

## INTRODUCTION

The federal government, as well as the nation as a whole, recognizes the debt owed to those who serve in the military and has always been a leading employer of veterans.

Congress has enacted laws protecting veterans seeking federal employment from being penalized due to their service. Veterans who are disabled or who were on active duty during specific time periods are generally entitled to preference over non-veterans.

Veterans' preference laws do not, however, guarantee veterans a job. The laws also do not give veterans preference when it comes to promotions, transfers, reassignments or reinstatements within an agency.

The U.S. government offers several programs designed to provide eligible veterans with special consideration when applying for federal jobs. However, veterans' preference in federal hiring and retention is extremely complex.

As a result, those who earned this entitlement through service to their country often misunderstand it. The purpose of this publication is to provide basic information and resources regarding veterans' preference.



## IMPORTANT WEBSITES

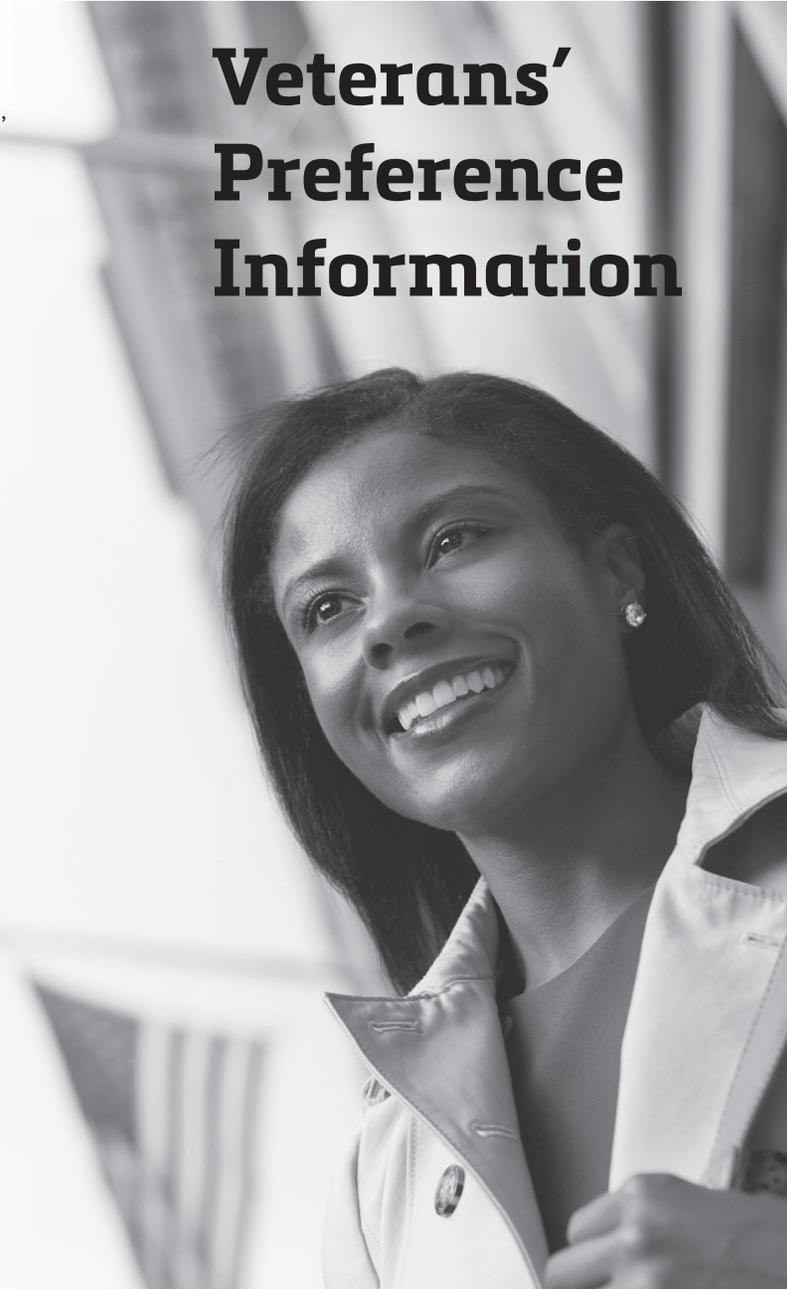
For in-depth information regarding veterans' employment within the federal government:  
**fedshirevets.gov**

For more resources:  
**veterans.gov**

For current nationwide federal job listings:  
**usajobs.gov/veterans**

For The American Legion's Career Center, including resource information and a job fairs calendar:  
**legion.org/careers**

# Veterans' Preference Information



**AMERICAN  
LEGION**

P.O. Box 1055  
Indianapolis, IN 46206  
(800) 433-3318

**legion.org**



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## VETERANS EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACT OF 1998

Provides qualified veterans the opportunity to compete for certain positions announced under an agency's merit promotion procedures. It applies when the agency is filling a permanent, competitive service position and has decided to solicit candidates from outside its workforce. It allows eligible veterans and preference eligibles to apply to announcements that would otherwise be open to "status" candidates, i.e., "current competitive service employees and certain prior employees who have earned competitive status." The veteran must be honorably separated, and either a preference eligible or have substantially completed three or more years of active service.

## VETERANS' PREFERENCE

For vacancies open to "all sources," preference is given to qualified veterans who are disabled or who served during certain periods or in military campaigns and those eligible for derived preference. This preference takes two forms: (1) having points added to the veteran's examination or evaluation score; and (2) placing preference eligible veterans ahead of non-veterans in the appropriate quality category, for which the veteran is assessed or placed when the hiring agency is category rating procedures.

Military retirees at the rank of major, lieutenant commander, or higher are not eligible for this preference unless they are disabled.

### To receive a five-point preference, a veteran must have served:

- Between Dec. 7, 1941, and July 1, 1955.
- For more than 180 consecutive days, any part of which occurred between Jan. 31, 1955, and Oct. 15, 1976.
- During the Gulf War, Aug. 2, 1990, to Jan. 2, 1992.
- In a campaign or expedition for which a campaign

medal has been authorized including El Salvador, Grenada, Haiti, Lebanon, Panama, Somalia, Southwest Asia and Bosnia.

- For more than 180 consecutive days, any part of which occurred beginning Sept. 11, 2001, and ending on Aug. 31, 2010.

Medal holders and Gulf War veterans who enlisted after Sept. 7, 1980, or entered active duty after Oct. 13, 1982, must have served continuously for 24 months or the full period called to active duty.

For 10-point preference, a veteran must have a present service-connected disability or be receiving compensation, disability retirement benefits, or pension from the military or the Department of Veterans Affairs. Unmarried spouses of certain deceased veterans and spouses of disabled veterans, as well as mothers of veterans who died in service or are totally disabled, are also eligible.

## VETERANS RECRUITMENT APPOINTMENT

Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) authority allows an agency to appoint an eligible veteran to a job without competition. VRA appointments begin as two-year terms and, when successfully completed, are then converted to permanent positions. Initial appointment must be at a grade or pay level no higher than GS-11.

### The following individuals are eligible for a VRA appointment:

- Disabled veterans; or
- Veterans who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during a war, or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized; or
- Veterans who participated in a U.S. military operation for which an Armed Forces Service Medal was awarded; or

- Recently separated veterans (within three years of discharge). An eligible veteran must have been separated under honorable conditions (this applies to all four categories of eligibility).

## 30 PERCENT OR MORE DISABLED VETERANS

This authority can be used to make temporary (at least 60 days but not to exceed 1 year) or term (more than 1 year but not more than 4 years) appointments in the competitive service. There is no grade level restriction. At its discretion, the agency may convert the employee to permanent status at any time during the temporary or term appointment.

## DISABLED VETERAN LEAVE

By law, Disabled Veteran Leave (DVL) must be provided to any federal employee hired on or after Nov. 5, 2016, who is a veteran with a service-connected disability rating of 30 percent or more for purposes of undergoing medical treatment for such disability. DVL is available as a one-time benefit during 12 months beginning on an eligible employee's "first day of employment" and may not exceed 104 hours for a regular full-time employee.

## DISABLED VETERANS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM

The Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program (DVAAP) was developed to promote recruitment, employment and job advancement opportunities within the federal government for qualified disabled veterans.

Individuals interested in receiving more information on how they may benefit from this program should contact the human resources office of the agency in which they wish to be employed.