

## JOBS FOR VETERANS' STATE GRANTS

(OMB Control Number: 1225-0086)

The Jobs for Veterans' State Grants (JVSG) are mandatory, formula-based staffing grants to States (including DC, PR, VI and Guam). The JVSG is funded annually in accordance with a funding formula defined in the statute (38 U.S.C. 4102A (c) (2) (B) and regulation and operates on a fiscal year (not program year) basis, however, performance metrics are collected and reported quarterly on a Program Year basis (as with the ETA-9002 Series). Currently, VETS JVSG operates on a multi-year grant approval cycle modified and funded annually.

In accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(b)(5) and § 4102A(c), the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training (ASVET) makes grant funds available for use in each State to support Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) staff. As a condition to receive funding, 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(c)(2) requires States to submit an application for a grant that contains a State Plan narrative, which includes:

### A. HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES TO VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS UNDER THE JVSG;

- A walkthrough of how eligible participants access American Job Center (AJC) services, are triaged and referred for Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) services and receive individualized career services through a case management framework.
- How the DVOP works with AJC staff and partners to connect veterans and other eligible participants to training and employment opportunities.
- How the Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) connect in the local employer community to promote job opportunities for veterans.

The goal is to help the Veteran become job-ready and gain employment in a field of their interest and/or ability. Tennessee has developed a standardized process for referring veterans and other eligible persons with significant barriers to employment (SBE) to a DVOP (see attached flowchart). This triage approach begins at the point of entry into the American Job Center (AJC). Triage can be conducted either in-person or telephonically by front desk staff asking a series of questions to determine eligibility for the various AJC programs, SBEs, and services desired. Tennessee also offers assistance through a virtual AJC where veterans and eligible persons can identify what services they are seeking and the system will match them with the appropriate AJC partner.

As part of the triage process, all customers are asked if they have served in the military. If they answer "YES" to the question, the veteran/eligible person is given a copy of the most current approved "Eligibility Triage Form" (ETF), with instructions on how to complete the form and then return it to the intake person. The intake person will review the form and assess the questionnaire responses. If determined to have a SBE, and based on their self-attested reason for visit, they may be referred to a DVOP for services.

At this point, veterans and eligible persons who are identified as having a SBE through the initial intake process at the AJC, and need specific Individualized Career Services, will be referred to appropriate DVOP/ Consolidated Position (CP) staff for assistance as required. Through the case

management framework, the DVOP and the Veteran/eligible person will work together to complete a comprehensive assessment to document any current or potential SBEs and services needed to help overcome those SBEs and develop an individual employment plan (IEP) to assist them in becoming job ready through agreed-upon goals and objectives. The veteran/eligible person would then, if required, be referred to an appropriate partner for additional services as needed based on the IEP. Consistent contact with the veteran/eligible person will be conducted through in-person, virtual, or telephonic means. Consistent contact will occur no less than every 14 days, and more often as needed depending on the veteran/eligible person's barriers. DVOPs will continue to follow-up with the veteran/eligible person once they obtain employment at 30/60/90-day intervals.

In the absence of DVOP staff, or if the Veteran/eligible person does not meet the criteria for DVOP services, the Team Lead, or other Wagner-Peyser staff assumes responsibility for the career assessment of the individual and assures that appropriate referrals and services are provided. DVOPs are a supplement to the AJC staff and should not be a substitute for providing services. DVOP staff and other AJC staff work together as a close-knit team to provide services to all veterans/eligible persons. After the comprehensive assessment is conducted to identify barriers and services needed, a DVOP will refer the veteran/eligible person to partner AJC staff such as Title I (Adult) for training and other support services, Adult Education (AE), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T), Re-employment Services Eligibility Assessment (RESEA), and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. The use of this multi-agency strategy, combined with a value for streamlined program integration will ensure the veteran/eligible person is provided maximum employment and training assistance that will aid in addressing the basic skills needed to promote more qualified, effective, and efficient opportunities for veterans. DVOPs will coordinate case management with the partners to ensure there is not a duplication in services, the IEP is being followed/updated as appropriate, and case notes are properly maintained.

LVER staff are assigned to each of the nine local workforce boards and responsible for employer outreach, promoting the benefits of hiring veterans/eligible persons and developing employment opportunities for veterans/eligible persons in their respective areas. One way this promotion process can be accomplished is by introducing employers to the immediate tangible incentives such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC, when funded), Incumbent Worker Training, On the job training (OJT), apprenticeships, GI Bill benefits, and State and Federal dislocated worker programs that is available to them when they hire Veterans.

Intangible incentives to hiring veterans include the "soft skills" veterans bring to the hiring table such as teamwork, trainability, leadership, diversity in the workplace, and a host of others that are inherent to the military experience. The LVER staff increases exposure for employers by organizing and/or promoting public events like career fairs, Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) events, Chamber of Commerce events, and the Hire Vets Medallion Program, which in turn increases the visibility of employment opportunities for veterans.

LVERs serve as a valuable source within the business engagement plan which includes a focus on identifying business needs through numerous and innovative channels, depending on the lifecycle of the business, and ensure a full range of possible resources and benefits are delivered in a timely manner. To succeed in these areas, LVERs serve employers by focusing on the TDLWD Seven Key Pillars which are (1) Sector-Based Service Delivery, (2) Business Cycle Framework, (3) LWDB as Asset Mappers, (4) Employer Case Management, (5) Enterprise Alignment, (6) AJC Network, and (7) Training and Development. These key pillars support reaching the goals of improving communications, alignment, implementation, measurement, accountability, and agility of the

agency and the workforce system statewide.

LVERs are an integral part of our Business Service Team (BST). The BST provides valuable information about promoting veterans within a variety of venues including job fair participation, Chamber of Commerce meetings, Society for Human Resource Managers (SHRM) meetings, employer visits, public radio and television service spots, and departmental brochures. The advantage of hiring veterans/eligible persons is a topic that needs to be presented to an employer consistently. Tennessee's American Job Centers (AJCs), through the Business Services Team (BST), provides an effective conduit to promote veterans/eligible persons to businesses as a sound and wise investment. Federal contractors and subcontractors are also targeted as they not only benefit from the hiring of veterans but are reminded about their responsibilities under the Office of Federal Contract and Compliance Programs (OFCCP) and Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act (VEVRAA) guidelines as well.

LVERs also work closely with Chambers of Commerce and local governments across the state with the development of a military recruitment strategy to encourage transitioning service members and their families to relocate to those areas.

**Consolidated Position (CP) Staff** serve a dual role as DVOP specialist and LVER. They provide services to both employers and SBE Veterans/eligible persons. After they have assisted their veteran/eligible person in addressing the identified SBEs through individualized career services and determined to be job ready, they move into their LVER role and conduct job searches, employer outreach, coordinate apprenticeship/OJT opportunities, schedule job clubs, and other employment opportunities for those in their caseload. Consolidated staff also provide training to other AJC staff to ensure programmatic compliance in serving the needs of veterans/eligible persons seeking our assistance.

**B.LIST THE POPULATIONS TO BE SERVED BY DVOP SPECIALISTS AND CONSOLIDATED DVOP/LVER STAFF, INCLUDING THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR REFERRAL TO DVOP SERVICES.**

All populations served by DVOPs must meet eligibility requirements in accordance with current Veterans' Employment and Training Service guidance. Please refer to the following Veterans' Program Letters (VPL), or most current guidance, to identify the eligible populations to be served by this grant:

DVOPs will specifically serve veterans/eligible persons as defined by VPL's 03-14, Ch. 1&2, 07-14, 03-19, or current guidance.

**These include:**

- A special disabled or disabled veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 USC §4211(1)(3); special disabled and disabled veterans are those:
  - who are entitled to compensation (or who, but for the receipt of military retired pay, would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or,
  - were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability;
- A homeless person, as defined in Sections 103(a) and (b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 USC 11302(a) and (b)), as amended, to include domestic violence and other dangerous or life-threatening conditions affecting permanent residence;

- A recently-separated service member, as defined in 38 USC §4211(1)(6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months;
- An offender, as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Section 3(38), who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration;
- A veteran lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate;
- A low-income individual (as defined by WIOA Section 3(36));
- Veterans aged 18-24;
- Vietnam-era Veterans; and
- Eligible Transitioning Service Members, Spouses, and Family Caregivers.

As part of the triage process, all customers are asked if they have served in the military. If they answer “YES” to the question, the veteran/eligible person is given a copy of the most current approved “Eligibility Triage Form” (ETF), with instructions on how to complete the form and then return it to the intake person. The intake person will review the form and assess the questionnaire responses. If determined to meet the criteria for a population that can be served by a DVOP, further assessment by a non-JVSG staff person will be conducted to determine if they meet the definition of an eligible veteran based on 38 USC 4211(4) or an eligible person based on 38 USC 4101(5).

An eligible veteran is a person who:

- 1) Served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days and was discharged or released therefrom with other than a dishonorable discharge;
- 2) Was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability; or
- 3) As a member of a reserve component under an order to active duty pursuant to section 12301 (a), (d), or (g) 12302, or 12304 of title 10, served on active duty during a period of war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge is authorized and was discharged or released from such duty with other than a dishonorable discharge.

An eligible person is:

- 1) The spouse of any person who died of a service-connected disability;
- 2) The spouse of any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time of application for assistance under this chapter [38 U.S.C 4101] et seq.]’ is listed’ pursuant to section 556 of title 37 and regulations issued thereunder, by the secretary concerned in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days: (i) missing in action, (ii) captured in line of duty by a hostile force, or (iii) forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power; or
- 3) The spouse of any person who has a total disability permanent in nature resulting from a service-connected disability or the spouse of a veteran who died while a disability so evaluated was in existence.

Per VPL 03-19, transitioning service members; wounded, ill, or injured servicemembers residing in military treatment facilities; and spouses/family caregivers of those wounded, ill, or injured servicemembers can be served by DVOPs provided they have an identified SBE.

**C.DESCRIBE THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES ASSIGNED TO DVOP SPECIALISTS, LVER STAFF, AND CONSOLIDATED DVOP/LVER POSITIONS BY THE STATE. THESE MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH 38 U.S.C & 4103A AND 4104**

DVOPs duties:

The primary duty of the DVOP is to provide Individualized Career Services to veterans/eligible persons with SBEs through a case management framework.

After the initial assessment of a Veteran in the AJC by non-JVSG staff, and determined that they are eligible for JVSG services, consistent with VPL 03-19, 03-14, Ch. 1 & 2, or current guidance, they will be referred to a DVOP for assistance. To render effective individualized career services, the DVOP

must, at a minimum:

- Conduct a comprehensive assessment of individual needs.
- Develop a documented Individual Employment Plan (IEP) based on any employment barriers identified during the assessment process and regularly update the plan as needed.
- Consistent Contact – Regular, consistent contact between the DVOP and the veteran/eligible person including meetings and updates, both pre- and post-employment. Consistent contact is based on the participant's individual needs and situation per the written plan and case notes and will occur no less than once every 14 days during case management and during the 90-day follow-up period once employment is obtained. Any contact or attempt at contact must be documented in case notes.

These three elements form the core of an effective case management framework under which individual career services will be delivered.

Upon completion of the objective assessment, the DVOP can determine the need for additional individualized career services and document those services on the IEP and in case notes.

**These services can take the form of:**

- Providing vocational guidance and individual counseling as required, such as skills assessment, career planning, communications skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct.
- Refer veterans/eligible persons to community-based organizations regarding employment and training services available to veterans; develop relationships with Veteran Service Organizations and other federal, state, and local programs to provide maximum employment assistance.
- Job referrals for specific employment opportunities.
- Referrals to training programs with other agencies, such as VA Veteran Readiness and Employment, as well as partner programs within the AJC, such as SNAP E&T, Adult Education, State Vocational Rehabilitation, and Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities.

DVOPs are required to take an active role in conducting outreach to find and assist SBE veterans/eligible persons through individualized career services. Outreach may occur at other local, state, and federal government agencies, veterans service organizations, community service organizations, LWDA partners, faith-based organizations, local community colleges/universities, Veterans Treatment Courts (VTC), and any other entities that are dedicated to locating and serving veterans.

TDLWD acknowledges that homeless veterans may not seek our services on their own and that an “under the bridge” approach is to be taken by DVOPs, encouraging them to go where these individuals can be found. DVOPs will also go to locations where there is access to organizations that serve homeless veterans, such as US DOL VETS Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) grantees, Supportive Services for Veterans and Families (SSVF), VA Medical Centers, Vet Centers, County Veteran Service Offices, civic and community service organizations, local homeless shelter organizations, and other sources as identified to provide services to homeless veterans.

**LVER Duties:**

The LVER will actively advocate for employment and training opportunities with business, industry, and community-based organizations on behalf of veterans/eligible persons consistent with VPL 03-14 Ch's 1 & 2, VPL 07-14, VPL 03-19 or current guidance. LVERs will be assigned duties that promote to employers, employer associations, and business groups the advantages of

hiring veterans/eligible persons and will be part of the “Business Services Team” within the AJC that conducts outreach activities to these entities.

**The following activities will be part of this program:**

- In conjunction with employers, conduct job searches and workshops and establish job search groups to facilitate the use of the TDLWD labor exchange system to enhance their employee search activities.
  - Form effective relationships with the business community and trade unions to enhance the availability of employment and training opportunities for veterans/eligible persons.
- (a) Encourage businesses to hire Veterans/eligible persons and to provide OJT and Apprenticeship programs geared to the Veteran community. Inform and promote the Hire Vets Medallion Program to employers which LVERs contact.
- (b) Maintain current labor market information on trends and adjust strategies accordingly.
- Work with training providers and credentialing bodies to promote opportunities for Veterans/eligible persons.
- (a) Encourage employers in professions requiring licensure or certification to develop OJT and/or apprenticeship programs for veterans/eligible person.
- (b) Promote the participation of veterans/eligible persons in programs leading to certification or licensure.
- (c) Advocate with training providers and credentialing agencies for recognition of equivalent military training.
- Plan and participate in job fairs to provide employment opportunities for veterans/eligible persons.

**The LVER will facilitate this by:**

- (a) initiating contact and developing relationships with employers, community leaders, labor unions, veterans’ organizations, and training program representatives to develop their commitment to providing employment and training opportunities for veterans/eligible persons.
- (b) maintaining current information regarding a full range of employment and training options available to Veterans/eligible persons.
- Work with federal contractors to inform them of the process they can use to recruit and hire veterans/eligible persons within the TDLWD Labor Exchange System and discuss their responsibilities under the OFCCP and VEVRAA final rule to attain the appropriate percentage of Veteran hires. The net result of LVER outreach to employers and the community will be an increased awareness of the capabilities of Veterans and their qualifications, along with developing employers’ willingness to utilize the OJT program that is available to them to increase the opportunity for Veterans/eligible persons.

**CONSOLIDATED POSITION (CP) Duties:**

CP staff serve in a dual role as a DVOP Specialist and LVER. They perform the services of LVER to employers and DVOP to the most in need Veterans/eligible persons. This allows one position to fill both roles to ensure veteran/ eligible persons are being provided individualized career services in strategically placed areas of the state. Once a Veteran’s/eligible person’s employment and training needs have been identified, AJC staff ensures that appropriate services are provided.

**General Duties:**

LVER/DVOPS/CP personnel all attend AJC staff meetings to provide updates on veteran/ eligible persons, answer questions from staff, and discuss needed services. CP staff are also available to provide training to other AJC staff. CP staff conducts employer outreach and plan job fairs and other activities to promote the employment of veterans/eligible persons.

Strategies to address individual needs include literacy and basic skills programs, resources for occupational skills training, job accommodations, assistive technologies, disability awareness

training, and other activities that may address barriers and support the achievement of positive employment outcomes. Tennessee has established and continues to adhere to a Priority of Service for Veterans.

D.DEMONSTRATE THE MANNER IN WHICH DVOP, LVER, AND CONSOLIDATED DVOP/LVER STAFF ARE INTEGRATED IN TO THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM, I.E., AJCs. THIS DEMONSTRATION SHOULD SHOW ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN JVSG AND OTHER AJC STAFF, SUCH AS THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN STAFF MEETINGS AND CROSS TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES.

Include a description of how DVOP, LVER, and consolidated DVOP/LVER positions are integrated into the employment service delivery system.

**This might include activities such as:**

- LVERs and business service teams collaborating to reach out to employers to present information on all programs to avoid duplicative visits.
- LVERs working with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) case managers to create job opportunities for veterans being case managed and trained through other WIOA one-stop partner programs.
- DVOPs sharing information with partner staff regarding available community resources they can access to better serve veterans who may not be eligible for DVOP services.

The LVER in each AJC is part of the local workforce area business services team to develop a plan for an effective employer relations program that emphasizes the hiring and retention of veterans, especially with Federal Contractors. The LVER is also responsible for informing management, staff, and other Workforce Center Partners of current veteran policies, laws, and programs. Tennessee recognizes the importance of developing job driven employment and training opportunities for the veterans/eligible persons residing in the state. Each LVER works with other business engagement staff to identify job-driven employment and training opportunities that can be filled by veterans/eligible persons with significant barriers to employment or by other veterans and provides that information to DVOP staff and other Workforce Center staff. This occurs at weekly staff meetings, through email exchanges, and through one-on-one discussions with staff. Priority of service for veterans/eligible persons is observed for these opportunities, just as with any DOL-funded programs or services that are available.

**DISABLED VETERANS OUTREACH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS (DVOP)**

Integration into the Workforce System: Integration of the DVOP via the AJC will be accomplished by utilizing in-place procedures for servicing Veterans with SBEs and combining them with the new policies and processes that will support functional alignment within the AJC. All partners will work together to support our plan for a seamless, customer-driven system. The new policies will enhance the delivery system and reflect the Governor's vision of effective and efficient governance through the alignment of several programs. DVOP staff, other DWS staff, and Workforce Partners work together as a close-knit team to provide services to all veterans/eligible persons and combine efforts to provide case management and individualized career service to those veterans who have barriers to employment.

DVOPs attend weekly Functional Team meetings directed by the Career Development Lead, monthly staff meetings with the Team Lead for State staff, and quarterly AJC Cross-training meetings with local and regional partner staff hosted by the One Stop Operator to ensure that all

partners are aligned with the same goals and standards across the local area and state to enhance services to veterans. DVOPs have the opportunity to share ideas with the other partners on the delivery of services for veterans/other eligibles and discuss how they can work together to enhance those services.

**CONSOLIDATED POSITIONS (CP):**

The CP staff in each AJC is part of the business services team. CONS work with the business services team to develop a plan for an effective employer relations program that emphasizes the hiring and retention of veterans, especially with Federal Contractors. The CONS are also responsible for informing management, staff, and other Workforce Center Partners of current veteran policies, laws, and programs.

**E. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALS AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES TO IMPROVE AND/OR ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE IN THE PROVISION OF SERVICES TO VETERANS, INCLUDING:**

1. The nomination and selection process for all performance incentive awards to individuals and employment service offices;
2. The approximate number and value of cash awards using the one-percent incentive award allocation;
3. The general nature and approximate value of non-cash performance incentive awards to be charged to the base allocation; and
4. Any challenges the state may anticipate in carrying out a performance incentive award program as mandated by 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(c). This should include any state laws or policies that prohibit such awards, if applicable. Describe the state's efforts in overcoming those challenges.

The Tennessee DOL-VETS JVSG Program utilizes the monetary incentive awards program authorized under VPL 01-22 to recognize American Job Center (AJC) staff that provide exceptional service to veterans and other eligible persons. Per guidance, 1% of the annual JVSG funding may be used for incentive awards. Due to the Pay for Performance cash awards, state employees are not permitted to receive individual cash awards through the incentive award program.

The objective of the program is to encourage staff members to be more attuned to the needs of the veterans and other eligible persons served in the AJCs, as well as continually ensure improvements are made to the overall delivery system of services provided to veterans and other eligible persons. There will be a total of three (3) AJCs awarded each year. The annual incentive award amount will be evenly split between each AJC awarded. These incentive award funds can be used for any purpose within the guidelines of VPL 01-22. We understand these amounts will vary annually based on our annual allocation, but average \$12,000+ each. Tennessee will not provide non-cash incentive awards.

Awards will occur annually on the following timeline:

- October 1st Presentation of Annual Incentive Award Program
- April 1st Submission deadline
- April 15th Committee meets to review submissions
- June 15th Announcement of Awards

Incentive Award funds will be distributed via Tennessee Department of Labor Finance Administration. All funds must be obligated by September 30th and expended by December 31st. Any unspent incentive award funding will be deobligated during the grant close out of the applicable fiscal year.



### **Selection Committee**

The selection committee for these awards will be comprised of the 3 Regional Directors, the TN Director of Veteran Services, U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training State Director, and the Assistant State Veterans' Program Coordinator(s). The selection committee members will be responsible for: (a) recording the minutes of each committee meeting; (b) retaining documentation for one (1) year on all AJCs that have been nominated; (c) ensuring persons on the selection committee who have made nominations do not vote on those nominations; and, (d) pre-approving an additional person to act as a "tie-breaking" vote in the event one is needed.

### **Submissions**

Submissions for an AJC may include documentation that displays outstanding service to a veteran or veterans, in turn producing positive outcomes. Awards to AJCs should be reserved for instances where most, if not all, office staff contribute to providing or improving employment and training services to veterans. Each individual AJC may submit one (1) application. Activities must have taken place during the current program year, which runs July 1st to June 30th. Submissions must clearly indicate they are for Incentive Award consideration. For example, VETS Success Story submission will not be assumed they are also Incentive Award submissions unless clearly marked as such.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- An exemplary success story showcasing substantial assistance with overcoming SBE(s) leading to successful job placement or development.
- Developing and sharing a best practice that has greatly benefited veterans.
- Creating and implementing a new program or initiative that promotes employment or training opportunities for Veterans.
- Additional achievements that provide a positive impact that enables a veteran or veterans to achieve meaningful employment.

#### **F. LIST THE PERFORMANCE TARGETS FOR DIRECT SERVICES TO VETERANS PROVIDED BY JVSG STAFF, AS MEASURED BY PARTICIPANTS':**

- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit: **43.67%**
- Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit: **41.11%**
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit: **\$3,880.00**

All performance goals are provided in Appendix 1.