



# State of Minnesota's Efforts to Employ and Support Veterans

**Submitted to the Minnesota Legislature by  
Minnesota Management and Budget**

**Reporting Period: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023**

**February 29, 2024**

Minnesota Management and Budget  
400 Centennial Office Building  
658 Cedar Street  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155  
651-201-8000

*To request an alternative format of this document, contact Michelle Thom at [michelle.thom@state.mn.us](mailto:michelle.thom@state.mn.us).*

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	2
Executive Summary.....	3
Veteran Employment Data.....	6
State Employee Veteran Status and Voluntary Disclosure.....	7
Veterans in State of Minnesota Government Workforce – Table 1 .....	8
Veteran Applicants for State Government Employment – Table 2.....	10
A. All Applicants Compliance Tracking .....	12
B. Historical Veteran Hiring in State Government.....	12
Statewide Veteran-Focused Initiatives, Programs, and Services .....	13
State Resources Dedicated to Veteran Support .....	16
Recruitment, Partnerships, and Outreach Activities.....	17
Targeted Veteran Advertising .....	20
Retention, Reintegration Support, and Training.....	21
Veteran-Focused Days of Recognition.....	23

## Introduction

The State of Minnesota seeks and values the unique skills of those who have served or are serving in the military. We actively recruit, hire, and develop veterans and service members because they bring important experiences and contributions to the workplace. This report provides the state's efforts to recruit and employ veterans during fiscal year 2023.

The data reported here is collected as required by the Minnesota Legislature. In addition, [Executive Order 19-20](#) instructs state agencies to report their veteran-focused recruitment and retention activities. Self-identification of veteran status is voluntary, and employees are not legally required to provide this information.

Minnesota Management and Budget would like to acknowledge and thank the executive branch agencies for their support and for providing information on their recruitment and retention activities included in this report. Through our joint efforts we are better positioned to serve Minnesota's veterans.

## Executive Summary

The Commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) is required by Minnesota law (Article 3, Section 22 of Chapter 94) to annually collect data on the number of veterans in cabinet-level state agencies and veteran information at various points in the state recruitment and selection process. In addition, Executive Order 19-15 instructs state agencies to submit to MMB their veteran-focused recruitment and retention efforts demonstrating their support for, and commitment and actions to, making Minnesota a more military- and veteran- friendly state.

The State of Minnesota, like many other employers, has been experiencing a tight labor market. Fiscal year 2023 continued to be a challenge related to hiring and retaining all employees, including veterans. The State continues to work to overcome hiring challenges following the “Great Resignation” and the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The State has had to think creatively about how to recruit in a virtual environment and is adjusting to new ways of working, such as teleworking, working remotely, and hybrid work arrangements.

## Workforce Representation

According to fiscal year 2023 data, 7.2 percent of the state government full-time employees in cabinet-level agencies self-identified as veterans. By comparison, 6.0 percent of Minnesota’s overall labor force over the ages of 18 are veterans (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 American Community Survey). In fiscal year 2023, 6.8 percent of employees hired by cabinet-level agencies into full-time positions were veterans.<sup>1</sup> Veterans are not a protected group under Minnesota law; however, the State of Minnesota monitors and actively recruits this group.

Our analysis shows the number of veterans in state government will continue to decrease if the percent of veteran applicants and new hires does not stay near 8 percent. In FY 2023, veteran turnover stood at 10.5 percent compared to 9.2 percent for all employees. Retirements make up a large component of this turnover (3.8 percent) as the Vietnam veteran generation leaves the workforce. The remaining 6.7 percentage points of the total turnover figure represents resignations. These combined separations leave gaps in the staffing around a number of critical job classes including correctional officers and state troopers.

### ***Two-Year Snapshot: Full Time Employees, Cabinet-Level Agencies***

	<b>FY 2022</b>	<b>FY 2023</b>
% of all applications submitted by veterans	7,648 (7.7%)	9,221 (7.0%)
% of all hires that are veterans	251 (7.1%)	273 (6.8%)
% of employees that are veterans	7.5%	7.2%

To promote the state as a veteran-friendly employer and to increase employment opportunities for veterans in state government during fiscal year 2023, state agencies:

- Conducted veteran-focused recruitment and retention activities to increase the numbers of veterans

<sup>1</sup> Employees are not required to self-identify their veteran status, so the number reported may not fully reflect veterans working for the State of Minnesota.

and retain them.

- Provided reintegration education and training to agency staff.
  - Developed partnerships with veteran organizations and advocates.
  - Provided support to deployed military employees.
  - Retained job classifications whose sole purpose is supporting veterans, and that in some cases must be filled by veterans.
  - Targeted recruitment efforts to veterans.
  - Promoted participation in Beyond the Yellow Ribbon and other veteran-friendly efforts.
-

## Agency Outreach and Recruitment Efforts

An important component of the state's recruitment strategy is participating in networking, outreach, and recruitment events. State agencies participate in various outreach and recruitment events throughout the year to raise awareness of employment opportunities with the state.

## Veterans' Career Fair

During this reporting period, several state agencies participated in the largest and most robust career fair for veterans on May 3, 2023, hosted by DEED. State agency staff offered resume tips and networking advice to veterans and also promoted employment opportunities within state agencies.

## Dedicated Staff

Some state agencies have dedicated staff to support veterans. The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs provides services to ensure that Minnesota's veterans, their dependents, and survivors receive the full measure of benefits and services to which they are entitled. In addition, the Minnesota Department of Military Affairs supports Minnesota National Guard members. Additional information on dedicated agency staff serving veterans is in the *State Resources Dedicated to Veteran Support* section of the report.

## Executive Order 19-20 Taskforce

In September 2019, several state agencies formed a task force to ensure collaboration to implement Executive Order 19-20 *Supporting the Selection and Employment of Veterans*. Participating agencies include: the Minnesota Department of Veteran Affairs, the Department of Employment and Economic Development, the Department of Military Affairs, and Minnesota Management and Budget. This group's efforts were reduced in FY 21 due to the conflicting demands of the COVID-19 pandemic. The group reconvened in late FY 21 to resume its work. The task force has a work plan to guide their work and includes the following priorities: 1) Recruiting veterans for state jobs 2) Providing training for Human Resource personnel, Hiring Managers, and Recruiters, and 3) Adding veteran-related resources to MMB's HR Toolbox, an online resource for state employees. In fiscal year 2023, the group partnered together to develop and deliver training to state HR offices on the military and some specific skills sets veterans would bring to state jobs.

## State Spending with Veterans

An important part of the economic vitality of the state are thriving businesses. The state has been intentional in its outreach efforts to include veteran businesses as registered vendors. The Department of Administration's Office of Equity in Procurement continues to work to improve the state's spending with targeted businesses.

## Veterans Business Programs

Minnesota Department of Transportation's [Veterans Business Program](#) provides verified veteran-owned small businesses with increased access to state contracting opportunities. This program is for Minnesota-based businesses that are at least 51 percent owned by veterans.

The Department of Administration's [Office of Equity in Procurement](#) helps ensure greater equity in state contracting and construction; promotes opportunities to do business with the state; and provides assistance to small businesses owned by women, minorities, people with substantial physical disabilities, and veterans as they seek state contracts. The office assists state agencies with leading efforts in equal employment opportunities, equal contracting opportunities, and full participation in civic life for all Minnesotans. More than 1,000 small businesses are certified as veteran-owned, economically disadvantaged, or targeted group businesses in Minnesota based on the business's ownership by a woman, minority, person with a substantial physical disability, or by its location in an economically disadvantaged area.

## Veterans Business Loan Program

For veterans interested in starting a new business in Minnesota or reestablishing a business left behind after deployment to active duty, the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development provides several resources including expert business guidance and some targeted business financing options.

## Building Talent Pipelines

Minnesota veterans are an excellent pipeline for Minnesota's workforce. A number of cabinet-level agencies have made great strides to successfully engage veterans in the State of Minnesota's workforce.

## Veteran Focused Legislation

The State of Minnesota recognizes the training and experience of military veterans, and this commitment is demonstrated in several state laws.

### **M.S. 43A.09 Recruitment**

[State Personnel Management: Recruitment statute](#) requires MMB, in cooperation with appointing authorities of all state agencies, to emphasize recruitment of veterans in addition to protected group members to "assist state agencies in meeting affirmative action goals to achieve a balanced workforce."

### **M.S. 43A.11 Veterans' Preference**

The [Minnesota Veterans' Preference statute](#) requires notification to state applicants that they may elect to use veterans' preference. It requires that applicants who meet the minimum qualifications for a vacant position and claim disabled veterans' preference be listed in the applicant pool ahead of all other applicants, and those claiming non-disabled veterans' preference be listed ahead of non-veterans. It also provides this preference to spouses of deceased veterans or of disabled veterans who because of disability are unable to qualify. It also requires that each recently separated veteran who meets minimum qualifications for a vacant position and has claimed a veterans' or disabled veterans' preference must be considered for the position and requires that the top five recently separated veterans must be granted an interview for the position. Finally, it requires appointing authorities who reject a finalist who has claimed veterans' preference to notify the finalist of the reasons for rejection.

### **M.S.43A.111 Noncompetitive Appointment of Certain Disabled Veterans**

The [Noncompetitive Appointment of Certain Disabled Veterans statute](#) allows state agencies to make noncompetitive appointments to classified positions for qualified disabled veterans with a verified service-connected disability rating of at least 30 percent.

For more information, please visit [Veterans](#) on MMB's website.

## Veteran Employment Data

The state employee data in the following tables are collected from the state's job applicant tracking and personnel information system. The data is from fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023) and these tables represent a snapshot of state employee data as of June 30, 2023.

The numerical data in this report is from the cabinet-level agencies in the executive branch as required by statute. The cabinet-level agencies account for over 94 percent of state employees. The data in Tables 1-3 do not include executive branch agencies and commissions outside of the cabinet-level agencies, the legislative branch, judicial branch, Minnesota State, or the retirement agencies.

## **State Employee Veteran Status and Voluntary Disclosure**

State law requires that the number of veterans among the state government cabinet-level agency workforce be reported to the Legislature every year. Identification of veteran status is voluntary, and employees are not legally required to provide this information. To obtain veteran status from state employees, we offer a “Self Service” webpage where state employees can update their demographics, including veteran status, at any time. Employees are encouraged but are not required to disclose their veteran status. As a result, some employees who are veterans may have not self-identified as such, impacting the accuracy of this data. Currently, 7.2 percent of full-time cabinet agency employees self-identify as veterans.



# Veterans in State of Minnesota Government Workforce – Table 1

Table 1 shows the distribution of veterans in executive branch cabinet-level agencies. Key points:

- About 7.2 percent of State of Minnesota government cabinet-level agency full-time employees self-identified as veterans.
- 6.0 percent of Minnesota’s civilian labor force between the ages of 18 and 64 are veterans. Labor force means employed or available and actively seeking employment. *Source: U.S. Census, 2022 American Community Survey.*

**Table 1 Veterans in the State of Minnesota Government Workforce Cabinet-Level Agencies, FY 2023**

Cabinet-Level Agency	Number of Employees in Full-Time Positions	Number of Full-Time Employees Who Self-Identified as Veterans	Number of Full-Time Positions Hired in FY 2023	Number of Full-Time Veterans Positions Hired in FY 2023
Administration	506	32	67	5
Agriculture	458	17	47	0
Bureau of Mediation Services	12	1	0	0
Commerce	387	20	62	1
Corrections	3,936	423	760	79
Education	431	8	57	0
Employment & Economic Development	1,397	76	192	8
Health	1,740	44	284	5
Housing Finance Agency	295	6	28	0
Human Rights	46	2	8	0
Human Services	5,838	274	779	30
Iron Range Resources & Rehab.	40	3	1	0
Labor & Industry	438	35	41	6
Military Affairs	355	102	47	12

MN Management & Budget	279	11	34	1
MN IT Services	2,495	215	181	16
Natural Resources	2,377	137	315	16
Office of Higher Education	71	2	8	1
Pollution Control Agency	861	29	89	3
Public Safety	2,024	251	209	24
Revenue	1,350	45	155	1
Transportation	5,002	402	478	37
Veterans Affairs	775	113	146	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,113</b>	<b>2,248</b>	<b>3,988</b>	<b>273</b>

**Column 2** - total number of persons employed in full-time positions listed by the state agency. Rule 3900.400 definition of full-time employee is an employee who is normally scheduled to work 80 hours in a biweekly period.

**Column 3** - total number of employees identified in Column 2 who self-identified as veterans. Disclosure of an employee's veteran status is voluntary and based on self-identification. Employees are encouraged but are not required to disclose their veteran status.

**Column 4** - total number of vacant full-time positions in the agency filled by hiring or appointment for fiscal year 2023.

**Column 5** - total number of full-time hires who indicated veteran status in FY 2023.

## Veteran Applicants for State Government Employment – Table 2

Table 2 shows a summary of veteran job applicants, interviewing, and hiring in fiscal year 2023.

- Approximately 6.7 percent of applicants for state employment are veterans.
- About 7.0 percent of applications submitted for full-time vacancies were submitted by veterans.
- Approximately 6.8 percent of the full-time jobs filled in FY 2023 were filled by veterans.

**Table 2 Veteran Applicants for State Government Employment in Cabinet-Level Agencies, FY 2023**

Cabinet-Level Agency	Full-Time Positions Filled	Total Applications Received	Veteran Applications	Veterans Hired
Administration	67	2,373	242	5
Agriculture	47	1,520	73	0
Bureau of Mediation Services	0	9	0	0
Commerce	62	2,170	193	1
Corrections	760	6,054	318	79
Education	57	3,249	232	0
Employment & Economic Development	192	6,079	553	8
Health	284	5,701	905	5
Housing Finance Agency	28	1,856	130	0
Human Rights	8	835	72	0
Human Services	779	34,337	2,301	30
Iron Range Resources & Rehab.	1	15	1	0
Labor & Industry	41	1,300	105	6
Military Affairs	47	570	59	12
MN Management & Budget	34	2,167	161	1

MN IT Services	181	16,482	1,664	16
Natural Resources	315	13,504	534	16
Office of Higher Education	8	369	38	1
Pollution Control Agency	89	4,361	226	3
Public Safety	209	7,141	517	24
Revenue	155	6,406	582	1
Transportation	478	10,294	606	37
Veterans Affairs	146	4,383	410	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,988</b>	<b>141,175</b>	<b>9,922</b>	<b>273</b>

**Column 2** - the total number of vacant full-time positions in the agency filled during fiscal year 2023

**Column 3** - the total number of applications received for positions that were posted and closed in fiscal year 2023

**Column 4** - the total number of applicants identified in Column 3 who self-identified as being a veteran

**Column 5** - the total number of veterans hired in cabinet agencies

## A. All Applicants Compliance Tracking

Veterans are not a protected group under Minnesota statute; however, the state continually monitors and actively recruits this group. U.S. Census data indicates that 6.0 percent of participants in the overall Minnesota workforce self-identify as veterans. However, for Minnesota state agencies to reflect demographics of the state workforce, the state needs to maintain a veteran hiring rate of 8 percent. Veterans currently represent 7.2 percent of full-time cabinet agency employees. In FY 2023, 6.8 percent of full-time hires were veterans.

## B. Historical Veteran Hiring in State Government

Tables 3 shows a summary of veterans hired for positions in state government cabinet-level agencies between fiscal years 2010-2023. Key points:

- Since fiscal year 2011, veterans as a percentage of total hires have declined although there was a recovery in FY 2021.
- About 6.8 percent of new hires are veterans as of fiscal year 2023

**Table 3 Veterans Hired in State of Minnesota Government at Cabinet-level Agencies Fiscal Year 2010-23**

Fiscal Year	Number of Full-Time Vacancies Filled	Number of Veterans Hired	% Veterans Hired
2010	2,271	203	8.9%
2011	2,242	250	11.2%
2012	2,879	273	9.5%
2013	3,257	324	9.9%
2014	3,259	299	9.2%
2015	3,060	258	8.4%
2016	3,532	274	7.8%
2017	3,878	307	7.9%
2018	3,961	298	7.5%
2019	3,668	266	7.8%
2020	3,573	242	6.8%
2021	2,625	223	8.5%
2022	3,528	251	7.1%
2023	3,988	273	6.8%

# Statewide Veteran-Focused Initiatives, Programs, and Services

The following section describes statewide initiatives, programs, and services available to Minnesota veterans. Many of the services listed involve collaboration between state or federal agencies and the Legislature, veteran advocacy organizations, and private companies.

## Commanders Task Force

The [Minnesota Commanders Task Force](#) is comprised of elected Commanders and Adjutants of nine congressionally chartered Veterans Service Organizations in the State of Minnesota. The key functions of this group include developing a united veterans' legislative agenda and actively advocating for it before the state and elected officials, serving as a non-partisan advisory group to the commissioner of Veterans Affairs, the governor, and legislators on veteran issues in the state, and working to form Veteran Service Organization partnerships in program development.

## Department of Natural Resources Licensing

The [Minnesota Department of Natural Resources](#) provides special privileges to certain veterans for hunting licenses, firearm safety training, fishing licenses, state park vehicle permits, and the Minnesota Conservation Volunteer magazine. The program also provides free deer hunting licenses; permission to hunt small game without a license; and free annual Minnesota state park permits.

## Military Service: Tax Implications for Retirement Pension and Pay

To the extent included in federal taxable income, compensation received from a pension or other retirement pay from the federal government for service in the military, as computed under United States Code, title 10, sections 1401 to 1414, 1447 to 1455, and 12733, is a subtraction. The subtraction must not include any amount used to claim the credit allowed under [section 290.0677](#).

## Military Tax-Related Benefits

The Minnesota Department of Revenue provides [tax credits and tax relief](#) for current, retired, and disabled military service members. Credit and tax relief includes the active-duty military pay subtraction, Military Spouses Residency Relief Act, credit for military service in a combat zone, tax credit for past military service, tax debt relief for deceased active-duty military, and market value exclusion on homesteads of disabled veterans.

## Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers

The [Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers](#) works collaboratively with the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs and nationally chartered veterans service organizations in promoting the interests and welfare of veterans, their families, and survivors. Their focus is to enhance the quality of these individuals' lives through advising, counseling, claims assistance, education, advocacy, and special programs. All services aim to ensure that veterans, their families, and survivors receive all the benefits and services so well deserved for the hardships they have endured.

## Minnesota GI Bill

The [Minnesota GI Bill](#) program provides postsecondary educational assistance to eligible Minnesota veterans, non-veterans who served in the military and eligible spouses and children. Full-time undergraduate or graduate students may be eligible to receive up to \$1,000 per semester and part-time students can receive up to \$500 per semester (up to \$3,000 per academic year and \$10,000 per lifetime). Eligible veterans may also receive on-job-training and apprenticeship funds up to \$2,000 per fiscal year for either program.

## Transition Resource Fairs

The Minnesota Department of Corrections hosts onsite [facility transition fairs](#) for veteran inmates. The transition fairs present opportunities for inmates with 18 months or less to serve. The goal is to provide contacts and resources for inmates in housing, family support, personal finance, transportation, employment, and mental health. These events are designed to provide veteran inmates who are transitioning back into the community with resources to assist them with successful reentry. Resources are provided in conjunction with other state agency exhibitors and include the Department of Human Services offering a three-week work readiness training for people with criminal histories. Additional exhibitors include trade unions, faith-based groups, community nonprofits, and volunteer groups.

## Transition Coalition

The Minnesota Department of Corrections partners with nonprofit agencies to provide [support for veteran inmates re-entering the community](#) after incarceration and treatment. The coalition produces an electronic newsletter which contains information related to facility transition fairs, training announcements, grants and contract requests for proposals and other reentry program networking opportunities.

## Incarcerated Veterans

The Minnesota Department of Corrections also conducts one-to-one visits with incarcerated veterans. The purpose of these visits is to address the specific needs of incarcerated veterans and consider in advance resources that will help ensure success upon release.

## Project Got Your Back

The Minnesota Department of Corrections also has a partnership with Project Got Your Back, which seeks to improve the wellbeing of all veterans. Project Got Your Back's Navigator Program pairs veteran clients to trained Navigators for one year. Navigators individually connect with and assist veterans with accessing veteran-specific resources of many types.

## Veterans Employment Services

[Veterans Employment Representatives](#) are located at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development's Workforce Centers and are available to work one-on-one with service members in their job search. The individualized assistance includes help with resumes, interviewing skills, networking techniques, referrals to other veteran services, and assistance connecting with employers.

## Veterans Business Program

Minnesota Department of Transportation's [Veterans Business Program](#) provides verified veteran-owned small businesses with increased access to state contracting opportunities. This program is for Minnesota-based businesses that are at least 51 percent own by veterans.

## Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

The [Minnesota Department of Revenue](#) provides veterans with free assistance to file their state income and property tax returns. Veterans (and other selected groups) can access this service from over 200 sites across Minnesota.

## Veterans Business Loan Program

For veterans interested in starting a new business in Minnesota or reestablishing a business left behind after deployment to active duty, the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development provides

several resources including expert business guidance and some targeted business financing options.

## **Commercial Driver's License**

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety offers a waiver for qualified service members for commercial drivers to apply without skills steps. This waiver can be used by service members who are currently licensed, who are or were employed within the past year (12 months) in military positions requiring the operation of a military motor vehicle equivalent to a Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV). Commercial Driver's License knowledge written tests cannot be waived.

## **Ongoing Policy Updates**

In 2022, [HR/LR Policy # 1448 Military Salary Differential](#) was issued to assist agencies in calculating military salary differential. State agencies must calculate and pay military salary differential to eligible state employees for each month or portion of month that the person is ordered to serve in active service. More recently, in January 2023, [HR/LR Memo # 2014-5 Military Leave](#) was updated to better assist agencies on use of paid leave while on military leave, and other clarifications such as documentation requirements. MMB continues to review guidance on military leaves and pay for military activities and assist agencies in complying with guidance and applicable law.



## State Resources Dedicated to Veteran Support

The state has veteran-focused positions responsible for supporting veterans as they reintegrate back into civilian life and the workforce. These positions are typically employed at the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Minnesota Department of Military Affairs, and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. In addition, all state agencies have personnel that assist veterans, and many agencies also have web pages dedicated to veteran information, resources, and services.

### Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) Staff

The entire MDVA staff is charged with assisting Minnesota's veterans and their families to obtain their rightful benefits and services. Key MDVA positions with a particular focus on assisting veterans include Veterans Assistance Coordinators and Veterans Claims Representatives.

The agency also has employees who conduct outreach activities and assist veterans in need. This work is conducted across many divisions. One division serves American Indians who are part of native tribes and eligible for veteran's benefits. Division staff assist them with the application process to obtain these benefits. Another division conducts outreach to homeless veterans living on state lands.

### Minnesota Department of Military Affairs

The [Minnesota Department of Military Affairs](#) is also known as the Minnesota National Guard. The agency provides leadership, resources, and support to the Nation Guard. The Minnesota National Guard has more than 13,000 service members. More than 400 National Guard service members are deployed to multiple locations.

### Attorney General's Veterans Assistance Unit

[The Minnesota Attorney General's Office](#) helps veterans, service members, or a member of their family with veteran's benefits, TRICARE benefits, credit issues, home mortgage, identity theft, and more. Contact 651-296-3353 or 1-800-657-3787 for free information about voluntary mediation services to help resolve problems.

### Veterans Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans Outreach Representatives

The responsibilities of the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development's [Veterans Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans Outreach Representative](#) positions include:

- Identify veterans interested in working for state agencies.
- Recruit veterans for all state jobs and promote the state at job fairs.
- Promote Minnesota as a veteran-friendly employer at state and national conferences.
- Coach veterans on the state hiring process and online employment tools.
- Outreach to veteran organizations and advocates such as the County Veteran Service Officer, VFW, American Legions, and Disabled American Veterans to promote state employment.
- Outreach to veteran-focused minority and disability organizations.
- Assist veterans and their families with housing, health, or other issues.

### Higher Education Veteran Program Coordinators

This program connects veterans with [educational benefits and resources](#) to be successful in college. Onsite assistance is given to military members and their families at colleges and universities. The goal of the program is to assist veterans in removing barriers to enrollment and access to benefits.

Coordinators work with the Minnesota State campuses to:

- Provide a welcoming environment for students to interact with other students who are veterans or family members of veterans.
- Facilitate communication between departments and staff who regularly interact with veterans.
- Provide information about veteran services, military education benefits and financial resources, scholarships, and veteran and family support activities.
- Provide training for campus staff related to veteran issues and concerns.
- Obtain feedback from veterans, and work to remove barriers to services.
- Provide veteran-friendly policies and procedures.
- Organize and provide training on veterans' issues.
- Meet with guard units and their families prior to deployment and provide information about education benefits they earn while deployed.

## State Agency Human Resource and Labor Relations Staff

[State agency human resources and labor relations staff](#) must be knowledgeable about applicable veteran laws to ensure agency compliance. This includes laws related to veterans' preference, noncompetitive appointments of certain disabled veterans, veterans' preference hearings, FMLA and military personnel, and Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

## Recruitment, Partnerships, and Outreach Activities

State agencies and Minnesota State are proactive in their veteran-focused recruitment, partnerships, and outreach activities. Representatives of state agencies attend key veteran job fairs and conferences to build relationships with veteran organizations and advocates. In turn, they promote state employment to their veteran clients. The goal of these efforts is to promote the state as a veteran-friendly employer and increase employment opportunities for veterans in state government.

### Recruitment

Below are examples of veteran-focused recruitment activities state agencies participated in throughout FY 2023.

#### Statewide "Beyond the Yellow Ribbon" Community Events

State agencies recruit at various yellow ribbon community and reintegration events around the state. This comprehensive program connects service members and their families with community support, training, services, and resources.

#### Yellow Ribbon Company Seminars

The Department of Military Affairs hosts Yellow Ribbon Company Seminars to bring together human resource and hiring managers to: 1) Build relationships; 2) Share best practices; and 3) Receive updates on military support initiatives focused on veteran recruiting, hiring, and retention to provide military connected employee support. Additionally, Yellow Ribbon Community Networks (in 219 cities and 26 counties) to coordinate with local business communities on veteran hiring.

#### Interview Accommodations

State agencies follow the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Right Act (USERRA) guidelines to provide job interviews to deployed soldiers using a variety of telecommunication tools.

#### The Military.com Career Expo

Military.com hosts a large job board for veterans and military-friendly employers and sponsors numerous career expos across the country, giving employers and veterans an opportunity to meet face to face to discuss job

opportunities.

## **DirectEmployers Association**

In July 2022, MMB entered into contract with DirectEmployers Association. This partnership continued in FY 23. DirectEmployers automates delivery of all State job postings to sites in all 50 states, including 17 web-based sources that serve the veteran community.

## **Minnesota Veterans Career Fair**

This career fair was sponsored by the Department of Military Affairs, the Department of Employment and Economic Development, and Minnesota Management and Budget. MMB partnered to ensure enterprise-wide participation.

## **Stand Down Events**

Hosted by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs, Stand Down events are typically one- to three-day events during which VA staff and volunteers provide food, clothing, and health screenings to homeless and at-risk Veterans. In addition, Veterans also receive referrals for health care, housing solutions, employment, substance use treatment, mental health counseling, and other essential services. In FY 23, many state agencies participated in Stand Down events in Minnesota, including Minnesota Housing, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, DEED, MMB, and others.

## **Veterans Talent Series**

MMB and DEED partnered in FY 23 to develop and deliver a series of trainings designed to encourage veteran hiring by state agencies. Sessions provided insight on veterans' experiences in the military, mental health considerations, and methods to interpret military experiences on resumes. The series will continue in FY 24.

## **MDVA Jobs Bulletin**

In FY 23, the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs created a weekly jobs bulletin. The bulletin promotes employment opportunities for veterans within the agency. It goes out weekly to veterans and their families across the state.

Below are examples of organizations state agencies work with to recruit veterans:

- American Gulf War Veterans Association
- American Legion
- Army National Guard
- Beyond the Yellow Ribbon
- County Serves Veteran Officers (CSVO)
- DEED Disabled Veterans Outreach Representatives
- DEED Veterans Employment Representatives
- Disabled American Veterans (DAV)
- Employment Action Centers
- Goodwill Easter Seals Military Services
- Higher Education Veterans Programs Campus Coordinators
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Lions Club
- MN Assistance Council for Veterans (MAVC)
- MN Attorney General's Veterans Assistance Unit
- MN Department of Military Affairs
- MN Department of Veterans Affairs

## **Outreach Activities**

Below are examples of organizations state agencies work with to support veterans:

- MN VA Hospitals
- MN Rotary Clubs
- Serviceman's Club
- Student Veterans of America (SVA)
- US Department of Veterans Affairs
- Vietnam Veterans of America
- Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)

### **Helping Women Veterans Find Careers**

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development Veterans Employment Representative at the Ramsey County Work Force Center is a networking program to help female veterans in the metro area find employment. The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs and the Minneapolis American Indian Center are working together to assist female veterans in navigating programs and services available to them.

### **Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans**

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) is a nonprofit organization that assists veterans experiencing homelessness or other life crises with transitional and permanent housing. They work with the Department of Corrections' Sentencing to Serve Program, which allows carefully selected non-violent offenders to work on community improvement projects. The Sentencing to Serve crews assists with lawn care and snow shoveling at resident housing for veterans and their families in both the Twin Cities and Duluth areas.

### **Minnesota Department of Military Affairs**

The director of military outreach from Military Affairs and the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Deployment Cycle Support Team partner on the following initiatives:

- Identify and connect unemployed veterans with local, state, and federal employment resources.
- Share best practices of veteran recruitment strategies with employers.
- Connect veterans with higher education resources.
- Provide training to veterans in resume writing, interviewing, and networking.
- Promote the use of workforce centers and veteran employment representatives.

# Targeted Veteran Advertising

Agencies report advertising job vacancies using a variety of different job boards, websites, and organizations. State agencies advertise their job announcements at the following events and venues including, but not limited to:

- [AbillityLinks](#)
- [County Veteran Service Officer \(CVSO\)](#)
- [Career One Stop](#)
- [Disabled American Veterans \(DAV\)](#)
- [Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development](#)
- [Disabled Veterans Rest Camp](#)
- [Duluth Veteran Center](#)
- [Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve](#)
- [Employment Action Center \(EAC\)](#)
- [GI Jobs Magazine](#)
- [Goodwill Easter Seals Military Services](#)
- [JobsinMinneapolis.com](#)
- [Military.com](#)
- [MilitaryVetJobs.com](#)
- [MinnesotaDiversity.com](#)
- [MinnesotaJobs.com](#)
- [MinnesotaWorks.net](#)
- [MN Assistance Council for Veterans](#)
- [MN Army and Air National Guard](#)
- [MN Department of Veterans Affairs \(MDVA\)](#)
- [Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Higher Education Resource Centers](#)
- [Minnesota State CAREERwise Education](#)
- [Navy and Marine Reserves](#)
- [National Association of Veterans Upward Bound \(NAVUB\)](#)
- [Northland College Military Veteran Services](#)
- [Veteran Journal Magazine](#)
- [Veterans of Foreign Wars \(VFW\)](#)
- [US Department of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Wounded Warriors](#)
- [Minnesota Department of Education Veteran Resources for Military Families](#)

# Retention, Reintegration Support, and Training

## Retention

The Department of Human Services has an active veterans Employee Resource Group (ERG) comprised of over fifty members. This veterans ERG is a group of employed veterans who meet with the purpose of supporting one another and advancing the mission, values, and goals of DHS. Currently, this group partners with the Veterans Administration to help develop and implement training, resources, and benefits.

## Reintegration Support

Reintegration support is a key factor in successfully returning veterans to work. Comprehensive reintegration programs provide a supportive environment which encourages the veteran to remain employed. It is also important for deployed employees to know they are remembered and supported while on active duty.

Typical agency support activities include the following:

- Pre-deployment:
  - Meet with the employees to discuss how the agency can best stay connected with them and their families.
  - Ask the employee to designate a representative who can legally interact with the state agency on their behalf.
  - Discuss benefits, human resources policies, leave time, etc.
  - Provide FMLA training.
- During deployment:
  - Guide deployed employees throughout the reintegration process.
  - Hold positions for deployed employees.
  - Encourage employees to return to their positions after deployment.
  - Ensure agency employees are informed about their deployed co-workers using agency newsletter and intranet sites when given privacy authorization.
- Post-deployment:
  - Conduct “Welcome Back” recognition events for deployed employees upon return.
  - Give appreciation awards for special recognition to veteran employees.
  - Develop individualized soldier return-to-work plans or supplementary training for smooth transition back to work.
  - Grant additional time off for reintegration if requested.
  - Provide information and resources about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and related programs, such as the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), to both supervisors and returning veterans.

## Training

Some state agencies provide and participate in training to ensure that managers, supervisors, and state employees are knowledgeable, in compliance with applicable veteran laws, and using best practices for supporting veterans in the workplace.

Training offered by state agencies for their employees includes the following topics:

- Reintegration training for leadership staff and the returning deployed employees to smooth transitions back into the civilian workforce.
- Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act (USERRA) training to outline the responsibilities of the employer and the rights and benefits awarded to veteran employees. For this

reporting period, the Department of Natural Resources and Department of Transportation partnered to host a series of trainings for hiring managers and supervisors.

- Specific applications of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to deployed state employees and military family members.
- Recently Separated Veteran Interview Law.
- Noncompetitive Appointment of Certain Disabled Veterans and Veteran Preference Act Training.
- DNR supervisor training resources available on the agency's intranet. Topics range from sensitivity to matters related to the combat zone, family adjustment, crisis intervention, and substance abuse.
- MnDOT's "*We all Serve Fort Minnesota*" training video.
- Resilience, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention (R3SP).
- Post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, and suicide prevention sessions for veteran counselors and coordinators at Minnesota State campuses.
- Military Discharge Upgrades training.
- The Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), the Department of Military Affairs, and the Department of Labor offer the *Leaders in Veterans Employment* training for HR directors, staff, and hiring managers on the value of hiring veterans.
- DEED also offers training to hiring managers and recruiters on interpreting military language in veterans' resumes and applications for employment.
- Agency recruiters who are responsible for finding talent to fill state positions have dedicated certain Recruitment Community of Practice Meetings to discuss veteran hiring strategies.
- The State Employee Insurance Group (SEGIP), which is housed in MMB, offers multiple health and well-being seminars on topics relevant to veterans. In the next year, topics include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Anxiety Awareness, and Thriving in a Chaotic World.

## **Veteran-Focused Days of Recognition**

State agencies observe and recognize veterans' contributions on the following designated days each year:

### **Veterans Day**

Each November 11, state and federal offices hold events honoring the service, sacrifice, and bravery of the veterans who have served and sacrificed to protect the freedoms we all enjoy.

### **POW/MIA Recognition Day**

The third Friday of September is the day set aside for Minnesota's recognition of the courage and sacrifices of the state's POW/MIA and their families.

### **Veterans Suicide Awareness Day**

Minnesota observes Veterans Suicide Awareness Day the first Saturday of October to increase visibility and awareness of suicide among our veteran population.

### **American Allies Day**

June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year honors foreign-born individuals who have fought alongside the United States Armed forces in military conflicts around the world.

### **Hmong Special Guerilla Units Remembrance Day**

May 14 of each year honors Southeast Asians Americans and their allies who served, suffered, scarified, or died in the Secret War in Laos during the Vietnam War from 1961-1985.

### **Hire a Veteran Month**

DEED has declared each May to be Hire a Veteran Month. During May, the annual Veteran's Career Fair takes place. In FY 23, MMB and DEED worked together to launch a "veterans' talent series" – a series of four trainings designed to help human resources staff and hiring managers interpret veteran skill sets and raise awareness about the importance of hiring veterans.