

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Dislocated Worker Service Providers and Staff
FROM: Anthony Alongi, Director, Dislocated Worker Program
RE: Policy Guidance on Veterans and DW
DATE: December 8, 2006

Following up on the St. Cloud DW/Adult Roundtable, following you'll find finished guidelines for including veterans in Dislocated Worker policy. Bottom line, we do everything we can within the letter and spirit of the laws to let them in.

Because we at the state level understand many providers already have veterans high on their priority of service, we are not publishing this as traditional policy. However, this memorandum should give you additional backing in letting a veteran into the program to get essential services.

I. General Principles for Serving Veterans in all Employment and Training Programs:

Recognizing the extraordinary contributions that veterans play in securing the peace, freedom, and security of the United States of America; and recognizing that many returning veterans require assistance to re-enter the civilian labor market, Minnesota's Dislocated Worker providers should:

1. Give veterans priority of service in all publicly funded employment and training programs in accordance with the Job for Veterans Act (P.L. 107 -288, November 7, 2002), Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty's Executive Order 06-02 (February 17, 2006), and all succeeding appropriate laws, rules, and regulations.
2. Make readily accessible to veterans all of the available resources in WorkForce Centers' Resource Rooms;
3. Apply, as appropriate and with the cooperation of the veteran, skills learned in the military to jobs in the civilian labor market;
4. Refer a veteran, only as appropriate and with the request of the veteran, to a Local Veteran Employment Representative and/or to Disabled Veterans Outreach Personnel; and
5. Work with veteran organizations to promote the hiring of veterans locally, statewide, and nationally.

II. Veterans' Dislocated Worker Programs Eligibility:

Veterans are eligible for the Dislocated Worker services, under either the federal or state program, under the following situations:

- 1) *Individuals leaving active duty of the "regular" armed forces:* An individual discharged from the regular armed forces, for reasons other than dishonorable discharge, is eligible for Dislocated Worker services.
- 2) *Individuals leaving active duty of the National Guard or Armed Forces Reserves:* An individual leaving the active duty status of the National Guard or Armed Forces Reserves, for reasons other than dishonorable discharge, is eligible for Dislocated Worker services if:
 - a) The individual no longer has a civilian job upon his or her return; or
 - b) The civilian job still exists but is no longer appropriate because of the individual's increased skills obtained in the military, leaving the individual essentially underemployed given his or her skills; or
 - c) The civilian job still exists but it pays significantly less than the military paid during the time of active service.

Conditions 2b and 2c are judgment calls to be made by the program provider. The State recommends providers define underemployment using an "80 percent" wage threshold – if the worker is making less than 80 percent of what he or she made previously, and/or if that individual could easily and verifiably make 20 percent more than the current job provides given the military-related increase in skills, underemployment may be an appropriate definition.

Condition 2b may allow program eligibility; but the program provider still has discretion over whether training is appropriate. Other Dislocated Worker services (e.g., counseling, job search, workshops, etc.) may be more appropriate, given the worker has already increased their skills.

Service providers should appropriately document all veterans' program eligibility and training approval decisions.