

Preseparation Timeline for Retirees

Two Years Prior to Separation

- Schedule your Preseparation Counseling appointment.
- Review the DD Form 2648, "Preseparation Counseling Checklist." Identify individual service providers who will provide assistance.

18 Months Prior to Separation

- Attend a Transition Assistance Program workshop. If your service connected disability makes you eligible, attend the Disabled Transition Assistance Program workshop.
- Develop your Individual Transition Plan (at home, self-directed). Seek assistance from your
- ACAP Center counselor, if needed.
- Make fundamental life decisions (continue working, change careers, volunteer, etc.) and determine future goals.
- Capitalize on current career stability to prepare for future career goals. Identify training, education and/or certification requirements and determine how to achieve goals (e.g., use tuition assistance). Start classes.
- Evaluate family requirements (college tuition, eldercare for parents, etc.)
- Determine post-retirement income requirements. Project retirement take-home pay. Identify if you need to supplement retirement take-home pay.

12-24 Months Prior to Separation

- Continue training/education needed to qualify for your objective career/pursuit.
- Investigate health and life insurance alternatives, including long-term health care coverage.
- Consider whether you will take terminal leave or cash in unused leave.
- Consider retirement locations.
- Identify medical/dental problems and arrange treatment for yourself and/or your family.
- Begin networking. Track potential network contacts you have lost or may lose contact with.
- Research Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP).
- Consider spouse education and career desires.
- Update legal documents (will, powers of attorney, etc.)

12 Months Prior to Separation

- Continue training/education needed to qualify for your objective career/pursuit.
- Develop your Individual Transition Plan (at home, self-directed). Seek assistance from your
- ACAP Center counselor, if needed.
- Attend a Transition Assistance Program workshop. If your service-connected disability makes you eligible, attend the Disabled Transition Assistance Program workshop.
- Establish a financial plan to make ends meet during your transition to civilian life.

- Assess your job skills and interests. To determine how they relate to today's job market, take a vocational interest inventory. Contact your installation's Education Center and ACAP Center.
- Begin researching the job market. Develop a career plan, including a list of possible employers in your career field.
- If you need additional educational or vocational training to compete in the job market, explore your options for adult education.
- Learn about the education benefits you are eligible for under the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB). If you enrolled in the Vietnam-era GI bill, learn how you can convert to MGIB. Contact your local Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) representative for details.
- Visit the Education Center to take academic entrance exams, college admission test or challenge exam. Remember, this is free to service members on active duty.
- Discuss with your family possible options about your career and where to live next.
- If you need help with your finances, explore the options.
- Review and make a copy of your personnel records.
- Start developing a resume.
- Join a professional association in your chosen career field and become involved in it.
- Schedule Part I of your separation physical. Part II will be scheduled upon completion of Part I.

180 Days Prior to Separation

- Continue training/education needed to qualify for your objective career/pursuit.
- Research specific job possibilities, job markets and the economic conditions in the geographic areas where you want to live.
- Contact friends in the private sector who may help you find a job. Actively network.
- Seek assistance from your ACAP counselor after completing the first draft of your resume.
- Attend job fairs to connect with potential employers.
- Develop an alternate plan in case your first career plan falls through.
- Review and copy your medical and dental records. Get a certified true copy of each.
- Schedule medical/dental appointments, as needed.
- Visit your ACAP Center to request your DD Form 2586, "Verification of Military Experience and Training" document.

150 Days Prior to Separation

- Continue training/education needed to qualify for your objective career/pursuit.
- Start actively applying for jobs. Make contact with employers who you will interview with.
- Start assembling a wardrobe for interviewing. Check with the ACAP Center for Dress for Success information.
- Seek help if the stress of your transition to civilian life becomes too much to handle.
- If you are separating prior to fulfilling eight years of active service, you must satisfy your obligations by becoming a member of the Reserves.
- Start posting resumes to career web sites.
- Research web sites for posting resumes and conducting on-line job search (e.g., <http://www.careers.org>.)

- Schedule your separation physical examination.

120 Days Prior to Separation

- Complete training/education needed to qualify for your objective career/pursuit.
- If you are considering federal employment, check online at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov> to determine the appropriate documents to submit. Explore special federal programs and hiring opportunities for veterans.
- Consider using RESUMIX, an automated tool that allows you to use an online application to create a resume for applying for Federal jobs. You can print the resume for you use and save it to the system to retrieve and edit for future use. For some federal job, you may be able to submit your resume electronically. You may obtain more information from the USAJOBS website at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/>.
- Continue to network aggressively.
- Visit the Relocation Assistance Program Office located at your Army Community Service Center to learn about relocation options, entitlements and assistance.
- If you live in government housing, arrange for a pre-inspection and obtain termination information.
- Contact appropriate offices at your installation to discuss extended medical care (if eligible) or conversion health insurance. Learn about your options for transitional health care. If you have specific questions about veteran's medical care, contact the VA, use the VA website or make an appointment with your local VA counselor.
- Research Reserve programs to continue to receive part-time benefits, earn a future retirement and continue to grow and train in your field. Even if you have fulfilled eight years of military service, you may want to explore the option of joining the Reserves or National Guard.
- Department of Veterans Affairs Web site containing valuable information for veterans: <http://www.va.gov>.
- Start a subscription to a major newspaper in the area to which you plan to move. Begin replying to want ads.
- Visit and evaluate the area to which you plan to move. Attend job interviews there. Visit a private employment agency or executive recruiter in the area.
- Send out resumes and make follow-up phone calls to check if they arrived. Submit your resume through the DoD Job Search web site at <http://dod.jobsearch.org>.

90 Days Prior to Separation

- Continue to post resumes to web sites. Conduct an automated job search for you and your spouse using the ACAP On-Line, Transition Bulletin Board, DoD Transportal, DoD Job Search, the Federal Job Opportunities Listing and other available employment data banks.
- Continue to expand your network.
- Web site that helps you locate a home, realtor or neighborhood (database of homes for sale) <http://www.realtor.com>.
- Once you have chosen where you will live next, arrange for transportation counseling. Learn about your options for shipment and storage of household goods.
- Schedule a final dental examination.
- Determine if you are eligible for separation pay.

- If you would like to update your will or if you have legal questions or problems, obtain free legal advice.

60 Days Prior to Separation

- Begin planning additional visits to the area to which you plan to move.
- Continue to send out your resume. Include in your cover letter the date you plan to move to the area.
- Continue to network at all levels.
- Choose your transitional health care option: use military medical facilities or sign up for TRICARE, if eligible.
- For detailed information about disability compensation, benefits and programs, call the VA at 1-800-827-1000.
- Complete Survivor Benefit Plan paperwork.

30 Days Prior to Separation

- Continue to network.
- Review your DD Form 214, "Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty" worksheet.
- Several government agencies offer special loans and programs for veterans. Check with your local VA office.
- If you are unemployed, you may qualify for unemployment compensation once you are a civilian.
- See your local state employment office for eligibility.
- Decide whether to sign up for the optional Continued Health Care Benefit Program medical coverage.
- Complete your Veteran's Affairs Disability Application (VA Form 21-526) and turn it in to the appropriate office. Check with your local ACAP Center or VA representative.
- Consider converting your Servicemen's Group Life Insurance to Veteran's Group Life Insurance (optional).
- Web site with worldwide relocation information on major military and associate installations for use by military personnel and their families who are relocating: go to <http://www.militaryhomefront.mil> then go to military installations
- Web site on the Military Health System: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil>.