

# Finding Your Next Job

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Even in a climate of high young vet unemployment, jobs still are available for returning veterans. Programs online and around the country can help.

Employment opportunities for Iraq and Afghanistan vets have fluctuated dramatically.

As of October 2009, the unemployment rate for post-Sept. 11, 2001, vets stood at 11.6%, according to the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Widely varying unemployment rates may show that these individuals are having difficulty transitioning to civilian jobs following Iraq or Afghanistan deployments. "If you served in the military, you're disconnected from the civilian workforce, you don't have contacts that a civilian person has," Justin Brown, VFW legislative associate, told *USA Today*.

Regardless of the cause of the documented high unemployment rates, federal and private programs exist to help vets find jobs after returning from war.

- [VetJobs](#) averages more job postings than any other military- or intelligence-related job board. An employment assistance section includes information on how to organize a job search, write a resume, interview and identify a potential employer. Its monthly newsletter for veterans, the *Veteran Eagle*, has information about employment and the job market. VFW partners with this job board.

- [American Corporate Partners](#) helps vets transition from the military to the workforce through career counseling and networking with corporate professionals. Some 300 mentors are available from Campbell Soup Company, General Electric, Home Depot, Morgan Stanley, PepsiCo and Verizon. Iraq and Afghanistan veterans—especially those who have been wounded—take precedence for selection in the program.

- [Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans With Disabilities](#) provides entrepreneurship training and small business management to disabled Iraq and Afghanistan vets. The Whitman School of Management at Syracuse University, UCLA Anderson School of Management, Florida State University's College of Business and Mays Business School at Texas A&M offer these free nine-day residency programs.

- *Texas Veterans Leadership Program* strives to match recently discharged vets with

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employers and also offers advice on VA benefits.

- [\*VA's Veterans Employment Coordination Service\*](#) helps veterans—especially wounded vets—who are interested in working for VA. Services include employment counseling, identifying transferable skills, a career assessment, resume and job search assistance, and direct job placement assistance.

- [\*Small Business Administration's Veterans Business Outreach Program\*](#) provides entrepreneurial development services including business training, counseling and mentoring, and referrals for eligible veterans who own or are considering starting a small business. Four organizations participate in this cooperative agreement and serve as Veterans Business Outreach Centers.

- [\*Hire Vets First\*](#), coordinated by the Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service, offers links to online job search engines and resume assistance. Its nearly 2,000 One-Stop Career Centers assist with job search, resume writing, job placement, interviewing skills, career counseling, labor market information and financial aid information.

- The *Little Caesars Veterans Program* offers a \$5,000 reduction of the franchising fee, financing benefits and a \$5,000 credit on the equipment order for the veterans opening their first store in this chain. Service-disabled veterans are eligible for a total benefit of up to \$68,000.

For reservists called to active duty, job protection is afforded under the 1994 *Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act*. The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve agency exists to provide assistance in this regard.

In November 2009, an executive order created the Council on Veterans Employment, charged with increasing the number of vets hired by the federal government. Each of 24 executive branch agencies must form a veterans employment program. The Office of Personnel Management is tasked with developing a strategic plan for veterans recruitment and employment.