

Washington State WorkSource Information Notice (WIN)

WIN Number: 0156

WIN Title: Employer Awards for Excellence in Serving Veterans and Military Families

Date: August 27, 2025

Expiration: N/A

Purpose:

To communicate the availability and encourage promotion of awards presented to employers for excellence in serving veterans and military families.

There are two Veteran-related employer awards:

1. [Hire-A-Vet Employer of the Year Award](#), and
2. [DOL-VETS HIRE Vets Medallion Program \(HVMP\)](#).

Action Required:

Local Workforce Development Boards and their contractors, as well as Employment Security Regional Directors, must distribute this guidance broadly throughout the system to ensure that WorkSource System staff are familiar with its content and requirements.

Content:

1. Hire-A-Vet Employer of the Year Award

[House Bill 2040](#), signed into effect in 2015, created the 2016 launch of the YesVets statewide campaign initiative to promote the hiring of Veterans. This initiative includes a partnership between:

- ESD
- [Washington Department of Veteran Affairs](#)
- [Washington State SHRM](#)
- [Washington State Military Transition Council](#)
- [Washington State Department of Commerce](#)

Employer participation to enroll at YesVets.org is based on an employer's interest in hiring a veteran. Once enrolled an employer can report veteran hires to their YesVets profile. Employers are contacted by Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs), Consolidated Veteran Services Representatives (CVSRs), or WorkSource business service teams to issue both virtual YesVets icon logos and physical YesVets decals to proudly display in their businesses once they've hired a veteran. Whenever possible, WorkSource offices are encouraged to publicly recognize these employers at sign-up,

when reporting Veteran hires, and/or other worthy veteran-related events or achievements.

Employers who wish to nominate their business for the Hire-a-Vet Employer of the Year Award must be enrolled in YesVets to be considered. This award is also aligned with the HIRE Vets Medallion Program (HVMP) gold-level criteria to recognize a large, medium, and small employer.

Selection Criteria and Process:

By February, registered YesVets employers are notified and encouraged to self-nominate their businesses for the YesVets Employer of the Year award. Those employers who have hired at least one Veteran in either the current calendar year or the previous calendar year (based on retention) are encouraged to self-nominate and be recognized.

Nomination criteria are slightly different between the large, medium, and small employer size categories, but all are a mix of quantitative and qualitative responses and are still in alignment with HVMP eligibility gold-level criteria.

Quantitative data measurements for a business to be a finalist:

- 7% of hires in the current calendar year were Veterans
OR
- 75% of the previous year Veteran hires are still employed in the current year
AND
- 7% of their overall workforce are Veterans

Qualitative data that strengthens the nomination (based on size of the employer):

- Small (1 - 50 employees): Describe any efforts (big or small) by their company that has engaged in any type of support that benefits the Veterans and Veteran families in their community.
- Medium (51 - 499 employees): In addition to the small qualitative response above, the employer is asked to describe any Veteran employee resource groups or programs that assist in coaching, and/or mentoring.
- Large (500+ employees): In addition to the small and medium qualitative responses above, the employer is asked to describe any programs that enhance the leadership skills of their employees.

View attachment A: [Hire-A-Vet Employer of the Year Criteria](#)

The winning employer selections will be based on the combined quantitative and qualitative data submitted. This information submitted by nominees will be used to assist an independent and non-biased selection board to select the top business in each the large, medium, and small business categories.

The selection board includes, but is not limited to:

- Washington Department of Veteran Affairs representative
- US Department of Veteran Affairs, Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) Employment Coordinator
- Washington Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) YesVets representative

- DOL-VETS Washington Director representative
- The ESD WSD Director will serve only as a tie breaker, as needed

Application Schedule

Annually, the statewide LVER (or Designee) will:

- a) Notify registered YesVets employers to self-nominate their business no later than February 15th;
- b) Stop accepting applications no later than March 15th. Employers will have at least four weeks to self-nominate their business;
- c) Provide data to the selection board for review and voting no later than April 1st;
- d) Inform winning employers by end of April of the July in-person hiring event around National Hire-A-Veteran Day. Winning employers will be encouraged to participate in-person to accept their award.

See Attachment B: [Awards Timeline](#)

Promoting the YesVets Employer of the Year Award across the WorkSource System:

Local Workforce Development Boards and WorkSource offices are encouraged to promote the YesVets initiative year-round. Leverage local business service teams to develop strategies to expand the awareness and participation of employers in YesVets and its benefits. Employer sign-up for YesVets is easy and the only criteria is for the business to have an interest in hiring a Veteran. Once signed up, all YesVets employers are automatically notified of the award and the submission window for self-nominations.

Winning employers should be locally recognized on social media channels, local chamber of commerce or SHRM meetings, and/or at local hiring events by offering a VIP table. At the ESD level, recognition will be offered to the winning large, medium, and small employer with a plaque, a VIP table at an in-person hiring event, and being publicly recognized both in-person and on various social media channels from all the YesVets partnerships.

2. DOL-VETS HIRE Vets Medallion Program (HVMP)

The Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing American Military Veterans Act of 2017 (HIRE Vets Act) led to implementation in 2019 of the [HIRE Vets Medallion Award Program](#), which recognizes employers who hire and retain veterans, along with their efforts to establish employee development programs and veteran specific benefits to improve retention.

Award recipients can use the medallion to market and promote their firms as veteran-ready businesses and for recruiting purposes. Employers' pursuit of the award can lead to increased focus on hiring and retaining veterans.

Employers that meet the criteria established in the rule will receive a "HIRE Vets Medallion Award" each year they apply and there is no limit on the number of years they can apply. There are two award tiers, Platinum and Gold, for large employers (500 or

more employees), medium employers (51 - 499 employees), and small employers (50 or fewer employees). Details on the award criteria may be found at [HIREVets.gov](https://hirevets.gov).

Application Schedule

Annually the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) will:

- Directly solicit applications from employers beginning January 31st;
- Stop accepting applications on April 30th;
- Finish reviewing applications no later than August 31st;
- Select employers to receive HIRE Vets Medallion Awards no later than September 30th;
- Notify employers that receive HIRE Vets Medallion Awards no later than October 11th; and,
- Announce award recipients at a time coincident with Veterans Day.

See Attachment B: [Awards Timeline](#)

Promoting the HIRE Vets Medallion Program across the WorkSource System

WorkSource works closely with employers of all sizes to help them with their workforce needs. Additionally, the system provides priority of service to veterans in their career and training service needs.

Given the unique role WorkSource plays in working with employers and veterans, it can be a strong advocate for the HIRE Vets Medallion Program. By taking an active role in promoting the HIRE Vets Medallion Program, the system can ensure that its local employer partners are recognized for their commitment to hiring the nation's veterans.

To expand awareness and promote the HIRE Vets Medallion Program between January and April (the open nomination period) the WorkSource System should:

- Leverage state and local business service teams, including Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs), to inform local employers about the program and its benefits.
- Leverage business-led state and local workforce development boards to develop strategies to expand the awareness of and participation in the program.
- Engage other WIOA-partner programs to expand awareness of the HIRE Vets Medallion Program.
- Leverage the self-nominations from the annual YesVets Employer of the Year submissions for targeted and strategic outreach to promote HVMP.

To better inform their business community, the WorkSource System is encouraged to:

- Visit [HIREVets.gov](https://hirevets.gov) to become familiar with the program.
 - Visit the resource page to view and download the following materials, as needed:
 - Program Fact Sheet
 - Detailed Program Criteria Table
 - Approved HIRE Vets Graphics
 - HIRE Vets Social Media “Widgets”

- HIRE Vets Signature Block for use in emails

Incorporate and promote program fact sheets and other materials found on the HIRE Vets and Workforce GPS websites with other employer-outreach materials at the local level.

References:

- [38 U.S.C. Chapter 41](#), Job Counseling, Training, and Placement Service for Veterans (38 U.S.C. 4100-4115), as amended
- [38 U.S.C. 4104](#), Local veterans' employment representatives
- [Division O of Public Law 115-31](#), The Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing American Military Veterans Act of 2017
- [20 CFR 678.435](#), What are the business services provided through the one-stop delivery system and how are they provided?
- [20 CFR Part 1011](#), HIRE Vets Medallion Program
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter ([TEGL 03-24](#)), Jobs for Veterans' State Grants (JVSG) Program Reforms and Roles and Responsibilities of American Job Center (AJC) Staff Serving Veterans
- [TEGL 09-18](#), HIRE Vets Medallions Program
- [Veterans' Program Letter \(VPL\) 05-24](#), Jobs for Veterans' State Grants (JVSG) Staff Roles and Responsibilities and Coordination with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Services to Veterans
- [VPL 02-19](#), HIRE Vet Medallion Program
- [House Bill 2040](#), establishing the YesVets campaign

Website:

[Workforce Professionals Center](#)

Direct Inquiries To:

*Employment System Administration and Policy
Employment System Policy and Integrity Division
Employment Security Department
P.O. Box 9046
Olympia, WA 98507-9046
SystemPolicy@esd.wa.gov*

Attachments:

- [Attachment A](#) - Hire-A-Vet Employer of the Year Criteria
- [Attachment B](#) - Awards Timeline

Attachment A

Hire-A-Vet Employer of the Year Award Criteria

Quantitative Data Measurements:	
Criteria 1	
Veteran Hires	7% of hire in the current calendar year were Veterans
OR	
Veteran Retention	75% of the previous year Veteran hires are still employed into the current year
AND	
Criteria 2	
Veteran Workforce	75% of their overall workforce are Veterans

Qualitative Data Measurements:	
<i>Small Employer (1-50 employees) Criteria 1</i>	
Efforts to Engage	Describe any efforts (big or small) by their company that has engaged in any type of support that benefits the Veterans and Veteran families in their community.
<i>Medium Employer (51-499 employees) Criteria 1</i>	
Efforts to Engage	Describe any efforts (big or small) by their company that has engaged in any type of support that benefits the Veterans and Veteran families in their community.
<i>Medium Employer Criteria 2</i>	
Coaching / Mentoring	Describe any Veteran employee resource groups or programs by their company that assist in coaching, and/or mentoring.
<i>Large Employer (500+ employees) Criteria 1</i>	
Efforts to Engage	Describe any efforts (big or small) by their company that has engaged in any type of support that benefits the Veterans and Veteran families in their community.
<i>Large Employer Criteria 2</i>	
Coaching / Mentoring	Describe any Veteran employee resource groups or programs by their company that assist in coaching, and/or mentoring.
<i>Large Employer Criteria 3</i>	
Leadership Enhancement	Describe any programs by their company that enhance the leadership skills of their employees.

Attachment B

Employer Awards Timeline – Year-at-a-Glance:

	Description	Date Time Frame
1	Begins the open submission window for employers to submit for HIRE Vets Medallion Program (HVMP)	January 31st
2	Notify YesVets employers to self-nominate their business for Hire-A-Vet Employer of the Year award by March 15th	January thru February 15th
3	Deadline for YesVets employers to self-nominate for the Hire-A-Vet Employer of the Year award.	March 15th
4	Hire-A-Vet Employer of the Year data delivered to selection board and given until end of week to make winner selections.	First week of April
5	Final day for employers to submit for HVMP .	April 30th
6	Hire-A-Vet Employers of the Year are notified and invited to award ceremony (winners are not publicized yet).	Last business day in April
7	Hire-A-Vet Employer of the Year in-person award ceremony aligned with National Hire-A-Vet Day.	Week of July 25th
8	DOL-VETS will announce HVMP winners nationally.	At a time, coincident with Veterans Day holiday