within 60 days. The first commander in the Service member's chain of command with proper authority pursuant to chapter 47 of Title 10, United States Code (also known as and referred to the "Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ)") must certify on the ITP Checklist any such request for exemption form TAP. A make-up plan must accompany the postponement certification.

The Command Career Counselor will have them hand carry their ITP Checklist to the appropriate commander in the Service member's chain of command and obtain that Commander's approval for the exemption. Service member must then return the ITP checklist to the Command Career Counselor so that the data can be entered and submitted to DMDC.

Command Career Command Career Counselor should do one final check to see if there are any questions. If not, Command Career Counselor should proceed to complete the tasks listed above and dismiss the class accordingly.

Personnel should attend Transition GPS with the following required pre-requisites:

- (1) Completed DD Form 2648/ DD Form 2648-1
- (2) VA E-benefits registration information (DSLogon)
<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal>
- (3) Individual Transition Plan (ITP) template (with a block 1 initiated to the best ability of separating Sailors)
http://www.cnic.navy.mil/navycni/groups/public/@hq/@ffr/documents/document/cnicp_a296155.pdf

In addition, to assist members in meeting Career Readiness Standards (CRS) and to obtain the most benefit from the course, it is recommended they bring the following documentation for their own personal use during various modules of the class.

- (1) Copy of Career Interest Assessment from O*Net "Interest Profiler"
www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip
- (2) Copy of VMET www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/vmet/index.jsp
- (3) Copy of most recent LES <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>
- (4) Copy of Evals/FITREPS
- (5) SMART transcript and training record
- (6) A copy of your credit report (personal use)
<https://www.annualcreditreport.com/cra/index.jsp> [Note: An employer may ask a job applicant permission to do a background check (including credit report) before hiring]