



Join VA SkillBridge

Become a Hosting Department

Seeking Talent to Grow Your Team? Consider SkillBridge

Each year approximately 200,000 members of the Armed Forces, stationed in over 140 military installations in the U.S. and overseas, will leave active duty and enter or re-enter the civilian workforce or pursue higher education.

Through the SkillBridge program, industry partners benefit from gaining early access to the extensive experience, skills, and unmatched work ethos that Service members bring to the workforce. Employers craft no-cost SkillBridge programs to meet their specific workforce needs and match those needs to the skills and abilities of highly motivated Service members.

Salary and Benefits With DoD

The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) continues to pay the Service member's salary and benefits while they participate in the program. This opportunity may last up to the final 180 days of service. The SkillBridge program is offered by more than 1,000 authorized public and private organizations, including the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). In December 2019, VA and DoD signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalize VA's role as a Federal employment partner supporting the program and to expand SkillBridge opportunities across VA.

SkillBridge Opportunities Within VA

VA SkillBridge offers opportunities to train transitioning Service members in career fields such as law enforcement, medical services, administrative support, and claims processing. Once their training is complete and the Service member comes off active duty, they are eligible for a position with VA.

Departments within VA interested in developing a SkillBridge opportunity can join the program by identifying positions that offer future career pathways and making them available to transitioning Service members. Interested departments will develop the training program, implement the plan, select applicants, and when the training is complete, make permanent hiring decisions. The Outreach, Transition, and Economic Development (OTED) serves as a consultant to assist departments throughout their participation in the program.



Step-by-Step Guide

- 1 Choose an existing job or develop a new job based on workforce needs to offer as a SkillBridge opportunity.
- 2 Develop the training program that will train the Service member. Training programs range from 3 to 12 weeks but cannot exceed 180 days. Program length is determined by the level of training required to learn the position's required skills.
- 3 VA SkillBridge will forward the identified training opportunity to DoD and once approved, the position will be available to transitioning Service members on the DoD's SkillBridge website: SkillBridge.osd.mil/locations.htm.
- 4 OTED will provide guidance and resources to the hosting VA office during the development, implementation, and execution phases of the program. OTED will serve as the liaison with DoD's SkillBridge program office.
- 5 VA organizations manage program coordination, select eligible participants, facilitate training, interview graduates, and hire successful program graduates to be VA civilian employees, as authorized.

VA SkillBridge Program Readiness Checklist

To be a successful VA SkillBridge program host, departments should consider the factors listed below.

Note: This is not an exhaustive list, nor do all factors need to apply.

- ✓ Have developed or have resources to develop and conduct a clearly defined job training program designed to enhance the opportunities for transitioning Service members.
- ✓ Have vacancies at the general schedule (GS) 6 (or equivalent) and above.
- ✓ Have considerable staffing needs (current and forecasted).
- ✓ Require specialized training to support your mission and can adapt training for transitioning Service members.
- ✓ Have designated VA training sites and/or can deliver training on military installations.
- ✓ Can ensure a high probability of employment for VA SkillBridge graduates.
- ✓ Offer geographic flexibility in permanent job placement.

To assist with assessing your SkillBridge needs or for more information, email: TEDSkillBridge.VBACO@va.gov.

Enhance SkillBridge with VMSTEP

VA SkillBridge participants can maximize their experience with the [Veteran and Military Spouse Talent Engagement Program \(VMSTEP\)](#). The program helps Veterans and transitioning Service members develop competitive applications to secure Federal employment. VA departments should encourage SkillBridge participants to use VMSTEP services, including:

VMSTEP services that enhance SkillBridge include:



Federal resume support and revisions.



Interview preparation and advice.



Guidance on **dressing for success**.



Assistance navigating the Federal Government's official employment website [USAJobs](#).

About VMSTEP

The Veteran and Military Spouse Talent Engagement Program (VMSTEP) provides outreach and employment readiness assistance to Veterans, transitioning Service members, eligible military spouses, and survivors while advocating the use of special hiring authorities, employment programs, and Veteran retention strategies to help VA become the employer of choice for Veterans and military spouses.



To learn more, visit VAforVets.VA.gov.