



National Veterans'
Technical Assistance Center

Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP): Strategies to Enhance Veteran Engagement

Virtual Learning Course Series 5,
Session 4 of 4

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Today's Presenter



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Reminder

HVRP best practices will be shared during this session. The National Veterans' Technical Assistance Center (NVTAC) encourages all grantees to utilize best practices that may improve their service delivery. Before implementing a practice discussed during this session, please review your award statement of work and contact your Grant Officer's Technical Representative (GOTR) to discuss if it is an allowable cost or activity or if it requires an amendment to your approved plan.

Agenda

- NVTAC Overview
- Veteran Engagement Overview
- Mentorship and Peer Support
- Integrated Support Services
- Professional Development
- Business Partnership and Job Placement
- Employer Engagement
- Job Retention
- Resources

Meet the Coaching Team



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NVTAC Overview (1 of 3)

- Provide technical assistance designed to increase grant recipients' ability to establish and operate successful HVRP grants
- Support HVRP grant recipients throughout their period of performance to ensure that challenges are resolved quickly
- Provide effective training and peer-to-peer learning opportunities that result in increased knowledge and adoption of innovative practices among HVRP programs nationwide

NVTAC Overview (2 of 3)

- Provide technical expertise to federal staff to assist in policy development in support of program oversight and strategic planning for the future of HVRP
- Quantify grant recipients' customer satisfaction and share promising practices and lessons learned

NVTAC Overview (3 of 3)

For questions about...	Contact:	NVTAC	GOTR
Collaboration and Partnerships		✓	
Coordinated Entry and Homelessness Systems		✓	
Enrollment at the American Job Center		✓	✓
Financial Management (i.e. Close-Out)			✓
Grant Amendments			✓
Outreach, Intake, and Assessment		✓	
Job Development and Placement		✓	
Outreach to Veterans, Employers, or Partners		✓	
Project Budget (i.e. SF-424, SF-424A, Budget Narrative)			✓
Quarterly Reporting (i.e. TPR and TPN)			✓
Training for New Staff		✓	
Working with Special Populations		✓	
Participant Training		✓	
HVRP Staff Retention		✓	
Follow-Up Strategies		✓	
Corrective Action Plans (CAP)		✓	

(Source: [NVTAC Menu of Services](#))

Veteran Engagement

Build Participant Buy-In (1 of 2)

- Building trust and veteran buy-in are critical aspects of HVRP
- Encouraging veteran buy-in starts at the point of outreach and continues throughout the duration of their time in the program
 - Maintain veteran buy-in and trust throughout the entire HVRP process and follow-up support
- For eligible veterans who will be enrolled in HVRP, providing a program overview at intake and highlighting the services, training, and support that HVRP provides can motivate the veteran to actively participate

Build Participant Buy-In (2 of 2)

- Ensure that each veteran participant is treated as an individual with unique skills, preferences, and goals
 - Use an active listening approach during meetings with veterans
- Take time to understand what the veteran considers important to them in the employment process

Individualized Career Path

- Consider the veteran's skills, interests, and goals
- Tailor employment and training opportunities to meet individual needs
- Foster a sense of ownership in the veteran's journey toward sustainable employment
- Practical and real-world examples

Mentorship and Peer Support

- Establish mentorship programs
 - Mentorship programs pairing veterans currently experiencing homelessness with mentors who have successfully transitioned from homelessness to employment can be of great inspiration and value to veteran participants
- Create peer support networks where veterans can share experiences, challenges, and successes
- Build a supportive community that encourages engagement and resilience throughout the employment process

Integrated Support Services

- Comprehensive support through partnerships with wrap-around services beyond job placement
 - Mental health
 - Housing assistance
 - Child care
 - Transportation
- Get to know the organizations in your community and the services they provide
- An integrated approach addresses various challenges that homeless veterans may face, promoting sustained engagement and retention in employment

Professional Development

- Offer, identify, and target skills aligned with current market demands
- Enhance veteran skill sets
 - Identify their current skills and consider how to equip the veteran with the tools and training necessary to further enhance them
- Engagement boost
 - Recognize and celebrate veteran success
- Certification initiatives

What additional strategies for veteran engagement have been successful in your HVRP experience?

Employer Engagement

Business Partnerships and Job Placement

- Cultivate partnerships with community employers who will collaborate with your HVRP
 - Visit their site or invite them to yours!
- Match veterans with jobs that align with veteran skills
- Connect veterans with employers that value veteran experience
 - Fosters employment retention

Employer Engagement: Job Development with Employers

- Understanding that job development involves selling skills
- Selling skills are distinct from HVRP case management skills
- A “business mindset” is essential - be confident that you are filling a hiring need the employer has
- “Cold calling” is part of the process - having a template script is helpful
- Having expert knowledge of the local labor market, trends, and opportunities is essential to focus your contact efforts

Employer Engagement: Develop an Employer Network (1 of 2)

- Leverage established connections, personal, community, board members, etc.
- Cultivate trust from employers by learning about their business and following up with requests for information
- Ask employers who have successfully hired HVRP participants to introduce you to other businesses

Employer Engagement: Develop an Employer Network (2 of 2)

- Establish an internal job bank that references the skills and career goals of your HVRP participants to focus job development
- Think beyond placement
 - Inviting employers to visit your agency, attending events, or volunteering can establish ongoing partnerships

Employer Engagement Tips (1 of 2)

- Connect with employers who have a large presence in the community, and/or seek to hire veterans
- Ask to visit the employer for informational purposes
- Ask about what jobs are available or will be in the future
- Describe HVRP as a no-cost service that has an untapped labor pool

Employer Engagement Tips (2 of 2)

- Inform employers about the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)
- Always sell the veteran's work strengths, not that they are experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- Offer follow-up services and support
- Be confident that you are helping the employer hire motivated and skilled employees!

(Source: [WOTC](#))

What additional strategies for employer engagement have been successful in your HVRP experience?

Veteran Engagement for Job Retention

Veteran Engagement for Job Retention

(1 of 2)

- Maintaining veteran buy-in is not only important during the HVRP process but throughout retention and follow-up as well
- Job retention is the culmination of the HVRP experience for the veteran and the grantee and may present unique challenges to understanding your veteran's individual needs, skills, and barriers to sustained employment.

Veteran Engagement for Job Retention (2 of 2)

- Keys to successful retention activities:
 - Understanding that job retention starts at the point of outreach
 - HVRP retention documentation requirements and the veteran's responsibility to provide them post-placement are part of HVRP orientation
 - The retention information needed is emphasized throughout the HVRP experience

Case Management Strategies to Promote Retention (1 of 3)

- Identify and discuss potential and current stressors that may lead to job loss through case management
- Help veterans remove or manage workplace stress by identifying action steps to take when triggered
 - Seek to normalize the experience of workplace stress to promote communication regarding challenges
 - Action steps can involve a written guide, such as a self-care employment retention plan

Case Management Strategies to Promote Retention (2 of 3)

- Engage all wrap-around supports to encourage job retention
 - Housing case workers
 - Therapists
 - Family members, significant others, and friends
 - Community networks, etc.
- Proactively schedule and adhere to regular check-ins via phone or in-person meetings with employed veterans

Case Management Strategies to Promote Retention (3 of 3)

- Follow up with the employer, with veteran approval, to provide support and prevent job loss
- Celebrate employed veterans by recognizing their achievement at agency events, on a “working wall,” in HVRP marketing materials, etc.

Resources

- [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs \(VA\) - Vocational Readiness and Employment Services](#)
- [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) Guide for Veterans](#)
- [Veterans and the ADA: A Guide for Employers](#)
- [WOTC](#)
- [Job Accommodation Network](#)



Questions?

Thank you!

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