



## Transition and Economic Development

### Office of Transition and Economic Development (OTED)

The Office of Transition and Economic Development eases Veterans transition from military service to civilian life. OTED engages over 250,000 transitioning Service members, Veterans, their families and caregivers at each step of their transition journey. OTED's programs provide early access to VA benefits and resources by connecting them to a network of partners who are working together to accelerate their economic empowerment and well-being. OTED administers Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and other programs within the Military to Civilian (M2C Ready) framework; 365 days before and after separation.

To better serve Veterans and dependents OTED collaborates with interagency partners including the Department of Defense (DOD), Departments of Labor, Homeland Security, Education, the Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Office of Personnel Management carrying out the requirements of the Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) to Hire Heroes Act, Public Law 112-56. OTED highlights the following key programs critical to Veteran's successful transition:

1. Transition Assistance Program
2. VA Solid Start
3. Personalized Career Planning & Guidance (PCPG)



Supports 332 military installations nationwide, with over 300 employees and support staff serving Veterans

#### Mission:

Ease the Veterans transition from military service to civilian life

#### Vision:

That organizations from all levels of government, VSOs, nonprofits and private sectors can collaborate without barriers as they provide transitioning Service members, Veterans, and their families a world-class experience that honors their service.

#### Activities:

- 213,343 TAP Attendees
- 312,651 TAP Touchpoints
- 70,258 TAP Events
- 69,980 Veterans Contacted by VA Solid Start
- 12,249 Priority Veterans Contacted through VA Solid Start
- 3,260 PCPG (Chp36) Applicants Counseled



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### Release history

Version & changes	Date
Data as of	09/30/2020

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## Transition Assistance Program (TAP)

TAP is an interagency initiative designed to help Service members have a smooth and successful transition to civilian life. VA, with interagency partners, implement the five-day TAP curriculum, which Service members are required to take beginning two years prior to retiring or one year prior to separation. The TAP curriculum provides the skill building, resources and tools Service members need to achieve emotional health, physical health and economic stability in civilian life. The full-day VA Benefits and Services course, led by VA Benefits Advisors, helps Service members and their family members understand how to navigate VA and the benefits and services they have earned through their military career. VA Benefits Advisors are also available to Service members throughout their military careers through Military Life Cycle (MLC) modules, One-on-One Assistance sessions and at Installation Engagement activities. In FY2020, COVID-19 impacted worldwide in-person VA transition services. OTED developed a remote support model to keep Service members, Veterans and their loved ones in touch with VA Benefits Advisors for One-On-One Assistance sessions to preserve connectivity and keep them informed on critical VA benefits and services during these unprecedented times.

### TAP Services Offered:

- **VA Benefits and Services course:** The VA portion of TAP is a one-day, mandatory, in-person course called VA Benefits and Services, which provides an overview of important topics that range from education, compensation, insurance, health care and survivor and mental health services. This course is also available online for those unable to attend in person.
  - In FY2020, OTED supported 2,851 in-person VA TAP Benefits and Services courses with 80,528 attendees.
  - As of September 30, 2020, 99,308 individuals completed the eLearning online VA Benefits and Services course through the Defense Department's Joint Knowledge Online (JKO).
- **One-on-One Assistance:** VA Benefit Advisors explain benefits, answer questions and connect Service members, Veterans and their loved ones with resources to meet their individual needs. In FY2020, OTED supported 65,050 One-On-One Assistance sessions (combination of in-person, phone and email) with a total of 67,496 transitioning Service members, Veterans and their families. One-on-one Assistance sessions from VA Benefit Advisors are listed by region and topics discussed. A session could include one or more topics.
- **MLC modules:** MLC modules are short instructor-led and online information sessions on topics that matter most to active-duty Service members and their loved ones, such as education benefits, home loans and life insurance. MLC modules help Service members connect with VA well before transition so they can get an early understanding of their benefits and plan for their futures, which may lead to more successful transitions overall. In FY2020 (October 1 – April 1 only), OTED supported 469 in-person MLC modules with 10,619 attendees.
- **Installation Engagement:** At the request of installation commanders or other designees, VA Benefits Advisors participate in Installation Engagement events, like new arrival events, Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program events, local resource fairs, career-preparedness activities, and spouse events to provide information on where and how to learn more about benefits, programs and services.
- **Capstone:** A mandatory event to evaluate Service member's preparedness to successfully transition from a military to a civilian career.



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## TAP satisfaction:

All participants who complete the VA Benefits and Services course can provide feedback through the Transition Assistance Curriculum Participant Assessment (TACPA). TACPA is a DOD-facilitated assessment collecting demographic data, assessment of the course curriculum, materials, facilitators and facilities. Participants also answer questions to gauge their intent to use information learned during the course, whether the course added to their overall knowledge and confidence in transitioning due to the course. In FY2020 VA's cumulative satisfaction score was 95.8%, exceeding the goal of 95%.

### Transition Assistance Curriculum Participant Assessment

Questions	FY2020 Goal Achieved	Goal
Facilitators were knowledgeable	96.7%	95.0%
Facilitators interacted well with participants	96.0%	95.0%
Learning resources (notes, handouts, AV, materials) were useful	96.2%	95.0%
I will use what I learned in module in my transition planning	96.7%	95.0%
The module enhanced my confidence in transition planning	93.8%	95.0%
<b>Overall Satisfaction</b>	<b>95.8%</b>	<b>95.0%</b>



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## VA Solid Start (VASS)

VA created the Solid Start program which called for the establishment of early and consistent contact with transitioning Service members (TSM) and recently separated Veterans. This program was created in response to Executive Order 13822: "Supporting Our Veterans During the Transition from Uniformed Service to Civilian Life," the Departments of Veterans Affairs (VA), Defense (DOD) and Homeland Security (DHS) issued a Joint Action Plan to provide seamless access to mental health care and suicide prevention resources.

VA Representatives place outbound phone calls at three key stages (0–90, 90–180, 180– 365 days post-transition). The phone conversations are tailored to the Veteran's needs, directing them toward appropriate resources, services and benefits. After each call, Veterans receive a follow up email with the information and resources specific to their needs.

### VA Solid Start Services:

- VA Solid Start addresses transition-related challenges through proactive outreach to encourage Veterans to use benefits as tools for success during the first year of separation, identifies at-risk individuals and provides warm transfers to the VA Crisis Line for those in immediate need, and lowers barriers to accessing high-quality mental health care.
- VA Solid Start calls all newly separated Veterans – regardless of service branch, character of discharge, or service history. This includes all active-duty Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, Navy, Marine Corps, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Public Health Service (PHS), Reserve and National Guard deactivated from overseas contingency deployments of at least 90 days. This also includes those with other than honorable discharges.
- VA Solid Start prioritizes calls to Veterans who had a mental healthcare appointment within the last year of their active duty service and meet other criteria. In FY 2020, Solid Start transferred 18 former Service members to the Veterans Crisis Line to receive assistance in addressing their immediate needs.
- VA Solid Start calls are driven by the needs of the transitioning Service member. Specially trained VA representatives help guide the discussion, using the Pillars for a Successful Transition as the basis for open-ended questions that identify what a newly separated Veteran needs at that point in time to integrate into civilian life.
- Veterans receive pre-call reminder emails with information on the program, including links to resources and the VA Solid Start webpage. Veterans also receive post-call emails that summarize the interaction, provide additional information on the topics discussed, and links to pertinent information about earned benefits and services.

### VA Solid Start coverage:

- Approximately 100 specially trained VA representatives, located at eight call centers across the country, engage with Veterans through VA Solid Start calls.
- Call center locations include Cleveland-OH, Philadelphia-PA, Columbia-S.C., Nashville-TN, Phoenix-AZ, Salt Lake City-UT, St. Louis-MO, and San Juan-P.R.



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## Personalized Career Planning and Guidance (Chapter 36) Services

Personalized Career Planning and Guidance (PCPG) is a rebranded execution of Chapter 36 now managed by the OTED. PCPG provides career and education counseling to transitioning Service members within six months of leaving the military, to Veterans who have left the military within the past 12 months, or at any time to individuals eligible to use a VA education benefit. In 2020, 6,223 Service members, Veterans, and Dependents applied for Chapter 36 services.

PCPG provides Service members, Veterans and eligible dependents with career counseling, assessment, education planning and guidance resources, unique to the needs of each participant to help them set and achieve personal, career and education goals. Enhanced services will be made available sometime in FY2021 and will add resume support which will also include additional time to work on an employment plan, and easier access to PCPG resources.

These services are designed to provide Beneficiaries with personalized counseling and support to help guide career paths, ensure the most effective use of VA benefits, and achieve educational and career goals.

PCPG career and education counseling services include:

- Résumé support
- Education and employment planning
- Detailed skills assessment
- Personalized action plan to achieve education and career goals
- Adjustment counseling to successfully transition to civilian employment
- Connection to VA benefits and services
- Tele-counseling

In collaboration with Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) and Education Services (EDU) both will continue to be an active partner in the delivery of education and career counseling support and will continue to offer PCPG benefits through VA Regional Office locations and VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) sites.

PCPG increases Veteran outreach, increasing Veteran eligibility awareness and encouraging Veterans to use the benefit multiple times across their career lifespan as long as they remain eligible. VA plans to expand engagement at non-VSOC colleges and universities with high numbers of student Veterans and military installations with high transitioning Service member populations.



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Office of Transition and Economic Development (OTED) Activities FY 2020

Transition Assistance Program Attendance

TAP Events	Attendance
One on One Assistance	67,496
VA Benefits and Services	80,528
Installation Engagement	50,003
Military Life Cycle (MLC)	10,619
Capstone	4,697
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>213,343</b>

Transition Assistance Program Events

TAP Events	Events
One on One Assistance	65,050
VA Benefits and Services	2,851
Installation Engagement	1,610
Military Life Cycle (MLC)	469
Capstone	278
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>70,258</b>





### TAP Attendance for One-On-One Assistance Sessions in FY2020

Region	Total Sessions	% of Total Sessions
Asia	8,687	13.3%
Europe	6,381	9.8%
Central	11,740	18.0%
Eastern	9,538	14.6%
Southern	13,860	21.3%
Western	14,547	22.3%
Other (Region not provided by remote participant)	297	0.4%

### One-on-One Assistance Session topics reported in FY2020

Benefit Topic	Number of Topics	Percentage
Disability Compensation	33,730	30.4%
Education Benefits	31,817	28.6%
Health Care, including eBenefits and/or My HealtheVet	15,015	13.5%
Home Loan Guaranty	7,204	6.5%
Employment Services	5,345	4.8%
Life Insurance	4,003	3.6%
VA Health Care Portal	1,971	1.8%
Social and Emotional Health Support	1,712	1.5%
Memorial and Survivor Benefits	1,742	1.6%
Housing Grants	299	0.3%
Homelessness	270	0.2%
Other	103	0.1%



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## VA Solid Start Contact



### VA Solid Start Eligible Veterans served

Beneficiary Type	Total
Eligible Veterans	123,743
Number of Eligible Veterans Successfully Contacted	69,980
<b>Eligible Veterans Successful Contact Rate</b>	<b>56.6%</b>

VA Solid Start prioritizes calls to Veterans who had a mental health appointment during their last year before separation.

### VA Solid Start Eligible Veterans served

Beneficiary Type	Total
Eligible Veterans	16,688
Number of Eligible Veterans Successfully Contacted	12,249
<b>Eligible Veterans Successful Contact Rate</b>	<b>73.4%</b>

## Veterans Counseled

### FY 2020 PCPG (Chapter 36) Cases

Case Status	Number of Cases
Total Applications	6,223
Applications Counseled	3,260
Average Days to Complete (Eligible Beneficiary Counseled)	26.1

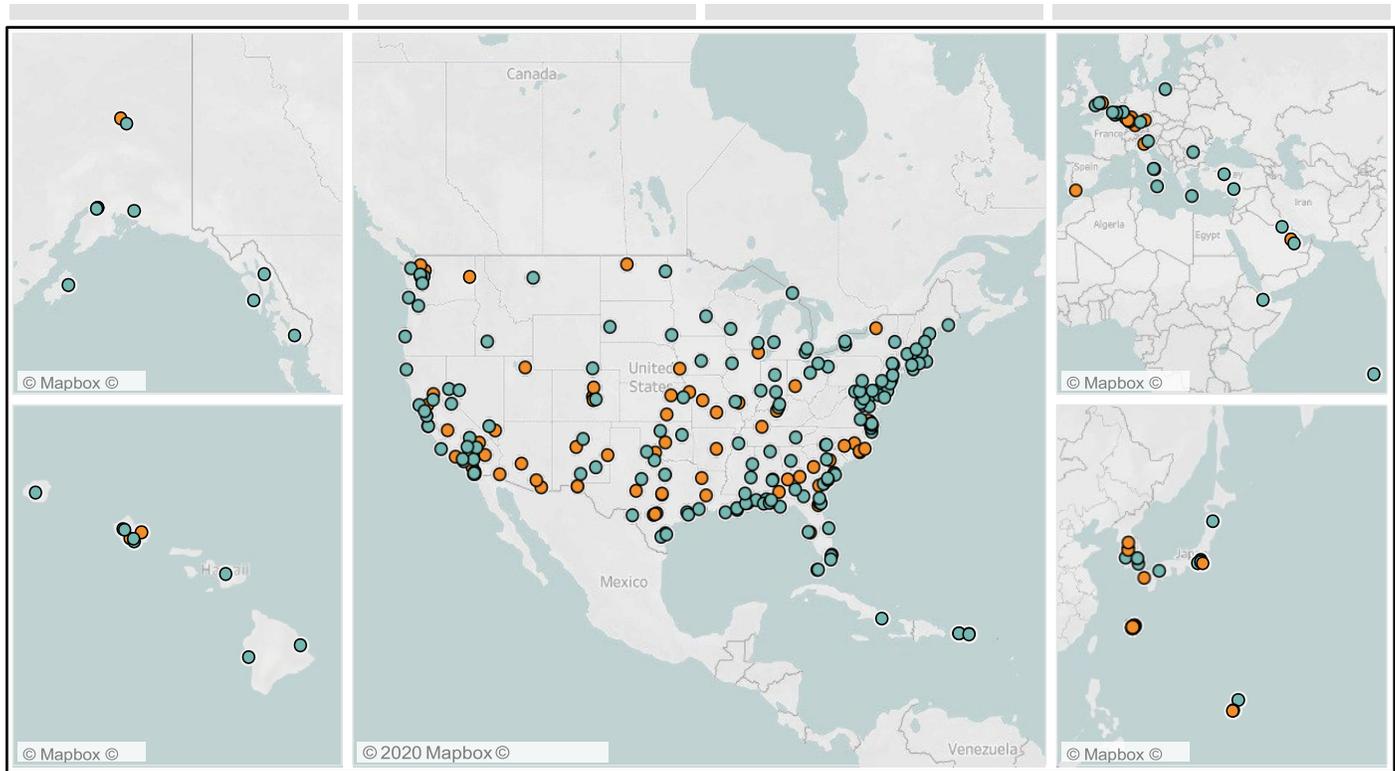


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## Appendix – Map of TAP Briefing Locations at Military Installations



### Contact Information

**Office of Transition and Economic Development and Employment Information:**  
1-800-827-1000

**Annual Benefits Report (Office of Performance Analysis & Integrity)**  
202-461-9040

**Department of Veterans Affairs home page**  
[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

**Veterans Benefits Administration home page**  
[benefits.va.gov](http://benefits.va.gov)

**eBenefits (Online forms and applications)**  
[www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov)

**VR&E home page**  
[www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab](http://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab)



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