



**Department of
Veterans Affairs
Deployment
Lifecycle Guide**
for Supervisors



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You are important to VA.

Your role as a supervisor is important to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and your staff.

As you may know, supervising employees who are also Military Service Members may present unique challenges in maintaining productive relationships throughout the deployment lifecycle. This guide draws your attention to the potential challenges you may encounter and provides you support for managing those challenges.

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Deployment Lifecycle

Each branch of service has its own terms for the process Military Service Members go through when they are called to perform military service.

The VA for Vets program defines the process as five phases:

- Employment & Readiness**
 Begins initially when service members are hired by VA and ends when they receive written or verbal orders to perform military service.
- Pre-deployment**
 Starts when service members receive orders or notification to perform military service and ends when they depart from VA to their deployment assignment.
- Deployment**
 Starts when service members depart from VA to perform military service and ends when they complete active duty.
- Post-deployment**
 Begins when the service members start the military out-processing procedures and initiates the transition back to VA employee status and ends when they return to VA employment.
- Reintegration**
 Begins when service members complete active duty and ends when they determine they are fully integrated back into the VA workforce.



Your Role in the Deployment Lifecycle

This roles matrix defines when the service member, his or her supervisor, and the Human Resources (HR) professional should be involved to ensure a standardized approach throughout the deployment lifecycle.

Exhibit 1 – Roles Matrix

Employment & Readiness Key Activities	Military SM	Supervisor	HR
Sign <i>VA for Vets Letter of Agreement</i>	●	●	
Create or revise <i>Transition Plan</i>	●	●	
Take Employment & Readiness lesson of USERRA Web-based Training (WBT)	★	●	●
Pre-deployment Key Activities	Military SM	Supervisor	HR
Inform VA supervisor, preferably in writing, of upcoming deployment	●		
Enter deployment date in the Case Management System (CMS)	●		
Verify deployment date has been entered in the CMS		●	
Initiate <i>Request for Personnel Action, SF 52</i>		●	
Use <i>Pre-deployment Advisor</i>	●		
Participate in HR pre-deployment session (using results from <i>Pre-deployment Advisor</i>)	●		●
Update medical, dental, life and long-term care insurance information	●		
Complete <i>Transition Plan</i>	●	●	
Meet to discuss staffing		●	●
Process <i>Request for Personnel Action, SF 52</i>			●
Take <i>Leading the Way</i> WBT		●	
Take Pre-deployment lesson of USERRA WBT	★	●	●
Deployment Key Activities	Military SM	Supervisor	HR
Communicate with deployed service member as agreed upon		●	●
Take Deployment lesson of USERRA WBT		●	●
Post-deployment Key Activities	Military SM	Supervisor	HR
Inform VA of upcoming return to employment	●		
Revise <i>Transition Plan</i>		●	
Initiate <i>Request for Personnel Action, SF 52</i>		●	
Process <i>Request for Personnel Action, SF 52</i>			●
Meet to discuss staffing		●	●
Revisit <i>Leading the Way</i> WBT and webcasts on effective communications		★	
Take Post-deployment lesson of USERRA WBT	★	●	●
Reintegration Key Activities	Military SM	Supervisor	HR
Recognize the service member's service to our country		●	●
Use <i>VA for Vets Career Center</i> to update resume	★		
Provide information on leave and benefits options			●
Update medical, dental, life and long-term care insurance information	●		
Take Reintegration lesson of USERRA WBT	★	●	●
VA for Vets Annual Training	Military SM	Supervisor	HR
Take <i>Introduction to USERRA</i> WBT	●	●	●
Take <i>Supervising throughout the Deployment Lifecycle</i> WBT		★	
VA for Vets On-boarding Training	Military SM	Supervisor	HR
Take <i>Effective Communications with Military Service Members</i> instructor-led training		●	

★ Optional activity but recommended

Employment & Readiness



The best time to prepare for a service member's deployment is before he or she receives orders or is called to perform military service. During this phase, you should work with your service member in drafting a Transition Plan and getting the VA for Vets Letter of Agreement signed.

Transition Plan

When a service member leaves on deployment, he or she takes knowledge, experience and contacts with him or her. Because of this, it takes time to get others taking on the service member's responsibilities trained and up to speed. One way to ensure a smooth and rapid transition is to create a Transition Plan.

A Transition Plan is a checklist-based list of tasks that the service member performs in his or her position with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The purpose of transition planning is to ensure a smooth and rapid transition when the service member departs from his or her civilian position and an interim worker takes over the position.

A Transition Plan benefits the staff by reducing the uncertainty of how things will get done, establishing a uniform course of action and, most importantly, providing an organizational tool for the supervisor, service member, temporary or short-term worker and staff. In addition, the Transition Plan is intended to ensure that the team's mission and goals are not disrupted when the service member deploys.

The Transition Plan should include the following:

- A list of responsibilities: tasks, meetings, reports, business contacts and computer systems used
- A list of required training activities
- A checklist of steps for handing off the position

Exhibit 2 - Transition Plan Template

Employee	Insert name	Last Updated	Insert date
Position	Insert title	Supervisor	Insert name
Position Description: List your primary responsibilities and any employees, if any, who report to you.			
Position Qualifications: List your qualifications such as college degrees, certifications and so forth.			
Current Work Schedule: Enter your work schedule, i.e., Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.			
Position Responsibilities			
Tasks: 1. Describe your tasks and how often you complete those tasks. Note: For recurring tasks, document each task by listing the specific steps to complete the task including paper and electronic processes. List other employees who are responsible for various parts of the task.			
Recurring Meetings You Attend: 1. Record the meeting title and day and time, meeting point of contact and your role in the meeting.			
Automated Computer Systems Documentation If you use automated computer systems, document the name of the system, the purpose of the system, who uses the system and how they use it, who owns the data (who is the manager in charge of the data), the technical contact, user permissions and the application and data sources that the system uses.			
Business Contacts List all business contacts with whom you interact and the purpose of the relationship.			

Transition Activities for Deployment (Overseen by supervisor)	Completion Date	Comments
Information provided on relevant business issues.		
Information provided on projects, initiatives and tasks.		
Information provided on direct reports, if applicable.		
Location of documents and records disclosed.		
Key contact information provided.		
Current colleagues notified.		
Tasks discussed between employee and supervisor.		
Support role of incumbent during transition period finalized, if applicable.		
Training requirements for position discussed and executed/in progress.		
Staff notified of position being temporarily filled by [insert name].		
IT/Facilities notified of access changes.		
Provide supervisor with most recent or updated federal resume.		

Transition Activities for Reintegration (Overseen by supervisor)	Completion Date	Comments
<i>Request for Personnel Action, SF 52</i> submitted to HR.		
Physical relocation carried out, if applicable.		
Information provided on relevant issues.		
Information provided on projects, initiatives and tasks.		
Information provided on new direct reports, if applicable.		
Location of documents and records disclosed.		
Key contact information provided.		
Relevant system IDs and passwords provided to supervisor.		
Meeting held with staff.		
Tasks discussed between service member and supervisor.		
Training requirements for position discussed and executed/in progress.		

Transition Plan Agreement

Employee Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date

VA for Vets Letter of Agreement

The *VA for Vets* Letter of Agreement (LOA) is between you and your service member. The purpose of this agreement is to promote effective communication between you and your service member to support the rights and responsibilities under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).



Set up a meeting with the service member to discuss the *VA for Vets* Letter of Agreement. After you both have signed the letter, make two copies (one for you and one for the Military SM) and send the original to HR. HR will file the signed *VA for Vets* Letter of Agreement in the service member's deployment file.

Go to the *VA for Vets* website (<http://VAforVets.VA.gov>) to download a copy of the *VA for Vets* Letter of Agreement.

Exhibit 3 – VA for Vets Letter of Agreement

The purpose of this agreement is to promote effective communication between the Military Service Member and his or her supervisor for supporting their rights and responsibilities under Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

I, *[insert supervisor name]* located at *[insert work site location]* agree to:

- Keep the service member informed of changes and/or updates during his or her deployment as agreed upon by service member.
- Provide necessary training to the service member to ensure successful reintegration into the workforce.
- Consider reasonable workplace accommodations, if needed by the service member, upon return from military service.
- Understand that the service member is entitled to return to VA after deployment.

I, *[insert service member name]* located at *[insert work site location]* agree to:

- Adhere to time constraints regarding applying for reemployment or returning to work.
- Participate in retraining if necessary in order to prepare for reemployment.
- Keep my supervisor informed of estimated dates of deployment, return from deployment, and post-deployment absence.
- Understand that a temporary replacement may be hired while I am deployed.
- Understand that serious injury may cause an unreasonable expectation of reemployment or retraining and a VA for Vets coach, along with other organizations, will provide guidance if this occurs.

We agree to the following:

- Changes to this document will be made by mutual agreement in writing.
- A coach from the VA for Vets program may act as a liaison between the workplace and the service member at the request of *[insert name]*.

We acknowledge that we will actively abide by this agreement.

Supervisor

<i>[insert name]</i>	Date
<i>[insert job title, organization]</i>	

Service Member

<i>[insert name]</i>	Date
<i>[insert job title, organization]</i>	

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act

The VA for Vets program has developed an online USERRA training that is customized for supervisors and organized by the phases of the deployment lifecycle. Review the Employment & Readiness lesson of the USERRA training. You can access online training on the VA for Vets website from any computer with Internet access at any time.



Employment & Readiness Checklist for Supervisors

VA has created a concise checklist that lists the job-related actions you need to complete during the Employment & Readiness phase. The VA Employment & Readiness Checklist for Supervisors is available on the VA for Vets website.

Exhibit 4 - Employment & Readiness Checklist for Supervisors



Employment & Readiness Checklist Supervisors

This checklist suggests activities that you should complete when you are assigned to supervise a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employee who also is a Military Service Member. For more details, see the Employment & Readiness section of the *VA Deployment Lifecycle Guide for Supervisors* on the VA for Vets website (<http://VAforVets.VA.gov>).

Directions: Complete each activity on this checklist. Place a check mark in the box provided next to the activity when completed.

1. Review service member rights under USERRA

- Access *USERRA for Supervisors* training on VA Talent Management System (TMS)
 - Review Employment & Readiness lesson

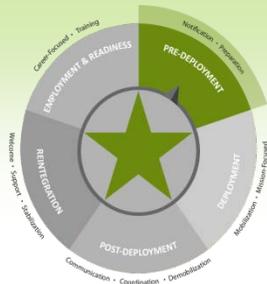
2. Sign VA for Vets Letter of Agreement

- Discuss the *VA for Vets* Letter of Agreement with your service member
- Obtain signatures on the *VA for Vets* Letter of Agreement
- Maintain a copy of the *VA for Vets* Letter of Agreement for yourself
- Provide a photocopy to the service member; send the original to Human Resources (HR)

3. Draft Transition Plan

- Work on the Transition Plan available on the *VA for Vets* website with your service member

PRE-DEPLOYMENT



The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) understands that having a service member called up for active military service can disrupt workflow. Our goal is to help minimize those concerns by providing you the key activities you will want to undertake before your service member deploys.

Notification from Service Member of Deployment

When the service member has informed you that he or she has received deployment orders or has been called to perform military service, you should do the following:

- Encourage the service member to visit the *VA for Vets* website for pre-deployment resources.
- Advise the service member to contact a Human Resources (HR) professional to schedule a pre-deployment session so that the service member can get his or her compensation, benefits and any entitlements regarding his or her deployment in order.
- Direct the service member to contact a *VA for Vets* coach and provide the contact information:
 - 1-855-824-8387
- Schedule a meeting with the service member to discuss the Transition Plan.



Once you know the exact date that the service member will leave his or her VA position to perform military service, you must submit a *Request for Personnel Action, SF 52* to HR.

Transition Planning

When service members deploy, they take knowledge, experience and contacts with them. Because of this, it takes time to get others taking on the service member's responsibilities trained and up to speed. One way to ensure a smooth and rapid transition is to create a Transition Plan.

A Transition Plan is a checklist-based list of tasks that the service member performs in his or her position with the Veterans Affairs (VA). The purpose of transition planning is to ensure a smooth and rapid transition when the service member departs from his or her civilian position.

A Transition Plan benefits the staff by reducing the uncertainty of how things will get done, establishing a uniform course of action and, most importantly, providing an organizational tool for the supervisor,

service member, temporary or short-term worker and staff members. In addition, the Transitions Plan is intended to ensure that the staff’s mission and goals are not disrupted when service member deploys.

If the service member drafted a Transition Plan during the Employment & Readiness phase, ask the service member to update the Transition Plan. If the service member has not drafted a Transition Plan, work with the service member to create a Transition Plan. If you are having the service member’s work covered by coworkers, make sure you work with the service member to identify those coworkers.

The Transition Plan should include the following:

- A list of responsibilities: tasks, meetings, reports, business contacts and computer systems used
- Required training activities in preparation to perform the requirements of the position

See Exhibit 2 – Transition Plan Template.

Review the Transition Plan. Determine your coverage needs – will you use a:

- Temporary appointment (an appointment lasting one year or less, with a specific expiration date);
- Short-term worker (an employment lasting for more than one year but not to exceed four years);
- Member(s) from another staff; or
- Member(s) from your staff.

Table 1 lists the pros and cons of hiring a short-term worker or temporary appointment.

Table 1 – Pros and Cons of Hiring a Temporary Worker

Pros	Cons
Maintains staffing flexibility	Training costs and time
Reduces workload for staff	Morale issues (The temporary employee may make more or less money than the existing staff members)

Meeting with a Human Resources Professional

Coordinate with a HR professional to discuss your staffing needs.

Preparation for Meeting with the Service Member

Prepare for your meeting by:

- Printing the USERRA poster.
- Reviewing the:
 - Service member's rights under USERRA.
 - Transition Plan for questions you may have about the information in the plan.
 - Signed *VA for Vets* Letter of Agreement between you and the service member.
Note: If you and the service member have not signed the *VA for Vets* Letter of Agreement, print a copy to bring to the meeting for signature.
- Creating an agenda to ensure you and your service member have a productive meeting (see Exhibit 5 for a sample).

Exhibit 5 – Sample Pre-deployment Agenda

<p>Pre-deployment Agenda</p> <p>Topics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Leave use before deployment2. Transition of job responsibilities3. Contact information while deployed:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Type of contact the employee would like to receive, such as staff updates, job notices, and so forthb. How often – once a week, once a month, and so forthc. What communication option to use, such as email, snail mail, text or telephone4. <i>VA for Vets</i> Letter of Agreement, if signature is needed <p>Handouts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• USERRA poster• <i>VA for Vets</i> Letter of Agreement• Transition Plan
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Meeting with the Service Member

Deployment brings uncertainty and stress into the service member's life. When conducting the meeting, try to be aware of this fact and think about how you can reduce this stress. Follow your agenda to ensure each topic has been discussed.



At the end of the meeting make sure you provide a signed copy of the *VA for Vets* Letter of Agreement (LOA) to the service member and send the original to HR. The purpose of the *VA for Vets* Letter of Agreement is to promote effective communication between you and the service member for supporting their rights and responsibilities under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

Remember, it is important to discuss how you will keep in touch with the service member and whether he or she wants to be contacted by you.

Deployment Awareness Training

The *VA for Vets* program has developed online deployment awareness training customized for supervisors. If you have not taken this training (titled *Leading the Way*), do so now to prepare yourself for communicating with the service member about deployment. You can access online training on the *VA for Vets* website from any computer with Internet access at any time.

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act

The *VA for Vets* program has developed online USERRA training customized for supervisors and organized by the phases of the deployment lifecycle. Review the Pre-deployment lesson of the USERRA training. You can access online training on the *VA for Vets* website from any computer with Internet access at any time.

Pre-deployment Checklist for Supervisors

VA has created a concise checklist that lists the job-related actions you need to complete after the service member informs you of his or her pending deployment assignment. The VA Pre-deployment Checklist for Supervisors is available on the *VA for Vets* website.

Exhibit 6 - Pre-deployment Checklist for Supervisors



Pre-deployment Checklist Supervisors

This checklist suggests activities that you should complete once the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employee, who also is a Military Service Member, has informed you that he or she has received deployment orders or has been notified that he or she will be deploying. For more details, see the Pre-deployment section of the *VA Deployment Lifecycle Guide for Supervisors* on the VA for Vets website (<http://VAforVets.VA.gov>).

Directions: Complete each activity on this checklist. Place a check mark in the box provided next to the activity when completed.

1. Review service member rights under USERRA

- Access *USERRA for Supervisors* training on VA Talent Management System (TMS)
 - o Review Pre-deployment lesson

2. Contact Human Resources (HR)

- Notify HR that a service member has an upcoming deployment/extended military duty
- Submit Request for Personnel Action, SF 52 to HR as soon as the service member notifies you of his or her deployment date to transition into Active Duty Leave Without Pay (Absent-Uniform Services) status
- Verify the deployment data has been entered in the Case Management System (CMS)
 - <https://mycase.VAforVets.VA.gov>

3. Learn about deployment awareness

- Review *Leading the Way* training on VA TMS

4. Inform service member

- Request your service member to set up a meeting, i.e., pre-deployment session, with an HR professional
- Advise the service member that HR will cover all aspects of leave, compensation, benefits and any entitlements regarding his or her deployment
- Let the service member know that, if desired, a spouse or other family member may be present at the pre-deployment session

5. Complete Transition Plan

- Complete the transition plan available on the VA for Vets website with your service member

6. Discuss staffing options with an HR professional

- Discuss your coverage needs in the service member's absence
- Determine if you will use short-term, temporary, or other team members

7. Conduct a transition meeting with your service member

- Ask if he or she will need to use leave before deployment
- Use the Transition Plan to discuss how his or her job responsibilities will be transitioned to another individual
 - o Ensure the plan addresses the storage and back up of any office equipment and electronic files or media that will be needed in the reintegration phase
- Reassure the service member that his or her job (or a commensurate with current job) will be available when he or she returns
- Ask the service member to provide you with an updated resume if he or she is interested in being considered for advancement opportunities while deployed
- Refer the service member to *VA for Vets* program for pre-deployment services

8. Obtain an agreement on communicating with service member while on military deployment

- Agrees with receiving communications from you while he or she is on deployment; define the type of communication; obtain contact information for the service member while he or she is deployed

OR

- Does not want to be contacted while on military deployment

DEPLOYMENT



During this phase, the priority of the service member is to fulfill his or her military mission.

Before the service member deploys, you should have made an agreement about whether he or she wants to be contacted by you while deployed. Make sure you maintain the trust you have with the service member by following through on that agreement.

Remember, you should not assign tasks to the service member and/or ask questions about where things are – this should have been handled prior to his or her deployment date. The service member is not permitted to do any VA work-related tasks while deployed – in fact, it is illegal for the service member to do VA work during military service.



Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act

The VA for Vets program has developed online USERRA training customized for supervisors and organized by the phases of the deployment lifecycle. Review the Deployment lesson of the USERRA training. You can access online training on the VA for Vets website (<http://VAforVets.VA.gov/tms>) from any computer with Internet access at any time.

Deployment Checklist for Supervisors

VA has created a concise checklist that lists the job-related actions you need to complete while the service member is deployed. The VA Deployment Checklist for Supervisors is available on the VA for Vets web site.

Exhibit 7 - Deployment Checklist for Supervisors



Deployment Checklist Supervisors

This checklist suggests activities that you should complete once the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employee, who also is a Military Service Member, has deployed. For more details, see the Deployment section of the *VA Deployment Lifecycle Guide for Supervisors* on the *VA for Vets* website (<http://VAforVets.VA.gov>).

Directions: Complete each activity on this checklist. Place a check mark in the box provided next to the activity when completed.

1. Review service member rights under USERRA

- Access *USERRA for Supervisors* training on VA Talent Management System (TMS)
 - o Review Deployment lesson

2. Communicate with the service member, if agreed upon in the pre-deployment phase

- Set up a reminder on your calendar to communicate with the service member
- Send the service member the types of communications you agreed to in the pre-deployment phase

POST-DEPLOYMENT



Your role in this phase is to prepare for the service member to return to his or her job at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Reemployment and the Military Service Member

A Military Service Member is eligible for protections under USERRA reemployment rights if he or she has been absent from his or her position of employment because of service in the uniformed services.

Service in the uniformed services means the performance of duty on a voluntary or involuntary basis in a uniformed service, including:

- Active duty (including activated Guard and Reserve members)
- Active duty for training
- Initial active duty for training
- Inactive duty training
- Full-time National Guard duty
- Absence from work for an examination to determine fitness for duty
- Funeral honors duty performed by National Guard or Reserve members

For the service member to have reemployment rights following a period of service in the uniformed services, the service member must meet five eligibility criteria. The service member must have:

1. Held a civilian job
2. Informed you and/or Human Resources (HR) that he or she was leaving the job for service in the uniformed services
3. Not have exceeded a five-year period of service

Note: Many types of duty, such as training and contingency operations, are exempted from the five-year limitation.
4. Been released from service under "honorable conditions"
5. Reported back to you and/or HR in a timely manner or have submitted a timely application for reemployment. Timely is defined as:
 - 1–30 days of service, report the next scheduled work day
 - 31–180 days of service, apply or report within 14 days after completion of service
 - 181 or more days of service, apply or report within 90 days after completion of service

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act

The VA for Vets program has developed online USERRA training customized for supervisors and organized by the phases of the deployment lifecycle. Review the Post-deployment lesson of the USERRA training. You can access online training on the VA for Vets website from any computer with Internet access at any time.

Notification from Military Service Member of Return to VA Position

When the service member has informed you that he or she will return to his or her VA position, you should tell him or her that:

- A job or a comparable job is waiting for him or her when he or she returns.
- He or she needs to contact Human Resources (HR).
- He or she should visit the VA for Vets website (<http://VAforVets.VA.gov>) for post-deployment resources and guidance as needed.

Once you have replied to the service member, you need to coordinate with Human Resources (HR) to discuss whether the service member will be returning to the job he or she held prior to deployment or to a comparable job on your current staff or another staff. Also, ask HR about the service member's five days of authorized absence; i.e., whether it applies to this period of military service.

If the service member is returning to your staff and you know the exact date that he or she will return, you must submit a *Request for Personnel Action, SF 52* to HR. You will also need to submit a *Request for Personnel Action, SF 52*, to HR for the worker who temporarily replaced the deployed service member and notify that worker that the service member will be returning to his or her job, if applicable.

Before the service member returns, find out if the service member will need any special accommodations due to injuries that may have occurred during deployment. Check with your HR professional about any reasonable accommodations that the service member may need in order to return to his or her civilian employment.

Make sure you reserve time on your schedule to meet with the service member on his or her first day returning to VA.

Transition Planning

Before being deployed, the service member drafted a Transition Plan. If applicable, have the worker who is performing the deployed service member's responsibilities update the Transition Plan. Use the updated Transition Plan to determine if the returning service member needs retraining. Schedule any training the service member may need. Also note who has been added to the staff since the service member's deployment.

In addition, you may want to identify what tasks will be transitioned and when they will be transitioned. Not every task should be transitioned to the service member on the first day, but rather the transition should be progressive to ease the service member's return to civilian federal employment. See the Employment & Readiness Phase section of this guide for a Transition Plan template.

Staff Preparation

Before the service member returns, meet with your staff to inform them that the service member is returning. Explain the service member's role and responsibilities.

Ask the staff to create a welcoming environment by:

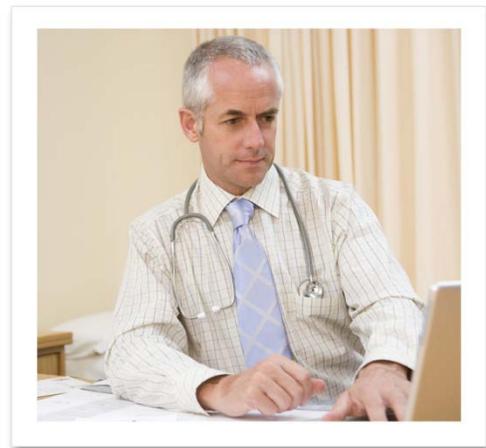
- Not asking the returning service member about his or her deployment
- Not pointing out any physical or mental changes
- Signing the "thank you" card recognizing his or her service to our country. See the *VA for Vets* Welcome Home toolkit for welcome back and thank-you templates.

You should also schedule one-on-one meetings with staff who will be working closely with the returning service member. At the meeting, discuss any concerns they have about the effect the service member's return may have on their responsibilities and emphasize the importance of providing a supportive environment throughout the reintegration period.

Human Resources Coordination

After the service member has contacted you about his or her return date and any special accommodations, contact HR to discuss whether the deployed service member will be returning to your staff or to a comparable job.

If the service member is returning to your staff, ask HR whether this period of military service qualifies for authorized five days of excused absence. Then notify the temporary employee that the service member will be returning to the staff. Work with the temporary employee to update the transition plan before the service member's return to VA.



Deployment Awareness Training

The *VA for Vets* program has developed online deployment awareness training customized for supervisors. You may want to retake this training to prepare yourself for communicating with the service member during the reintegration phase. You can access online training on the *VA for Vets* website from any computer with Internet access at any time.

Post-Deployment Checklist for Supervisors

VA has created a concise checklist that lists the job-related actions you need to complete after the service member informs you of his or her return to VA. The VA Post-deployment Checklist for Supervisors is available on the *VA for Vets* website.

Exhibit 8 - Post-deployment Checklist for Supervisors



Post-deployment Checklist Supervisors

This checklist suggests activities that you should complete once the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employee, who also is a Military Service Member, has informed you that he or she will be returning to civilian employment with VA. For more details, see the Post-deployment section of the *VA Deployment Lifecycle Guide for Supervisors* on the *VA for Vets* website (<http://VAforVets.VA.gov>).

Directions: Complete each activity on this checklist. Place a check mark in the box provided next to the activity when completed.

1. Review service member rights under USERRA

- Access *USERRA for Supervisors* training on VA Talent Management System (TMS)
 - Review Post-deployment lesson

2. Communicate with service member

- Reassure the service member that a job is waiting when he or she returns
- Ask the service member if he or she needs any special accommodations
- Discuss office and system requirements referencing the Transition Plan
 - Contact appropriate parties to fulfill office and system requirements

3. Revise Transition Plan

- Work on the Transition Plan with the employee(s) who assumed the tasks of the service member while he or she was deployed

4. Inform your staff

- Tell your staff that the service member is returning and when (if known) from deployment
- Ask the team to sign a “thank you” note (available on the *VA for Vets* website) for the service member or other gesture recognizing the his or her service to our country

5. Coordinate with Human Resources (HR)

- Notify HR that the service member will be returning to his or her civilian job from military duty
- Submit *Request for Personnel Action, SF 52* for the reintegrating service member
 - If applicable, submit *Request for Personnel Action, SF 52* for employee who temporarily replaced the deployed service member
- Ask HR if the service member is entitled to five days of excused absence based on his or her deployment
- Discuss any reasonable accommodations that the service member may need

6. Learn about Deployment Awareness

- Review *Leading the Way* training on VA TMS
- Review webcasts on effective communications from the *VA for Vets* website

REINTEGRATION:



You play an important role in the reintegration of Military Services Members returning to the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA).

Some service members may return to VA anxious over the changes that have taken place in the workplace. Expect the service member to be different. If he or she has changed, this guide will help you face that challenge.

You will need to coordinate closely with a Human Resources (HR) professional and your service member so that his or her transition back into civilian employment is as smooth as possible, including the reestablishment of his or her job, responsibilities, retraining and other considerations.

First Day: Service Member Returns to VA

The first day the service member returns to the workplace you should have scheduled a time to meet with him or her. The topics that should be discussed at this meeting are as follows:

- **New skills acquired while on deployment**
 - Encourage the service member to update his or her resume using the military translator on the *VA for Vets* website.
 - Provide job-seeking resources, if applicable:
 - *VA for Vets* Career Center
 - USA Jobs (<http://www.USAJobs.gov>)
 - Transition Assistance Program (<http://www.TurboTap.org>)
- **Transition Plan**
 - Discuss the service member's role and responsibilities.
 - Inform the service member of any training he or she needs to attend.
 - Provide the service member support resources.
- **Human Resources (HR)**
 - Tell the service member to coordinate with HR to ensure that his or her benefits are in order.
 - Verify with HR that Absent-Uniformed Services code change from 961 to 962 has been done in the system
- **Welcome back acknowledgement**
 - Send an email to your Military SM welcoming him or her back, along with a "thank you" note for his or her service. See the *VA for Vets* Welcome Home toolkit for welcome back and thank you templates.
 - Encourage him or her to review the tools, training and resources on the *VA for Vets* website and reach out to a *VA for Vets* coach for one-on-one reintegration support. Provide the *VA for Vets* coach's contact information in the email:
 - Phone: 1-855-VA4VETS (1-855-824-8387)

After the meeting, introduce the service member to any new staff members. Make sure the signed “thank you” card is on the service member’s desk.

First Month: Service Member Returns to VA

Schedule a “touch-base” weekly meeting with the service member and his or her coworkers to see how they are adjusting, to discuss any issues they may be facing, to get project updates and to find out how you can help him or her further. Use your best judgment to determine if you need to have one meeting with the service member and another meeting with his or her coworkers or if you should meet as a group.

If it seems that the service member is finding it difficult to reintegrate, encourage him or her to connect with one or more of the following reintegration resources:

- VA for Vets coaches: 1-855-VA4VETS (1-855-824-8387)
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255
- AfterDeployment.org (<http://www.AfterDeployment.org>)
- Military OneSource (<http://www.MilitaryOneSource.com>)
- Yellow Ribbon (<http://www.YellowRibbon.mil>)
- HR about any available resources to ease the transition, such as the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Next Six Months: Service Member Returns to VA

Continue monitoring the service member’s transition to his or her civilian job.

- Is the service member meeting deadlines?
- How is the service member’s performance?

Use your best judgment in determining how well the reintegration is working. If you think the service member is finding it difficult to reintegrate and you have to encourage him or her to connect with reintegration resources, contact a VA for Vets coach for support by:

- Phone: 1-855-VA4VETS (1-855-824-8387)

You can check the status of your issue and/or case in the Case Management System (CMS) by logging on at <https://mycase.VAforVets.VA.gov>.

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act

The VA for Vets program has developed online USERRA training customized for supervisors and organized by the phases of the deployment lifecycle. Review the Reintegration lesson of the USERRA training. You can access online training on the VA for Vets website from any computer with Internet access at any time.

Reintegration Checklist for Supervisors

VA has created a concise checklist that lists the job-related actions you need to complete after the service member informs you of his or her intent to return to the job. The VA Reintegration Checklist for Supervisors is available on the *VA for Vets* website.



Exhibit 9 - Reintegration Checklist for Supervisors



Reintegration Checklist Supervisors

This checklist suggests activities that will help you provide information and services to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employee, who also is a Military Service Member, so that he or she can reintegrate smoothly when he or she returns to civilian employment with VA. For more details, see the Reintegration section of the *VA Deployment Lifecycle Guide for Supervisors* on the *VA for Vets* website (<http://VAforVets.VA.gov>).

Directions: Complete each activity on this checklist. Place a check mark in the box provided next to the activity when completed.

1. Review service member rights under USERRA

- Access *USERRA for Supervisors* training on VA Talent Management System (TMS)
 - o Review Reintegration lesson

2. Recognize the service member's service to our country

- Give the "thank you" note signed by the team to the returning service member

3. Conduct a transition meeting with your service member

- Thank the service member for his or her service to our country
- Remind the service member to update his or her resume through the *VA for Vets* Career Center
 - o Encourage the service member to contact a *VA for Vets* coach if he or she needs career and/or resume support at 1-855-VA4VETS (1-855-824-8387)
- Use the Transition Plan to discuss how he or she will be transitioned to his or her job responsibilities
- Recommend that the service member talk to Human Resources (HR) about benefits
- Verify with HR that Absent-Uniformed Services code change from 961 to 962 upon the service member's return

4. Provide the service member with reintegration resources

- VA for Vets coaches: 1-855-VA4VETS (1-855-824-8387)
- VA Employee Assistance Program (EAP): contact HR for more information
- Military OneSource (<http://www.MilitaryOneSource.com>)
- AfterDeployment.org (<http://www.AfterDeployment.org>)
- Yellow Ribbon (<http://www.YellowRibbon.mil>)
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255

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