

Volume 26, Issue 11

November 2025



Are Your Workers' Skills Up-To-Date?

The FMS Workforce Career Center has funding available to upskill existing employees. Up-skilling gives businesses a competitive advantage by increasing productivity and closing skills gaps. Investing in your current employees is often less expensive than recruiting and training new hires, and upskilling can reduce turnover by making employees more likely to stay with the company.

Your company can cut your current employees' training costs through two training reimbursements:

- Customized Training** - 50% reimbursement for costs involving instructor-led training that may include the introduction of new technologies, new production or service procedures, or an upgrade to a new job that requires additional skills, and workplace literacy.

* Maximum reimbursement ranges per person or project: \$1000-\$3000!

- Employed Worker Training** - Designed to upgrade job specific skills of current workers for promotion or advancement. This program offers a 50% gross wage reimbursement during training.

* Maximum reimbursement per person: \$4000!

For more information about specific eligibility requirements, contact your local Business Services Representative:

Nancy Reccio, (518) 842-3676 Ext. 3052 or
Email: nreccio@fmsworkforcesolutions.org

or

Nancy Rogers, (518) 842-3676 Ext. 3046 or
Email: nrogers@fmsworkforcesolutions.org

Is YOUR Company Ready for the Next Minimum Wage Increase?

The next change to minimum wage in New York State will take effect January 1, 2026. The general minimum wage rate for upstate New Yorkers will increase to \$16.00/hour.

For more information and frequently asked questions, go to:

<https://dol.ny.gov/minimum-wage-frequently-asked-questions>

Join Our December Amsterdam Mini Job Fair

The Amsterdam Workforce Career Center's December Mini Job Fair will be held **Tuesday, December 9, 2025** at 2620 Riverfront Center in Amsterdam. The event will be held from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. There is no charge to the businesses.

Job Fairs provide an opportunity to prescreen applicants, and employers may offer on-site interviews based on brief interactions at the Job Fair. Online applications save time but **face-to-face interaction is vital in both pre-screening and interviewing applicants.**

If you are interested in joining us at our next Mini Job Fair, contact your local Business Service Representative today as we have limited space:

Nancy Reccio
(518)842-3676 Ext. 3052
Email: nreccio@fmsworkforcesolutions.org

or

Nancy Rogers
(518)842-3676 Ext. 3046
Email: nrogers@fmsworkforcesolutions.org



Disabled Veterans

Understand how your organization can benefit from sourcing and recruiting veterans with disabilities. (article from askearn.org)

When military personnel reenter civilian employment, America's businesses stand to benefit. Veterans offer organizations of all sizes in all industries a source of qualified, committed job candidates with transferable skills proven in real world situations. Veterans grasp new concepts quickly and work well both independently and as part of a team—highly valued skills in any workplace. During their service, some veterans may have acquired disabilities, whether visible or not, that can impact everyday activities, including with respect to employment.

America's employers have an important role to play in ensuring veterans' success in the workplace. Often, a few simple workplace adaptations are all that is necessary for an employer to benefit from a dedicated, skilled employee who has sacrificed in service to our nation.

Employers who hire disabled veterans may qualify for certain tax incentives. For employers who are federal contractors and subcontractors, there are additional reasons to proactively recruit veterans—doing so can help them achieve their goals under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act as well as Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act. Through a range of initiatives, the Federal Government has also pledged to be a model employer of veterans, including those with disabilities.

Regardless of the nature of employer, the following frequently asked questions may assist in understanding issues related to hiring disabled veterans.

Hiring Veterans with Service-Connected Disabilities

What happens when veterans with service-connected disabilities leave the military?

Veterans with service-connected disabilities typically follow one of five tracks to employment when separating from the military. The track that they choose will determine the actions they must take prior to their separation. The five tracks are: reemployment with their previous employer; rapid access to employment; self-employment; employment through long-term services; or independent living services.

What is the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)?

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA, 38 U.S.C. § 4301 – 4335) is a federal law intended to ensure that people who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, Reserves, National Guard or other “uniformed services:” (1) are not disadvantaged in their civilian careers because of their service; (2) are promptly reemployed in their civilian jobs upon their return from duty; and (3) are not discriminated against in employment based on past, present or future military service. The federal government is to be a “model employer” under USERRA (38 U.S.C. § 4301). For more information on USERRA visit the Veterans' Employment & Training Service (VETS) website.

How does USERRA differ from the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?

USERRA prohibits employers from discriminating against employees or applicants for employment on the basis of their military status or military obligations. It also protects the reemployment rights of those who leave their civilian jobs (whether voluntarily or involuntarily) to serve in the uniformed services, including the U.S. Reserve forces and state, District of Columbia and territory (e.g., Guam) National Guards.

Both USERRA and the ADA include reasonable accommodation obligations; however, USERRA requires employers to go further than the ADA by making reasonable efforts to assist a veteran who is returning to employment in becoming qualified for a job. The employer must help the veteran become qualified to perform the duties of the position whether or not the veteran has a service-connected disability requiring reasonable accommodation. This could include providing

training or retraining for the position.

Title I of the ADA prohibits employers from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities with respect to hiring, promotion, termination, and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. The ADA also prohibits disability-based harassment and provides that, absent undue hardship ("significant difficulty or expense"), applicants and employees with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodation.

Is a veteran with a service-connected disability automatically protected by the ADA?

No. A veteran must meet the ADA's definition of disability. The ADA defines an "individual with a disability" as a person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; (2) has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment. This definition of disability may differ from the definition used in other laws. For example, the term "disabled veteran" means an individual who has served on active duty in the armed forces, was honorably discharged, and has a service-connected disability or a disability that was aggravated during active duty, or is receiving compensation, disability retirement benefits, or pension because of a public statute administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs or a military department. For more information about the employment rights of veterans with disabilities, read the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) guide "Veterans and the Americans with Disabilities Act: A Guide for Employers."

Are traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) considered disabilities under the ADA?

The ADA does not contain a list of medical conditions that constitute disabilities. Instead, the ADA has a general definition of disability that each person must meet. Therefore, some people with TBI and/or PTSD will have a disability under the ADA, and some will not. A person has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. For more information about how to determine whether a person has a

disability under the ADA, visit the EEOC website.

May an employer ask if an applicant is a "disabled veteran" when seeking to hire someone with a service-connected disability?

Yes. Although employers generally may not ask for medical information from applicants prior to making a job offer, they may invite applicants to voluntarily self-identify for affirmative action purposes. See EEOC Enforcement Guidance: Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

What steps should an employer take if asking an applicant to self-identify as a "disabled veteran"?

If an employer invites applicants to voluntarily self-identify, the employer must indicate clearly and conspicuously on any written questionnaire used for this purpose, or state clearly (if no written questionnaire is used), that:

- The information requested is intended for use solely in connection with its affirmative action obligations or its voluntary affirmative action efforts; and
- The specific information is being requested on a voluntary basis, it will be kept confidential in accordance with the ADA, that refusal to provide it will not subject the employee to any adverse treatment, and that it will be used only in accordance with the ADA.

Information collected for affirmative action purposes must be kept separate from the application to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. The Code of Federal Regulations provides a Sample Invitation-Identify for federal contractors who are considered covered entities under VEVRAA.

Are there tax incentives for hiring veterans with service-connected disabilities?

Yes, there are tax incentives for employers hiring and accommodating veterans with service-connected disabilities under the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program. Employers receive tax credits when they hire veterans who have completed or are receiving rehabilitative services through the state or the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or who are

members of families receiving or have recently received food stamps. Learn more about benefits available to employers who hire disabled veterans.

Are there safety concerns and higher insurance rates associated with hiring veterans with service-connected disabilities?

There is no evidence indicating a correlation between hiring veterans with service-connected disabilities and an increase in insurance rates. In fact, evaluating and restructuring job functions and processes, as well as accommodating an employee when necessary, may increase overall safety ratings.

Are there reporting requirements after you hire a veteran with a service-connected disability?

Yes, employers that are federal contractors and subcontractors must complete the VETS-100 Report. Use the Department of Labor's elaws VETS-4212 Federal Contractor Reporting Advisor to help determine if your company needs to submit a VETS-4212 report. VEVRAA requires some federal contractors to establish annual hiring benchmarks for protected veterans, and to collect and analyze employment data.

Where can I get assistance with translating military skills and training to match position requirements?

The Occupational Information Network (O*NET) is a comprehensive database of occupational skills, knowledge and other characteristics—including those that veterans bring to the workforce. O*NET has online tools to help you align military education and training with your current position requirements. You can use O*NET's online tools, specifically their Crosswalk Search, to find occupations that match "Military Occupational Classifications."

What should employers do if they suspect an employee is experiencing the effects of TBI and/or PTSD?

Employers must realize that, once they hire a

veteran with a disability, they are not alone. A wealth of support services are available to help them respond to the unique needs of their employees with disabilities or combat-related injuries. If available, a company's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a good place to seek counsel and assistance for workers experiencing TBI, PTSD and other disabilities. And to learn the types of workplace accommodations they should implement, employers can call the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), a free consulting service that provides individualized worksite accommodations solutions and technical assistance regarding the ADA and other disability related legislation.

Where can I get information about accommodating service members, veterans or others with PTSD and TBI?

Employers can receive information about accommodating service members, veterans or others with PTSD and TBI from JAN, a free consulting service that provides individualized worksite accommodations solutions and technical assistance. Other information and support services are available from their local Vet Center, the National Center for PTSD and the ADA National Network.

I recently hired a veteran with a service-connected disability who is an amputee with low morale. Where can I find support services?

The National Amputation Foundation, Inc. (NAF) sponsors an AMP to AMP program. Amputee members of their organization visit new amputees to build morale by sharing their experiences. NAF provides information and a list of support groups for every state. Individuals can also receive booklets and pamphlets of special interest to the amputees.

Questions????

**Contact YOUR local
Disability Resource Coordinator,
Sarah Preston, at 518-842-3676 Ext. 3047
or email:
spreston@fmworkforcesolutions.org**

Creating Workforce Solutions for YOU!

Post YOUR Job Opening on the NYS Department of Labor Job Bank!

Contact Nancy Reccio at 518-842-3676 Ext. 3052 Email: nreccio@fmsworkforcesolutions.org OR
Nancy Rogers at Ext. 3046 Email: nrogers@fmsworkforcesolutions.org

CAPITAL REGION VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR

The New York State Department of Labor and Partners are proud to offer a Virtual Job Fair and YOU are invited! This simulation allows businesses and jobseekers to connect in a virtual setting in real-time, while keeping the familiar feel and positive outcomes of a physical event. There is no charge for this event.

To fully support your recruitment efforts, there will be a Preview Day on Monday, December 8th, 2025. The Virtual Career Fair will go live on Tuesday, December 9th, 2025 from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm.

How Do I Participate In This Event?

You will need to create your booth and upload your job openings. You will receive training materials and information before the event for setting up your booth. Following receipt of exhibiting registrations, businesses will receive an email containing deadlines, important links for accessing the event, login credentials to "create" your booth and a Virtual Career Fair Exhibitors Guide. This guide details information about the event, gives helpful tips and answers many frequently asked questions. Department of Labor staff will be available throughout the process to help you with overall technical assistance.

Connect to the event and chat! During the live day, log in and chat with the visitors. You will

have access to the resumes of the candidates who visit your booth.

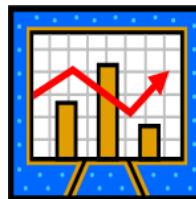
PRE-REGISTER FOR THE VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR BEFORE December 1st!

[https://
virtualevent.nysdolboothregistration.com/
CapitalRegion](https://virtualevent.nysdolboothregistration.com/CapitalRegion)

For more information, please contact Your DOL Business Services Representative:

Christopher Larrabee
Phone: 518-842-3676 Ext. 3032
OR

Email: christopher.larrabee@labor.ny.gov



August Unemployment Rates

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Fulton County	4.2%	4.0%
Montgomery County	4.3%	4.4%
Schoharie County	3.8%	4.1%
New York State	4.7%	4.8%

Up-to-date Unemployment Rates are currently delayed due to the recent Federal Government shutdown. They will be posted when available. To view, go to: <https://www.dol.ny.gov/newsroom>, Scroll down to local area unemployment rates and view State Labor Dept. Releases Area Rates.

Creating Workforce Solutions for YOU!