

**PRESENTER'S GUIDE**

- I. TITLE:** Transition GPS Overview and Orientation
- II. DATE:** November 2012
- III. PURPOSE:** To support a successful transition experience for military personnel and their families by introducing participants to the Transition Assistance Program Goals, Plans and Success (Transition GPS). While participants were provided a Transition GPS overview and orientation at their Pre-Separation counseling appointment, it is important for facilitators to re-emphasize all of the milestones and objectives from a participant's pre-separation counseling to the point of separation or retirement.
- IV. TARGET POPULATION:** Presentation is appropriate for all personnel and family members participating in the Transition GPS program in preparation for transition from military to civilian life.
- V. TOPIC OBJECTIVES:** Upon completion participants will be able to:
- Describe all components of the Transition GPS program.
  - Identify ways to maximize participation in all Transition GPS curriculum modules.
  - Identify the common connections between all Transition GPS curriculum modules.
  - Identify needed pre-work and deliverables to successfully meet all Career Readiness Standards.
  - Identify the common issues Service members and families experience during the transition process.
  - Identify resources available to address transition issues and challenges.
  - Understand all deliverables each participant must complete during training event to connect to required Career Readiness Standards.
- VI. PROCEDURES AND OVERVIEW:** This module will be delivered at the beginning of the Transition GPS curriculum immediately after the senior leader welcome or service leader video. The curriculum helps participants understand the overall Transition GPS program, requirements to meet Career Readiness Standards, and identify common issues Service members and families experience during the transition process. It emphasizes the common connection points between the individual Transition GPS curriculum modules and clarifies both pre-work and deliverables associated with each module. It emphasizes the impact their transition may have on family, friends, and loved ones and encourages open communication to address concerns, clarify expectations, and mitigate stress. The session closes with a review of resources available to support participants as they address identified issues and gaps in their Individual Transition Plan (ITP).

**VII. PRESENTATION MATERIALS:**

- A. Chart paper or dry-erase board
- B. Colored markers, dry erase or water color depending on medium used
- C. Computer and projector or video monitor to support slide presentation
- D. Power Point presentation “Transition GPS Overview and Orientation”
- E. Table Tent Name Plates or other materials for name cards.

**VIII. OUTLINE:**

- A. Participant Welcome (provides the welcome for all Transition GPS modules)
- B. Transition GPS Overview & Orientation
  - Pre-Separation Counseling and Assessment
  - E-Benefits Registration
  - Opportunity to Join the Reserve Component
  - Financial Planning
  - Military Occupational Code Crosswalk and GAP Analysis
  - VA Benefits Briefing
  - Department of Labor Employment Workshop/Gold Card
  - Optional Pathways
    - Higher Education Track
    - Technical Training Track
    - Entrepreneur Track
  - Capstone
  - Resilient Transitions
- C. Career Readiness Standards
- D. Challenges Along the Way!
  - Stress, the need to proactively manage change, the need to engage family, friends and mentors in the process.
- E. Wrap Up and next steps!

*NOTE: This portion of the Transition GPS curriculum is intended to provide an overview of the overall program and highlight the benefits of preparing for active involvement in each module. A skilled trainer well versed in the overall Transition GPS program should facilitate the overview session.*

**IX. CONTENT:**

**A. Participant Welcome**

**[Slide 1]**

1. Introduce self
2. Relate experience with topic.
3. Cover basic requirements/rules for participating in the Transition GPS program to include; punctuality – turn off cell phones – bring module pre-work – be courteous – discuss issues with family and friends – be engaged.
4. Discuss with participants the need to regularly refer to their ITP throughout the program. It is important to note for participants that they should make notes as they change their mind about actions and priorities based on Transition GPS discussions or new information.
  - i. Participants should take the time to personalize their ITP as they experience the Transition GPS CORE curriculum. They should use the ITP as a “master notes” page to identify the programs and agencies they want and need to explore.
  - ii. Emphasize that facilitators will refer participants to their ITP throughout the Transition CORE Curriculum. Participants should

review their ITP and update information as they gain new information from the material and discussions that impact their priorities, goals, and decisions. Emphasize that it is important for participants to refer to and update their ITP throughout the transition process.

5. The facilitator should emphasize for participants that some of them have transitioned many times during their military careers as they deployed, relocated to new duty stations and acclimated to new positions. Please note for participants that transitioning from the military will have similarities to previous transitioning experiences, but will also present new and unique opportunities and challenges. **[Slide 2]**
6. Lightly touch on and discuss some of the changes, challenges and emotions associated with a career transition. (Stress, uncertainty, anger, depression...) **[Slide 3]**

## **B. Transition GPS Overview & Orientation**

### **[Slide 4 – Transition GPS Process]**

1. When we think of transitioning from the military, we focus a lot on resumes, job searches, interviews, moving, VA benefits, and tons of paperwork. These pieces are all important parts of the transition puzzle. But as you start fitting the pieces in-place, you must have a sense of the whole picture and begin with the end in mind to be successful.
2. President Obama, Congress and DoD leadership mandated a reinvigorated Transition Assistance Program to ensure Service members had the information and support to affect a successful transition from military service to employment, educational programs small business opportunities or technical training. The improved program is very different from what was provided in the past. It starts with pre-separation counseling and requires Members to meet Career Readiness Standards prior to separation or retirement. Career Readiness Standards, or CRS's, include having a professional solid resume, developing a 12 month post military service budget, et cetera. I will highlight each CRS as we discuss each Transition GPS curriculum module. This slide shows all of the key components of the improved program.
3. **Pre-Separation Counseling: MANDATORY FOR ALL SERVICE MEMBERS [Slide 5]**-- Congress has directed the military services provide each transitioning service member pre-separation counseling no less than 90 days before separation but optimally at the one year point for separating and two year point for retiring Service members. As a military Service member, you have earned valuable services and benefits, but you can only take advantage of them if you understand

which services and benefits you're eligible for and how to get them. It takes approximately 90 minutes to complete. All Service members must complete this important part of the Transition GPS program in order to separate from military service. A completed DD Form 2648 or DD Form 2648-1 is your proof that you have received the required counseling. Pre-Separation Counseling represents the most holistic, personal, and extended component of TAP. While all components are educational and useful, the Pre-Separation Counseling provides the opportunity to plan and prepare effectively for all aspects of transition. Service members will find this guide most useful in its role in guiding them through this component. The good news is that you have already completed this first important step. (QUERRY AUDIENCE TO ENSURE EVERYONE HAS COMPLETED PRE-SEPARATION COUNSELING PRIOR TO ATTENDING THE TRANSITION GPS CURRICULUM).

4. **Assessments:** Discuss the need to complete career, education or transitioning assessments if participants are uncertain about goals, skills, desires and capabilities. TAP staff or Education Center counselors can help participants identify needed assessments or evaluations to better clarify their capabilities or education and career priorities. Research about your skills, likes and dislikes can provide the foundation for your goals, objectives and key milestones. Emphasize that participants will complete an interest inventory on O-NET during the MOC Crosswalk Transition GPS module to perform a GAP analysis between their current skills and the ones needed for targeted employment opportunities.
5. **E-Benefits Registration:** This portal is a one-stop shop for benefits-related online tools and information for Wounded Warriors, Veterans, Service members, and Family of Service Members. One Career Readiness Standard is for Service members to have an E-Benefits account (password and log-on information). Participants should have completed this step at their pre-separation counseling session. If participants do not have a password, they will receive one during the VA Benefit Briefings later in the Transition GPS program.
  - **Career Readiness Standard/E-Benefits Account.**
6. **Opportunity to Join the Reserve Component:** Emphasize for participants the need to include in their career and education decision process an evaluation of options to continue their military service through Reserve opportunities.
  - **Career Readiness Standard/Documents demonstrating contact with a Reserve Component Recruiter**
7. **Financial Planning:** Financial readiness is one of the cornerstones of managing a successful transition from the military. Later this week participants will attend a Financial Planning Seminar and will develop

a 12 month post service budget. It is important for participants to bring their most recent LES, bank statements showing both checking and savings account information, an overview of their expenditures and bills and have a good picture of their finances to this Transition GPS curriculum module.

- **Career Readiness Standard/12 Month Post Military Service Budget**

8. **Military Occupational Code (MOC) Crosswalk and GAP**

**Analysis:** Understanding your skills is critical in supporting a career transition. In this Transition GPS curriculum module you will review your MOCs as listed on your Verification of Military Education and Training (VMET) document, translate them into civilian terms and conduct a gap analysis between your verified skills and possible employment after you leave the service based on your career goals.

- **Career Readiness Standard/MOC GAP Analysis**

9. **VA Benefits Briefing I&II – MANDATORY FOR ALL SERVICE**

**MEMBERS:** Provides transitioning Service members benefits information, and sign-up opportunity, on disability compensation, health care, education/training opportunities, home loans, and life insurance options.

- **Career Readiness Standard/E-Benefits account.**

10. **Department of Labor Employment Workshop (DOLEW):**

Members will learn about their military personality and how that impacts their civilian employment goals. In this Transition GPS module participants will learn about core skills and principles related to getting an interview and being selected as the best candidate for an employment opportunity. The workshop will provide information on: job search techniques, writing an effective targeted resume, understanding how to demonstrate powerful interviewing skills and how to apply for a federal job by understanding the federal hiring process. Emphasize for participants that they must bring the Gold Card, which is located at the back of the DOLEW participant workbook to their ITP Checklist review. The DOLEW workshop will provide information on:

- Job search techniques
- Writing an effective targeted resume
- Understanding interviewing skills and
- How to apply for a federal job.
- **Career Readiness Standard/Resume**

11. **Tracks:** The Transition GPS CORE curriculum includes the DOLEW, the Military Occupational Code Crosswalk, the Financial Planning, the VA Benefits Briefings and the Resilient Transition modules. Throughout the Transition GPS program facilitators will

discuss several different tracks that are intended to support a Service member's post service goals. They include the following:

**Entrepreneurship** – Facilitated by Small Business Administration professionals, this track is for those individuals who are interested in developing a small business or franchise. There is a special Small Business Administration 2-day track to explore entrepreneurship and understand the dynamics involved in developing and sustaining a business, and will include discussion of the key components of a business plan and identifying required resources. It will also provide the opportunity to learn from other business owners.

**Higher Education** – This track is for those who plan to focus on their academic goals after they transition from the military. This 2-day track will help a Service member prepare for college life and learn about transferring credits, gaining college credit for military training and experience, researching schools and financial assistance, understanding the risks associated with incurring debt to finance educational goals, how to complete an application, and the realities of campus life.

**Technical Training** - Technical or Vocational education and training (VET) is an education program that prepares trainees for jobs or careers in a trade, a craft, or a technical position in engineering, accounting, nursing, medicine and other healing arts, architecture, pharmacy, law, etc. Craft vocations are usually based on manual or practical activities, traditionally non-academic, and related to a specific trade, occupation, or vocation. Technical schools focus on teaching specific skills that are required in a certain trade, craft or profession. Technical colleges also incorporate core classes, theory, skill and general knowledge into student training.

This track is for individuals who have determined that technical training best supports their career goals. This 2-day track, provided by the VA, will help Service members identify the appropriate technical educational program to support their employment goals, identify needed certifications for targeted career opportunities and how to research tuition and other costs. Participants will receive information about the VA's vocational educational counseling during the VA portion of the Transition GPS CORE curriculum.

- 12. Capstone:** Members attend CAPSTONE to demonstrate and validate that they are prepared to be successful following their military service by producing documentation that they met Career Readiness Standards.

1. Transition is change, period. Anytime you induce change into your lifestyle, you induce stress...both good and sometimes bad stress. Good stress might be the feeling you have right before you get on a roller coaster...bad stress is the build-up of emotions over things that you cannot control in your life. So, obviously, there will be plenty of stress to go around as you transition. The key is to focus on stability, resilience and the things you can control. Transition GPS provides a pathway and a methodical approach to manage all of the things you need to do as you transition. You need to manage the stress associated with transitioning, or know when to seek additional help from family, friends or professionals on your base or in your community when it becomes unmanageable and a major focus in your life.
2. A common response in both the military and civilian culture is to ignore stress in us and others because it is a normal part of life...we all have it from time to time. When faced with all the challenges of transition, you may be tempted to just try to “suck it up” one more time. While in transition you need to focus on normalcy...keeping your regular routines and habits and maintaining resiliency, or the ability to bounce back from stress or adversity.
3. While you will hear more about stress and change management throughout the Transition GPS program, it is important to ask yourself how to maintain control and balance in your life throughout the process. Ask yourself these simple questions:
  - a. “What can I do to help myself set realistic expectations, identify areas of control, develop appropriate responses and improve relationships along the way?”
  - b. How can I involve my family and let them feel some sense of control and feel like a meaningful part of the process?
  - c. What opportunities are present to help me improve my personal and professional relationships?
  - d. Are there training workshops, counseling opportunities, research sites, mentors, or job fairs that I can use to help?”
4. Know where your local Family Support Center is located. If relevant to you or your family members, give them a call and set up a counseling session to discuss your options, and resources and support in a more confidential private setting. If you would rather use another agency, your Family Support Center staff can help identify alternate resources. The important thing is that you recognize that these issues are a part of who you are and need to be addressed as part of your individual transition plan.

**D. What can the Family Center do to help? [Slide 8]**

1. Provides a wide variety of Life Skills training programs including stress management, anger management, communication workshops, conflict management, and relationship building programs.

2. Counseling services are available for individuals, couples, families, and children. Counselors also facilitate support groups addressing a variety of issues.
3. Financial Education programs provide education and financial counseling for all levels from basic money and credit management to home buying and retirement savings and investments.
4. Sexual Assault Prevention and Response professionals and Family Advocacy Program professionals provide education, advocacy, and referral services for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence and stress management.
5. Career Development and Resource Center professionals provide training on resume writing, federal employment, job search strategies, interview techniques, and all aspects of finding employment for military personnel and their spouses.
6. Parenting Classes cover a wide range of topics to assist parents in understanding the challenges associated with parenting in a military environment, the effects of military life on children, and strategies to help parents manage them effectively.
7. Information and referral specialists can assist with identifying alternative resources for just about any situation identified by the client. If your Family Center doesn't have it, they can help find someone who does.

#### E. Re-Cap [Slide 9]

1. Facilitator should discuss with participants the key points of the Overview.
  - a. Transition GPS provides new opportunities for Members to prepare for a successful transition from military service.
  - b. At its core is **Career Readiness Standards** that Members must meet prior to separation/retirement.
    - i. Ask the audience...what are some of the Career Readiness Standards we discussed today?
  - c. It is important to come prepared to each session of the Transition GPS curriculum to get the most from the program in support transition goals and priorities.
    - i. Ask participants...what are some of the pre-work or key information you must bring to Transition GPS curriculum sessions?
  - d. Ask participants what is the primary roadmap and master notes page for the Transition GPS process (Answer – ITP). Discuss with participants the importance of bringing the ITP to all Transition GPS modules.
  - e. Where should participants go if they need additional support and resources??