

Veterans Pathway Initiative

Discussion Paper

Background

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) administers several veteran-focused initiatives designed to support military service members, veterans, and their families as they transition into civilian education, training, and employment. These initiatives address a wide range of needs, including outreach to hard-to-serve veterans, translation of military training into academic credit, employer engagement, and targeted employment services for transitioning service members.

Issue

While each program has demonstrated value, they currently operate as separate initiatives with distinct eligibility rules, reporting structures, and administrative processes. This separation results in duplicative work for TWC staff, inconsistent reporting frameworks, and fragmented service delivery for veterans seeking education and employment support.

To streamline administration, improve statewide consistency, and strengthen alignment with workforce needs, staff recommend consolidating five existing veteran initiatives into a single, modernized statewide strategy, the **Veterans Pathways Initiative**.

This consolidated initiative would allow grantees to select from multiple allowable activity types under one grant structure, while TWC tracks performance consistently across all models.

The following initiatives currently operate independently (use all the FY27 funds into one grant):

- Veterans Workforce Outreach (74010) – 2027 Budget: \$425,000
- College Credit for Heroes (74034) – 2027 Budget: \$750,000
- We Hire Vets Campaign (74062) – 2027 Budget: \$2,000
- Military Transition to Civilian Employment (74095) – 2027 Budget: \$2,500,000
- Senior Military Leaders to Civilian Employment (74100) – 2027 Budget: \$0

Each program uses different eligibility rules, reporting structures, and performance measures. Administering these programs separately requires TWC to issue and manage multiple solicitations, monitor multiple grant structures, and maintain separate reporting and oversight processes. This increases administrative workload for TWC staff and results in inconsistent reporting across similar veteran-focused models.

Consolidating these initiatives into a single statewide strategy will reduce administrative complexity, streamline procurement and monitoring, and allow for a unified performance framework that is easier to manage and evaluate.

Under this model, TWC would continue to distribute a portion of the dollars available directly to the LWDBs, in the manner approved by the Commission on April 28, 2026. The remaining funds would be placed into an application process that would allow grantees to select one or more allowable activity types, each representing a broad category of veteran workforce programming, based on the type of entity. These categories replace legacy initiative names and allow flexibility while maintaining clear performance expectations. Over time, this consolidation will streamline administration, reduce TWC's internal workload, improve monitoring consistency, and strengthen Texas statewide veteran workforce strategy.

Proposed Allowable Activity Categories and Eligible Applicants

Allowable Activity Categories

Veteran Outreach & Employment Support Activities that identify, engage, and support hard-to-serve veterans through outreach, assessment, case management, job readiness training, and referrals to employment services. **Eligible Applicants:** Local Workforce Development Boards, Community Based -Organizations (CBOs), Education Service Centers (ESCs), ISDs/Charters, and Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs).

Military to Civilian Career Transition Services Training, employment services, and wraparound supports that help transitioning service members translate military skills into civilian occupations, including targeted training in high demand fields such as skilled trades, energy, logistics, and manufacturing. **Eligible Applicants: Local Workforce Development Boards only.** (Reflects current 74095 and 74100 structure.)

Credit for Military Experience & Prior Learning Activities that evaluate military transcripts, award academic credit, and support Veterans in earning credentials or degrees aligned with high demand occupations. **Eligible Applicants: Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs only).** Only accredited IHEs may evaluate transcripts and award academic credit.

Veteran Employer Engagement & Recognition Activities that promote veteran hiring, recognize employers who hire Veterans, and expand employer partnerships to support veteran employment pipelines. **Eligible Applicants: Local Workforce Development Boards only.** (Reflects current We Hire Vets structure.)

Decision Point

Staff recommend approval to consolidate the five veteran initiatives into the **Veterans Pathway Initiative**, using the activity categories and eligibility structure outlined above.