



A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS AND SUPERVISORS Returning to Work after Deployment

Going back to work as a civilian can be hard. Service members may have trouble fitting back into the workplace. As an employer or supervisor you can help make the transition easier.

What you need to know

Service members bring many good qualities to the workforce. They have valuable leadership and problem solving skills. They can be assets to your place of business. Most veterans will adjust to work without problems. However, a small number of Veterans may have trouble due to:

- **Family and relationship problems**
- **Financial problems**
- **Difficulty letting go of survival skills**
- **Coping with sadness and loss**
- **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder [PTSD]**
- **Traumatic Brain Injuries [TBI]**

Tips for helping service members readjust to work

- **Educate co-workers.** Before the service member returns to work, meet with their co-workers. Explain the importance of being supportive of the service member. Remind employees not to ask sensitive questions. This includes questions about injuries or combat experiences.
- **Update the service member.** Meet with service members to discuss their job duties. Give them detailed job tasks that are manageable. Explain any new policies or staff changes. This will help them feel part of the work force again.
- **Educate the returning service member.** This can include any job related training or education requirements. This will help them feel more confident in their skills.
- **Allow for readjustment time.** Be aware that everyone is different. Some people need more time adjust. Encourage the service member to ask for

guidance and support. Make sure they take breaks throughout the day. This will help reduce excess stress.

- **Provide special accommodations.** Plan for the special needs of those who have been injured. The service member's family can help identify potential problem areas at work.

When should you seek help?

Seek help if the service member has trouble readjusting to work. This can include:

- Poor work performance
- Trouble concentrating
- Anxiety, depression, and fatigue
- Alcohol or other substance abuse problems

Visit www.americasheroesatwork.gov to find useful information for employers and supervisors. This website has:

- Common employer questions
- Fact sheets and reference guides
- Presentations and training tools
- Step by step Veteran hiring information



REMEMBER...

Going back to work as a civilian can be hard. Service members may have trouble fitting back into the workplace. Educate co-workers before the service member returns to work. Remind them to be respectful with any questions they ask. Encourage the service member to ask for the guidance and support. Seek help if the service member has trouble adjusting to work.

Know employment and re-employment rights.

As an employer you must be aware of the rights guaranteed to members of uniformed services. The law applies to every employer, including small businesses with only one employee.

The following is a short summary of the rights guaranteed to employees upon their return from service.

You must reemploy a returning service member if:

- The returning employee notified you in advance that he or she was leaving the job for service in the uniformed services.
- The period of service did not exceed 5 years with a single employer, with some exceptions allowed for situations such as call-up during emergencies.
- The returning employee must have been released from service under honorable conditions (not because of a court martial).
- The returning employee must return to work in a timely manner or have submitted a timely application for reemployment.

Law coverage: The law covers nearly all employees.

Pension plan: You must give the returning employee the pension plan benefits that accumulated during his or her service.

Health plan: When the service member returns to work you must give him or her the pre-service health plan with no delay.

Hiring and firing: You are not allowed to discriminate in hiring and firing based on the employee's membership in the uniformed services.

