



## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VA Regional Office  
VR&E Division 28, Room 1356  
915 Second Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98174

March 2, 2020

Washington Department of Veteran Affairs  
Attn: Mary Forbes  
1102 Quince St. SE  
Olympia, WA 98504

Subject: 2020 Veterans and Military Spouse Reverse Job Fair

Dear MS Forbes,:

Here is a White Paper outlining the proposed 2020 Veteran Reverse Job Fair in partnership with the US Department of Veteran Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program (VR&E) and the Veterans Employee Resource Group (VERG).

**PROPOSAL:** During 2020 the VR&E and VERG in partnership offer to Veterans, Military Souses, and State Agencies the opportunity to participate in a Reverse Job Fair held in the July-August timeframe.

**SITUATION:** Both the VR&E and the VERG have a common goal; that is to assist qualified and interested Veterans to obtain suitable employment within the structure of Washington State government departments, agencies, and organizations. Veterans and Military Spouses each face individual barriers to entering state service; however, some of the most common are the application process; identifying classifications or positions that align with their skills and experience; and retention during periods of trial service.

Governor Inslee has shown his interest in attracting Veteran and Military Spouses to State service with Executive Order 13-01, Veterans Transition Support called for State both validated the VERG and called for State Agencies to work with OFM to develop plans to increase the representation of Veterans in their workplaces. Executive Order 19-01, Veteran and Military Family Member Transition and Readiness Support, further calls for State Agencies to identify and actively promote jobs that are relevant to Veterans and Military Spouse skills and experience.

**ACTION:** A Reverse Job Fair is a method to aid both job seekers to enter into suitable employment and employers to attract qualified applicants to their organizations. The VR&E has experience with these events that includes a preparation model that affords the employer an opportunity to see in advance resumes from the participants to identify

current and projected vacancies that are in alignment with the Job Fair Participants while preparing the attendees to both identify agencies of interest and aid them in preparing to present themselves to employer representatives.

**APPLICATION:** A Reverse Job Fair flips the presentations normally found at a job fair, with the Veterans and Military Spouses stationary at tables with displays that highlight their skills and experience with the employers moving about the room identifying and meeting with candidates. The model used by the VR&E includes opportunities to work in advance with interested agencies to identify in demand classifications and opportunities and HR staff and Hiring Managers to identify in advance attractive applicants to maximize their return on investment for participation. This model also includes a series of workshops for the job seeker, giving them the opportunity to find agencies that align with their personal values, develop generic and specific resumes for those agencies, strengthen interview techniques, and construct tabletop displays that show off their past performance, skills, and training.

**RESOURCES NEEDED:** A commitment from 10-15 state agencies to include this event in their recruiting plans. This model uses a smaller hand selected group of job seekers, generally 25-30 job seekers. Rooms for a series 4-5 sessions starting 2 months in advance of the event are needed for the job seekers and meeting space large enough to hold the event is needed. The VR&E will conduct the workshops with representatives from the VERG and/or agencies participating is highly encourage.

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES:** This event will aid agencies in meeting both the intent and actions called to improve the recruitment efforts to attract and retain Veterans and Military Spouses to state serviced called for by Governor Inslee. A Reverse Job Fair hosted in partnership with the King County Veterans Program in 2019 resulted in 25 job seekers and 12 employers attending in the event. Outcomes for the job seekers was measured at 6-months after the event that indicated 11 of the job seekers were employed which is a 46% success rate. A survey taken of the employers two weeks after the event showed that all who responded had over 4 high quality candidates to follow-up with and 100% indicated that they would participate in a similar event again.

Please feel free to distribute this information to interested State Agencies on the employer side and other WDVA Partners who are interested in helping to identify top rate job seekers for the 2020 Veteran and Military Spouse Reverse Job Fair. Persons seeking addition information on the VR&E Reverse Job Fair model or our program can reach me at (206) 342-848, or [michael.kormas@va.gov](mailto:michael.kormas@va.gov).

Sincerely,

Michael "Chip" Kormas  
Employment Coordinator