

Preseparation Overview Timelines

24 Months Prior to Anticipated Retirement or 12 Months Prior to Separation:

- Service members schedule and attend Preseparation Counseling.
- They attend a Transition Assistance Program workshop. If they are disabled, they attend the Disabled Transition Assistance Program workshop.
- Service members begin establishing a financial plan to make ends meet during their transition to civilian life.
- Service members assess their job skills and interests to determine how they relate to today's job market, they should take a vocational interest inventory.
- Develop their Individual Transition Plan.
- If retirement eligible, they schedule a briefing on the Survivor's Benefit Plan.

180 Days Prior to Separation:

- Review their Preseparation Counseling Checklist (DD Form 2648).
- Service member begins researching the job market. They should develop a career plan, including a list of possible employers in their career field.
- Review and make a copy of their personnel records.
- Discuss with their family possible options about their career and where to live next.

150 Days Prior to Separation:

- Service members should seek help if the stress of their transition to civilian life becomes too much to handle. Contact their friends in the private sector who may help them find a job. Start networking.
- Begin attending job fairs.
- Develop a fall-back plan in case their first career plan falls through.
- Research specific job possibilities, job markets, and the economic conditions in the geographic areas where they want to live.
- If they are separating prior to fulfilling eight years of active service, they must satisfy their obligations by becoming a member of the Selective Reserves or Individual Ready Reserves as stipulated in their Enlistment Contract and/or Amendments.

120 Days Prior to Separation:

- Service members should download their Verification of Military Experience and Training (DD Form 2586) document at <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/vmet>.
- Seek assistance from their transition office after completing the first draft of their resume.
- If they are considering federal employment, Service members should check job listing on the <http://www.usajobs.com> web site as well as explore special federal programs and hiring opportunities for veterans at federal agencies they are interested in by reviewing the [Federal Job Opportunities Listing](#), and other available employment data banks.
- Service members should continue to network.

- They should visit the Relocation Assistance Program Office to learn about relocation options, entitlements, and assistance.
- If they live in government housing, arrange for a pre-inspection and obtain termination information.
- They need to learn about the education benefits they are eligible for under the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB). If they enrolled in the Vietnam-era GI bill, learn how they can convert to MGIB. They need to contact their local Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) representative for details.
- If they decide to go back to school, they need to take an academic entry exam, college admission test, or challenge exam. Remember, this is free to service members on active duty.
- Obtain copy of their SMART Transcript
- They need to schedule their separation physical examination.
- Service members contact appropriate offices at their installation to discuss extended medical care (if eligible) or conversion health insurance. They should learn about their options for transitional health care. If they have specific questions about veterans medical care, they need to contact the VA, use the [VA website](#) or make an appointment with the local VA counselor.
- Even if they have fulfilled eight years of military service, they may want to explore the option of joining the Reserves or National Guard.

90 Days Prior to Separation:

- Service members should start a subscription to a major newspaper in the area to which they plan to move and begin replying to want ads.
- They need to send out resumes and make follow-up phone calls to check if they arrived. They can submit their resume through the DoD Job Search web site at <http://dod.jobsearch.org>.
- They should begin an automated job search for themselves and their spouse (if applicable) using the [Transition Bulletin Board](#), [DoD Transportal](#), [DoD Job Search](#), the [Federal Job Opportunities Listing](#), and other available employment data banks.
- They need to start assembling a wardrobe for interviewing and continue to network.
- Once they have chosen where they will live next, they should arrange for transportation counseling and learn about their options for shipment and storage of household goods.
- They should schedule a final dental examination.
- Determine if they are eligible for separation pay.
- If they would like to prepare a will or if they have legal questions or problems, they can obtain free legal advice.

60 Days Prior to Separation:

- Service members should begin planning a visit to the area to which they plan to move.
- Continue to send out their resume. Include in their cover letters the date they plan to move to the area.
- Continue to network.
- Decide whether they want to sign up for the optional Continued Health Care Benefit Program medical coverage.
- Choose their transitional health care option: they need to use military medical facilities or sign up for TRICARE, if eligible.

- If retiring, they choose an appropriate election category under the Survivor's Benefit Plan (SBP).
- For detailed information about disability compensation, benefits, and programs, call the VA.

30 Days Prior to Separation:

- Service members should visit the area to which they plan to move, attend job interviews, visit a private employment agency or executive recruiter in the area.
- Continue to network.
- Review their Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214).
- Several government agencies offer special loans and programs for veterans. Have them check with their local VA office or with the state they plan to relocate.
- Review and copy their medical and dental records, have them get a certified true copy of each.
- Complete their Veteran's Affairs Disability Application (VA Form 21-526) and turn it in to the appropriate office.
- Consider converting their Servicemen's Group Life Insurance to Veteran's Group Life Insurance (optional).