

EMPLOYMENT FOR VETERANS

- Our government is committed to helping releasing Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans successfully transition into life after service.
- On June 28, 2024, Veterans Affairs Canada officially launched and published the National Veterans Employment Strategy in response to the Government of Canada's commitment to facilitate rewarding employment opportunities for Veterans transitioning out of the Canadian Armed Forces. The development of this strategy marked a significant milestone in our efforts to support Veterans in finding meaningful employment.
- The strategy was a culmination of over two years of research and consultation with Veterans, stakeholders, and partners across the public and private sectors. Their input and perspectives informed the development of the National Veterans Employment Strategy and will continue to influence programs and services for Veteran employment.
- The National Veterans Employment Strategy focuses on four main objectives: improving services and expanding programs for Veterans, creating and recognizing Veteran-ready employers, positioning the public service as a leader in Veteran employment, and building trusted partnerships.

WHEN PRESSED:

Q1 – How is Veterans Affairs Canada supporting the employment of Veterans in the Public Service?

In 2015, the Public Service Employment Act was amended by the Veterans Hiring Act to help eligible Canadian Armed Forces members find federal public service jobs. This act provides priority hiring status to medically released Veterans, ensuring they have access to public service positions.

Veterans Affairs Canada established a unit specifically to support Veterans seeking careers in the public service. This unit educates hiring managers about the valuable skills and experience that Veterans bring to the workforce and promotes Veterans as a skilled and talented workforce.

Veterans Affairs Canada works closely with the Public Service Commission, the Department of National Defence, and the Canadian Armed Forces to implement the recommendations from the Joint Evaluation of the Implementation of the Veterans Hiring Act of 2020. This collaboration ensures that the hiring process is streamlined and effective for Veterans.

Launched in June 2024, the National Veterans Employment Strategy aims to enhance employment opportunities for Veterans across all levels of public administration. This strategy focuses on improving services, expanding programs, creating Veteran-ready employers, and building trusted partnerships with various organizations to support Veteran employment.

These efforts are part of Veterans Affairs Canada's commitment to ensuring that Veterans have the support they need to transition successfully into civilian careers, particularly within the public service.

Q2 – Has Veterans Affairs Canada consulted with Veterans and private industry regarding the National Veterans Employment Strategy?

Yes, Veterans Affairs Canada has actively consulted with private industry regarding the National Veterans Employment Strategy. The strategy is based on the results of consultations with more than 1,200 Veterans and stakeholders and could not have been developed without their valuable feedback and collaboration.

- Veterans Affairs Canada has established a growing network of private sector employers who are interested in hiring Veterans. The input from these employers has been instrumental in shaping the strategy and will continue to influence programs and services for Veteran employment. This ongoing dialogue ensures

that the needs and perspectives of both Veterans and employers are considered, fostering a supportive environment for Veteran employment.

- One of the most important things we have learned is that no transition is the same, because there is not one type of Veteran. As well, employment plays a significant role in Veterans' well-being by providing financial stability, a sense of purpose, and fostering social connections.

Q3 – Is Veterans Affairs Canada working with not-for-profit organizations or other third parties supporting or advocating for improved Veteran employment opportunities?

Yes, Veterans Affairs Canada works closely with numerous not-for-profit organizations and third parties to support and advocate for improved Veteran employment opportunities. Such as share information, align activities, and identify opportunities to collaborate. This effort will be ongoing, with annual reporting of key partnerships.

Some of the key organizations Veterans Affairs Canada engages with include:

- **Helmets to Hardhats:** This organization helps Veterans transition to careers in the construction industry.
- **True Patriot Love Foundation:** They provide funding and support for programs that benefit Veterans and their families.
- **Treble Victor Group:** This network connects Veterans with business leaders to facilitate career opportunities.
- **Coding for Veterans:** Offers technology certification and reskilling programs for Canadian Veterans.
- **Soldiers in Tech:** Provides training and certification in technology fields.

Additionally, Veterans Affairs Canada has provided funding through the **Veteran and Family Well-Being Fund** to support various projects aimed at improving Veteran employment. For example, funding was provided to the **Challenge Factory** to create the Canadian Guide for Hiring Veterans, an employer resource designed to help businesses understand the value Veterans bring to the workforce.

Q4 – What has Veterans Affairs Canada done to promote job placement or directly connect Veterans with employment opportunities?

Veterans Affairs Canada has implemented several initiatives to promote job placement and directly connect Veterans with employment opportunities:

- **Career Transition Services:** Career Transition Services offers a comprehensive suite of job-searching resources, including career counselling, resume writing assistance, interview preparation, job searching, and job placement services. These services are designed to support Veterans in their transition to civilian employment. As well, Veterans Affairs Canada is creating promotional materials

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to increase awareness of services available through Career Transition Services, including career coaching, learning modules, and job development.

- **Virtual Career and Employment Webinars:** In cooperation with its national service provider for Career Transition Services, Veterans Affairs Canada hosts virtual career and employment webinars. These webinars focus on both private and public service opportunities for Veterans. The most recent webinar was held in October 2024 which saw 856 participants resulting in 157 direct one to one engagements with employers. More webinars are planned for this fiscal year to continue providing valuable insights and connections.
- **LinkedIn Group “Hire A Veteran”:** Veterans Affairs Canada created a LinkedIn Group called “Hire A Veteran” to connect Veterans with Canadian employers interested in hiring them. This group has a little over 6,000 members and showcases dozens of new job opportunities on a weekly basis. It serves as a valuable platform for Veterans to network and find job openings tailored to their skills and experiences.
- **Veterans Job Bank Portal:** Launched in cooperation with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) in 2020, the Veterans Job Bank portal offers a centralized location for employers to advertise job opportunities directly to Veterans. It also provides Veterans with a one-stop hub to search for employers interested in hiring them. Veterans Affairs Canada is working with ESDC to improve the Job Bank for Veterans online platform, integrating it into the Digital Resource Hub with significant enhancements.

Q5 – What is Veterans Affairs Canada doing to continue promoting job placement or directly Connect Veterans with employment opportunities?

- **Accreditation, Licenses, Recognition of Skills:** Veterans Affairs Canada is strengthening partnerships with certifying bodies, government agencies, and professional regulatory bodies to improve the acknowledgment and utilization of military skills and training. This includes developing a framework to guide releasing Canadian Armed Forces members, Veterans, and employers in validating and recognizing military skills as civilian certifications, as well as enhancing existing digital skills translation tools to help Veterans and employers understand transferable military expertise and competencies
- **Recognize Veteran Ready Employers:** Veterans Affairs Canada will award a “Veteran Ready” seal of recognition to employers demonstrating a commitment to hiring, training, and retaining Veterans. This recognition will be promoted through public channels, including events, social media, and newsletters.

- **Peer Mentorship Networks:** Veterans Affairs Canada is expanding and promoting existing Veteran peer mentoring networks that connect Veterans with careers in the civilian labor market. Resources regarding these networks will be published on Veterans Affairs Canada's employment webpage.
- **Veterans Employment Webinars:** Veterans Affairs Canada hosts quarterly webinars highlighting job opportunities from companies interested in hiring Veterans. These webinars are well attended by Veterans and CAF members considering career transition. Over 200 organizations have presented at the webinars with each presentation recorded and made available for future references.
- **RCMP Veterans:** We are determining opportunities to better support RCMP Veterans who need career transition resources.
- **Veteran Entrepreneurship:** We are exploring avenues for entrepreneurship, including partnering with more organizations, creating resources for Veterans, and increasing awareness of support available to Veterans to start their own businesses.
- **Community of Practice:** We will launch a Government of Canada Community of Practice focused on Veteran employment in the federal public service.
- **Public Service Employment:** We are developing new resources and showcasing existing materials to build awareness among Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans of job opportunities in the federal public service, federal agencies, and Crown corporations.

Q6 – What is Veterans Affairs Canada doing to support Veteran entrepreneurs?

Veterans Affairs Canada is committed to supporting Veteran entrepreneurs through various initiatives:

- Career Transition Services works with Veterans interested in entrepreneurship to help them gain the skills needed to apply for funding opportunities and self-promotion. This includes providing guidance on business planning, marketing, and financial management.
- Veterans Affairs Canada collaborates with numerous third-party organizations that support entrepreneurship and self-employment. Some of these organizations include:

- **Helmets to Hardhats:** Assists Veterans in transitioning to careers in the construction industry.
- **True Patriot Love Foundation:** Provides funding and support for programs benefiting Veterans and their families.
- **Treble Victor Group:** Connects Veterans with business leaders to facilitate career opportunities.
- **Coding for Veterans:** Offers technology certification and reskilling programs for Canadian Veterans.
- **Soldiers in Tech:** Provides training and certification in technology fields.
- Veterans Affairs Canada provides funding through this fund to support projects aimed at improving Veteran employment. For example, funding was provided to Operation Entrepreneur, a national program of Prince's Trust Canada, to expand its workshop and online learning programs for Veterans and their families to explore self-employment options.
- Veterans Affairs Canada offers funding for Veterans to attend post-secondary programs or professional development courses. This benefit helps Veterans acquire the business skills needed to venture into entrepreneurship.

Q7 – Are equity-deserving groups a focus of the National Veterans Employment Strategy?

Yes, equity-deserving groups are a significant focus of the National Veterans Employment Strategy. In June 2023, Veterans Affairs Canada consulted with equity-deserving groups to better understand the barriers these Veterans face when entering the civilian labour market.

Veterans Affairs Canada is currently reviewing Census 2021 data and other studies to identify segments of the Veteran population that may require additional support in their employment search. This data-driven approach ensures that the strategy is inclusive and addresses the specific needs of diverse Veteran groups.

Furthermore, Veterans Affairs Canada is committed to ongoing dialogue with these groups as the National Veterans Employment Strategy is implemented. This continuous engagement helps to refine and adapt the strategy to better serve all Veterans, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Q8 – What is VAC’s role regarding the Public Service Commission (PSC) Data Transfer Issue?

- We welcome the recently published report titled [Audit on the Application of the Order of Preference for Veterans During the Data Transfer Outage Between the Department of National Defence and the Public Service Commission](#) of Canada.
- At this time, we stand-by to collaborate with DND and PSC regarding the recommendations while at the same time our priority remains to assist Veterans and CAF Transitioning members in achieving their career goals including those seeking employment in the federal government.

BACKGROUND – EMPLOYMENT FOR VETERANS

Using a Veteran-centric approach, the National Veterans Employment Strategy responds to the Government of Canada's commitment to launch a comprehensive strategy aimed at facilitating rewarding employment opportunities for all Veterans transitioning out of the CAF. Veterans Affairs Canada undertook an analysis of existing research and consulted with Veterans and stakeholders. The strategy is designed to address existing gaps and leverage opportunities that may exist for new and improved supports for Veterans. It highlights plans to connect Veterans with employers looking to hire Veterans, and it outlines roles for government, the private sector and non-governmental organizations to promote and increase opportunities for Veterans to find civilian employment.

The strategy is built upon four foundational strategic objectives:

- Improving Services and Expanding Programs for Veterans
- Creating and Recognizing Veteran Ready Employers
- Positioning the Public Service as a Leader for Veteran Employment
- Building Trusted Partnerships

The consultations highlighted several important points, including the need for ongoing collaboration with the Canadian Armed Forces to encourage serving members to plan for their transition earlier in their careers. Additionally, there is a need to improve awareness of Veterans Affairs Canada's programs and supports and to continue highlighting the successes of Veterans who transition into civilian careers.

Veterans Affairs Canada offers Career Transition Services to help Canadian Armed Forces members, Veterans, Survivors, and their spouses/common-law partners with career counselling and related services delivered by qualified employment coaches. Veterans Affairs Canada also works closely with numerous Canadian not-for-profit organizations and third parties interested in promoting Veteran-friendly hiring programs and special initiatives designed to advocate for greater Veteran employment.

Research from Veterans Affairs Canada's Life after Service Studies shows that many Veterans seek employment in public administration as they transition to the civilian labour market. At the same time, the Public Service is looking for the skills and experience that Veterans can offer. The Public Service Employment Act was amended by the Veterans Hiring Act of 2015, aimed at helping eligible Canadian Armed Forces members find federal public service jobs. Soon after, Veterans Affairs Canada established a unit focused on supporting Veterans seeking public service careers, educating hiring managers, and promoting Veterans as a talent pool.

A Joint Evaluation of the Implementation of the Veterans Hiring Act was published in 2020, and Veterans Affairs Canada continues to work with its partners in the Public Service Commission, the Department of National Defence, and the Canadian Armed Forces to carry out the recommendations from the evaluation. In addition, the National Employment for Veterans

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Veterans Employment Strategy, launched in June 2024, will guide decision-making and action to enable improved Veteran hiring outcomes across the public service. The highlights of the Strategy's implementation plan can be found on VAC's external website here: [The National Veterans Employment Strategy Roadmap](#).