



The Illinois Hires Heroes Consortium

The Illinois Hires Heroes Consortium is a group of Illinois employers who recognize the great value veterans bring to the workplace and operationalize the term "veteran-friendly" by committing to implement military veteran recruitment, training and retention practices. Members of the Consortium are Illinois employers who commit to at least three initiatives - one in each aforementioned human resource category.

The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA) and the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) will assist participants in meeting the simple goals that will lead the employer on the path to recruiting and retaining high-quality veteran candidates. Employers will be publicly recognized by Governor Pat Quinn and will be allowed to use the Illinois Hires Heroes logo to market themselves as veteran-friendly.

Employers can join the Illinois Hires Heroes Consortium by applying at:

www.illinoishiresheroes.com.

If there are any questions, feel free to contact the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA) or the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) at:

IDVA: Julissa Carrasco

Julissa.Carrasco@illinois.gov

312-814-7204

IDES: Bill Harrison

William.Harrison@Illinois.gov3

309-794-3604



TAKE THE PLEDGE NOW!

1) Recruiting Practices 2) HR Training 3) Retention & Support Practices



Consortium Commitments

Members commit to at least one initiative in each of the following categories:

Recruiting Practices

1. List job openings on Illinois Job Link and on the Heroes to Hired (H2H) job websites.
2. List job openings on Illinois Job Link and participate in at least 2 state-sponsored veteran hiring events in a calendar year.
3. List job openings on Illinois Job Link and become an Army Partnership for Youth Success (PaYS) Partner.

Human Resources Training

4. Participate in the Illinois Department of Employment Security's training regarding military-to-civilian skills and lexicon translation. Alternate delivery options include training furnished by Operation Employ Veterans by Easter Seals, America's Heroes at Work by the Department of Labor – Veterans Employment and Training Service, and/or Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families.
5. Participate in the Department of Labor – Veterans Employment and Training Service's "USERRA 101" and "USERRA 102" online training modules.
 - a. [USERRA 101 Basic Web Based USERRA Training Sponsored by U.S. Department of Labor](#)
 - b. [USERRA 102 Advanced Web Based USERRA Training Sponsored by U.S. Department of Labor](#)(Once training modules are completed employers are urged to email the digital certificates verifying completion to Julissa Carrasco at Julissa.Carrasco@illinois.gov.)
6. Sign the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Statement of Support.

Retention & Support Practices

7. Highlight, on company media and web-based platforms, veteran hiring/employment support programs and initiatives on a recognizable tab/page for quick/efficient access.
8. Establish/promote an employee affinity group and/or corporate mentorship program for military veterans.
9. Utilize the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs or National Able for post-employment support to assist veterans overcome their particular challenges.
10. Pay National Guard and Reserve members the differential between their normal wage and their National Guard wage when they are activated for duty.

Frequently Asked Questions

Recruiting Practices

1. What is Illinois Job Link?

A: Illinois Job Link (IJL) is a new, Internet-based job search tool that features current job openings and includes both statewide and nationwide job banks. By enrolling in IJL, veterans will be able to navigate job opportunities; may qualify for assistance from IDES's veteran employment representatives; and will be included in the main database used to search for qualified veterans as IDES works directly with major employers seeking to hire veterans. Most importantly, it's free to employers and job-seeking veterans. IDES staff is standing by to assist employers in listing their positions directly on IJL. For further information on IJL or assistance in enrolling, please visit: <https://illinoisjoblink.illinois.gov>

Contact Name: Gideon Blustein, IDES
Contact Phone Number: (312) 793-9842
Contact Email: Gideon.Blustein@Illinois.gov

2. Who is H2H.jobs?

A: H2H.jobs is a free powerful tool for job seekers, with a multitude of innovative resources to help you find your next job. The site offers easy-to-use search features, a military skills translator, a career assessment survey, tips and advice, and professional networking opportunities. H2H.jobs helps guide you every step of the way in finding your next job. For further information on H2H, please visit: <https://h2h.jobs/>

3. What are Helping and Hiring Our Hometown Heroes events?

A: Helping and Hiring Our Hometown Heroes assists Illinois Veterans with employment opportunities, healthcare, housing, education, training, and specialty programs available for minority, women, disabled and homeless veterans. For further information on how to participate in these free events, please visit: <http://www2.illinois.gov/veterans/programs/Pages/hometown-heroes.aspx>

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Contact Email: Richard.Wuthridge@Illinois.gov

OR

Contact Name: Max Dulberger, IDVA Senior Aide to Asst. Director Garcia
Contact Phone Number: (312) 814-5538
Contact Email: Max.Dulberger@illinois.gov
Contact Name: Rodrigo Garcia, IDVA Asst. Director
Contact Phone Number: (312) 814-5538
Contact Email: Rodrigo.Garcia@illinois.gov

4. What is the Army Partnership for Youth Success (PaYS)?

A: The PaYS program works to connect and partner civilian corporations and companies, as well as local government agencies with Army personnel. PaYS partners project future openings and are matched with soldiers with relevant specialties in advance of those soldiers exiting the military. For further information on program participation, please visit: <https://www.armypays.com>

Contact Name: Danny Free, Midwest PaYS Marketing Analyst
Contact Phone Number: (502) 613-0675
Contact Email: danny.free@us.army.mil

Human Resources Training

1. Who is the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES)?

A: IDES provides unemployment insurance (UI), employment services and guidance to workers, job seekers, and employers through a statewide network of IDES offices and Illinois workNet centers. The agency combines federally-funded job training programs in Illinois into a "workforce development"

system via which individuals can find a job or train for a new career. In addition, IDES statewide network of veteran employment representatives and employment specialists stand by to assist Illinois employers with varying employer services. For further information on IDES, please visit: <http://www.ides.illinois.gov/>

IDES will provide a customized, in-person presentation, at no cost, to all interested human resource personnel on a monthly basis at a pre-designated location, date, and time. The presentation will communicate the value of hiring military veterans and illustrate best practices in veteran recruitment, training, and retention practices.

Contact Name: Gideon Blustein, IDES
Contact Phone Number: (312) 793-9842
Contact Email: Gideon.Blustein@Illinois.gov

2. Who is Easter Seals – Operation Employ Veterans?

A: Easter Seals Operation Employ Veterans is a no cost, internet-based interactive program designed to outline the vast benefits veterans bring to an organization. The three one-hour modules are focused on proving human resource professionals, personnel recruiters, and intermediate supervisors training on the perceptions Veterans face in the workplace around issues such as PTSD, TBI and other disabilities. Each module is designed to stand alone and can be used as a drop-in that can be added to any diversity training program, or as a comprehensive program designed to address individuals who may need workplace accommodations. For an alternative delivery method which includes a CD-ROM copy for \$75, please contact Easter Seals. For further information on Operation Employ Veterans, please visit: http://www.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ntl_military_veterans_operation_employ_veterans

Contact Name: Carol A. Salter – AVP Workforce Development
Contact Phone Number: (202) 277-1660
Contact Email: csalter@easterseals.com

3. Who is Department of Labor – America’s Heroes at Work Veteran Toolkit?

A: Filled with useful information on hiring Veterans, this Toolkit has been designed to assist and educate employers who want to include Veterans and wounded warriors in their recruitment and hiring initiatives. Featuring a straightforward six-step process, it pinpoints helpful tools and outlines important steps to take when designing a Veterans hiring initiative. To obtain the free tool kit, please contact the Department of Labor – America’s Heroes at Work. For further information on the Veteran Toolkit, please visit: <http://www.americasheroesatwork.gov/>

Contact Name: America’s Heroes at Work
Contact Phone Number: (866) 4-USA-DOL
Contact Email: AmericasHeroesAtWork@dol.gov

4. Who is the Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF)?

A: The mission of the IVMF is to fully leverage the intellectual, human and social capital of higher education, in service to America's veterans and their families. The IVMF develops education and

employment-focused programs in collaboration with industry, government, NGOs and the veteran community, to address the primary economic and public policy concerns of our nation's servicemen and women, and their families. For further information on IVMF, please visit: <http://vets.syr.edu>

To access "The Guide to Leading Policies, Practices & Resources: Supporting the Employment of Veterans and Military Families", is a collaborative effort of the Institute and more than 30 private sector employers and supporting organizations to delineate best practices, lessons learned and innovations tied to the recruitment, assimilation, retention and advancement of vets in the workforce. It is available as a PDF at <http://vets.syr.edu/pdfs/guidetoleadingpractices.pdf> for download. In addition, IVMF issued a brief, "The Business Case for Hiring a Veteran: Beyond the Clichés," which draws from academic literature to suggest a robust, specific and compelling business case for hiring individuals with military background and experience. It is available at <http://vets.syr.edu/pdfs/The%20Business%20Case%20for%20Hiring%20a%20Veteran%203-6-12.pdf>.

Contact Name: James Schmeling
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5. What are the USERRA 101 and 102 online training modules?

A: The training assists companies in understanding employee eligibility and job entitlements, employer obligations, and benefits and remedies under the federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). USERRA protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service or certain types of service in the National Disaster Medical System. USERRA also prohibits employers from discriminating against past and present members of the uniformed services, and applicants to the uniformed services. For further information on the USERRA online training, please visit: <http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra>

Contact Name: Illinois ESGR – Chris Roeloff
Contact Phone Number: (708) 824-6111
Contact Email: christopher.r.roeloff.mil@mail.mil

6. Who is the Employer of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)?

A: The ESGR is a Department of Defense organization, established in 1972 to promote cooperation and understanding between Reserve component members and their civilian employers and to assist in the resolution of conflicts arising from an employee's military commitment. ESGR seeks to inform and educate employers about their responsibilities toward employees, who serve in the National Guard and Reserve, as well as to recognize and reward those employers who go "over and above" the requirements of the law. For further information on the ESGR, please visit: <http://www.esgr.mil/site/>

Contact Name: Illinois ESGR – Chris Roeloff
Contact Phone Number: (708) 824-6111
Contact Email: christopher.r.roeloff.mil@mail.mil

Retention & Support Practices

1. Is there assistance in establishing affinity and/or mentorship programs?

A: The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs can assist in providing guidance and mentorship in establishing corporate affinity groups and/or mentorship programs. In addition, the following companies have agreed to provide "best practices" on establishing an affinity and/or mentorship program: Sears, AT&T, BMO Financial, and JP Morgan Chase. **Contact information is available upon request.**

2. Who is the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA)?

A: IDVA is a state agency dedicated to empowering veterans, as well as their dependents and survivors, to thrive by assisting them in obtaining the benefits to which they are entitled; by providing long term health care for eligible veterans; by approving educational institutions for GI Bill funding; by administering state grants and benefits to eligible Illinois veterans; and by working with other agencies and non-profits to help veterans address education, mental health, housing, and employment challenges. For further information on IDVA, please visit: <http://www2.illinois.gov/veterans>

Contact Name: Harry Sawyer, IDVA Field Services Manager
Contact Phone Number: (312) 814-2745
Contact Email: harry.sawyer@illinois.gov

3. Who is National Able?

A: National Able Network is the provider of military-to-civilian employment program models for veterans. National Able's Veterans Services carries out Able's mission as it assists those self-sacrificing individuals of the armed forces in becoming self-reliant members of the workforce while also addressing the physical and emotional damages experienced during their service. National Able Network's Veterans Navigation Assistance Program meets the needs of veterans through a comprehensive service delivery model which addresses personal and professional barriers common among veterans. The integrated program is designed to meet the needs of veterans of all branches, ages, and stages of their career. The program includes specialized job coaching, workplace mentoring, natural workplace supports, customized training, and linkages to supportive services to meet basic needs.

Contact Name: Adam Hughes, Director of Veterans' Affairs
Contact Phone Number: (312) 994-4292
Contact Email: ahughes@nationalable.org

4. Who is CareerOneStop Business Center?

A: Looking to hire a veteran? Then you probably already know the many reasons that veterans make excellent employees. Their military experience has provided them with education, training, values, leadership skills and teamwork experience.

Translate military skills

Many veterans have specific skills that can be put to good use in your workplace. To learn about military occupations that may share skills and work experience with the jobs you're hiring for, visit the [Civilian-to-Military Occupation Translator](#).

JOINING THE ILLINOIS HIRES HEROES CONSORTIUM (IHHC) Process Summary

Below is a short description of each of the steps needed to join the IHHC and key contacts who can help with the process. Either Julissa Carrasco (IDVA) or Bill Harrison (IDES) are given primary responsibility for a particular step, but each is the primary contact from their agency and they are working closely together on this effort, so they can both assist with any questions.

Please note that organizations can join the IHHC *immediately*. The IHHC Verification Chart includes general guidelines for the timeframes for completing each commitment after an organization officially becomes an IHHC member.

In addition, when you join the IHHC you will be asked for your organization's logo and a short summary to be loaded onto the IHHC website. Depending on your organization, the process for releasing your logo may take some time. If possible, please initiate this process before you officially join the IHHC.

Steps for Joining the IHHC:

1. Initial outreach and questions/concerns before joining IHHC

Contact: Julissa Carrasco at the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (Julissa.Carrasco@illinois.gov) **or** Bill Harrison at the Illinois Department of Employment Security (William.Harrison@Illinois.gov).

Julissa is the primary contact person from the IDVA and can answer questions about the commitments required for joining the IHHC. Julissa is also in charge of verifying IHHC commitments, and can provide useful pointers regarding verification.

Bill is the primary contact person from IDES and is the person who actually receives your pledge and confirms what commitments you have made. Bill also assists Julissa in verifying IHHC commitments.

2. Joining the IHHC

Organizations can join the IHHC at www.illinoishiresheroes.com

Contact: Bill Harrison at the Illinois Department of Employment Security (William.Harrison@Illinois.gov)

Once the on-line pledge has been made, Bill Harrison from IDES will send a welcome email listing the commitments that have been made and asking for the company logo and summary for the IHHC website. Julissa Carrasco will be copied on this email to begin the verification process.

3. Post-pledge assistance

Contact: Bill Harrison at the Illinois Department of Employment Security (William.Harrison@Illinois.gov) **or** Julissa Carrasco at the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (Julissa.Carrasco@illinois.gov).

Julissa and Bill will coordinate in assisting with any questions regarding fulfilling IHHC commitments. Questions about particular options should be directed to the contact who has been assigned verification responsibility on the attached verification chart.

4. Verification

Contact: Julissa Carrasco at the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (Julissa.Carrasco@illinois.gov)

Julissa will collect all verification materials and confirm once verification is complete. Bill will assist in verification of commitments that include IDES staff and systems.



Illinois Hires Heroes Consortium

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www.illinoishiresheroes.com.

If there are any questions, feel free to contact the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA) or the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) at:

IDVA: Julissa Carrasco (JC) Julissa.Carrasco@illinois.gov 312-814-7204
 IDES: Bill Harrison (BH) William.Harrison@Illinois.gov 309-794-3604

Questions regarding verification procedures for specific options should be directed to the staff assigned verification responsibility below. Some options require additional employer action for verification, e.g., employer emails materials to Julissa Carrasco. Those options are indicated in the verification column in bold.

CATEGORY	EMPLOYER OPTIONS	HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS	VERIFICATION	IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE
RECRUITING	1. Register to post job openings on Illinois Job Link (IJL) and on Heroes to Hired (H2H.jobs)	IJL Report; H2H Website	BH checks IJL Report; JC checks H2H Website Report	60 days
	2. Register to post job openings on Illinois Job Link (IJL) and participate in at least 2 state-sponsored veteran hiring events in a year	IJL Report; Event Reports	BH checks IJL Report; Employer emails copy of event materials to JC	90 days
	3. Register to post job openings on Illinois Job Link (IJL) and become an Army Partnership for Youth Success (PaYS) Partner	IJL Report; Army PaYS Website	BH checks IJL Report; JC checks Army PaYS Website	120 days
HR TRAINING	4. Participate in Illinois Department of Employment Security training re. military-to-civilian skills and lexicon translation or use Easter Seals, Department of Labor's America's Heroes at Work, or the Institute for Military and Veteran Families to train HR personnel	Program Completion	BH checks IJL Report to confirm IDES training; Employer emails documentation of alternative program completion or affidavit to JC	60 days
	5. Participate in Department of Labor USERRA 101/102 on-line training	USERRA Certificate	Employer emails copy of USERRA certificate to JC	60 days

	6. Sign the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Statement of Support	ESGR Website	JC checks ESGR website	90 days
RETENTION & SUPPORT	7. Highlight on company media and web-based platforms veteran hiring/employment support programs and initiatives on a recognizable tab/page for quick/efficient access	Company Website	Employer sends JC link to company website for visual verification	90 days
	8. Establish/promote an employee affinity group/mentorship program for veterans	Policy, Bylaws, Meeting Minutes	Employer sends JC a copy of policy or bylaws or meeting minutes	90 days
	9. Utilize the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs or National Able for post-employment support to assist veterans in overcoming their particular challenges	Employer Affidavit	Employer sends JC an affidavit stating that they will use support as needed	90 Days (for Affidavit) Use support as needed
	10. Pay National Guard and Reserve members the differential between their normal wage and their National Guard wage when they are called for duty	Policy, Employer Affidavit	Employer sends JC affidavit or written policy stating that they pay differential	180 days