

The Employment Situation of Veterans

Today the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported a slight increase in the month-to-month unemployment rate of job seekers in the U.S. For the period ending June 2012, 8% of all those looking for work were unemployed, as compared to 7.7% of job seekers in May 2012 (not seasonally adjusted percentages, population 18 and over).

Unemployment rates for veterans decreased slightly from 7.8% in May to 7.4% in June 2012. The unemployment situation of Gulf War era II veterans (post-9/11 generation) improved, decreasing from 12.7% in May to 9.5% in June 2012, however the youngest post-9/11 veterans continue to experience the highest unemployment rates. Those ages 20-24 are unemployed at a rate of 23.8% (compared to 14.3% for non-veterans). Post-9/11 veterans ages 25-29 experienced a significant decrease in their unemployment rate over the period of May to June (21.1% to 10.3%), however this rate is slightly higher than non-veterans ages 25-29 (8.3%). The unemployment rates have all decreased for post-9/11 veterans compared to this same time last year, however, veterans between the ages of 45-54 have seen an increase in their unemployment rate from last year (ages 45-49 had a 6.7% increase and ages 50-54 had a 10% increase). Both male and female post-9/11 veterans experienced decreases in their unemployment rates from May (12.4% and 12.7%) to June (9.4% and 10.1%), however female post-9/11 veterans still had slightly higher unemployment rates. Both unemployment rates are slightly higher compared to their non-veteran counterparts. Unemployment rates decreased for Hispanic post-9/11 veterans from May to June (18.9% to 16.7%), while increased slightly for African-Americans (19.1% to 19.3%). However, both, of these rates are higher compared to Hispanic and African-American non-veteran unemployment rates for the month of June (9.9% and 13.2%, respectively).

Demographics & Trends

The following tables summarize the employment situation of veterans in America, based on BLS data released on July 6, 2012. These are unpublished data from the Current Population Survey, not seasonally adjusted, and represent the period ending June 2012.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR:	May 2012	June 2012	Change (+/-)	June 2011
All Americans	7.7	8.0	0.3	8.9
All Veterans	7.8	7.4	-0.4	8.8
Gulf War era II (Post-9/11) Veterans	12.7	9.5	-3.2	13.3
Gulf War era I Veterans	6.3	6.4	0.1	7.1
WWII, Korean War and Vietnam Veterans	6.9	7.1	0.2	7.8
All Nonveterans	7.7	8.1	0.4	9.0

NOTE: Population is 18 and over; Gulf War era II (September 2001-present), Gulf War era I (August 1990-August 2001), Vietnam era (August 1964-April 1975), Korean War (July 1950-January 1955), World War II (December 1941-December 1946), and other service periods (all other time periods). Veterans who served in more than one wartime period are classified only in the most recent one. Veterans who served during one of the selected wartime periods and another period are classified only in the wartime period.

Tables below (Gulf War Era II and Nonveterans) are for population ages 20 and over. (1) Rates are not shown where base is less than 35,000.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR GULF WAR ERA II (POST-9/11) VETERANS				
Category	May 2012	June 2012	Change (+/-)	June 2011
20-24	22.1	23.8	1.7	25.5
25-29	21.1	10.3	-10.8	19.1
30-34	7.7	4.8	-2.9	12.8
35-39	11.4	6.1	-5.3	12.1
40-44	5.6	0.5	-5.1	3.1
45-49	7.0	9.0	2.0	2.3
50-54	8.2	15.2	7.0	5.2
55-59	4.3	5.4	1.1	5.8
60-64	(1)	22.8	-	4.5
65 years and older	23.7	(1)	-	(1)
Male	12.4	9.4	-3.0	13.5
Female	12.7	10.1	-2.6	10.9
White	11.4	7.6	-3.8	11.2
Hispanic or Latino	18.9	16.7	-2.2	19.2
African-American	19.1	19.3	0.2	17.9

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR NONVETERANS				
Category	May 2012	June 2012	Change (+/-)	June 2011
20-24	13.2	14.3	1.1	15.1
25-29	8.2	8.3	0.1	10.2
30-34	7.4	8.0	0.6	8.3
35-39	6.7	7.0	0.3	7.5
40-44	6.0	6.5	0.5	7.0
45-49	5.5	5.7	0.2	7.5
50-54	6.2	6.3	0.1	6.7
55-59	5.4	5.3	-0.1	6.5
60-64	6.3	6.1	-0.2	7.1
65 years and older	6.7	7.1	0.4	6.1
Male	7.4	7.6	0.2	8.7
Female	7.1	7.6	0.5	8.2
White	6.5	6.8	0.3	7.4
Hispanic or Latino	9.4	9.9	0.5	10.5
African-American	12.6	13.2	0.6	15.4

Related Policy, Legislation and Initiatives

The following policies, programs, and initiatives have been proposed or enacted within the past 30 days. This list is not all-inclusive, but instead is designed to offer a 'snapshot' of recently announced government, industry, and community-based efforts positioned to positively impact the employment situation of veterans in America.

- A new **Oklahoma state law**, the **Post-Military Service Occupation, Education and Credentialing Act (Senate Bill 1863)**, will allow Oklahoma colleges, universities and technology centers to provide academic credit to a military veteran honorably discharged in the previous three years for any applicable education, training and experience received through military duty that pertains to his or her area of study. Under the law, college boards must adopt policies for military academic credit by Jan. 1, and courses must meet the standards of the American Council on Education or equivalent standards. Effective November 1, this new legislation will help the spouses of active military to more easily find employment by mandating that agencies, boards and commissions develop procedures to expedite the licensure of military spouse applicants. To read more, visit: <http://www.stripes.com/news/in-oklahoma-military-experience-will-convert-into-academic-credits-1.179302>.
- **Drexel Hamilton**, an institutional brokerage firm started in 2007 by a disabled Vietnam veteran, contributes 20% of its expenses toward housing, educating and training disabled veterans for careers in finance. Once they have passed their regulatory exams, they interview for positions at financial institutions, and those who cannot find work that matches their abilities are hired by Drexel Hamilton. The company also apprentices disabled veteran recruits to securities industry professionals with decades of experience, in an effort to help them learn the business. To read more, visit: http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/17/business/drexel-hamilton-a-wall-st-firm-hiring-disabled-veterans.html?_r=2.
- The **Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS)** announced **Virginia Values Veterans (V3)**, an initiative to reduce veteran unemployment by helping employers to hire, train and retain veterans. Companies participating in V3 go through a certification process, developed by TMG Inc. and DVS, which includes developing a pipeline to recruit veterans, completing a pilot program and setting measurable goals for hiring and retaining veterans. Companies in attendance at the introductory V3 conference, committed to hiring Virginia veterans, ranged in size from 20 employees and up to corporations such as Anthem, Dominion Resources and Amazon.com. To read more visit: <http://www.vahs.virginia.gov/News/viewRelease.cfm?id=1292>.
- **President Obama** announced a new **We Can't Wait** initiative that will help thousands of service members with manufacturing and other high-demand skills receive civilian credentials and licenses. The Department of Defense (DOD), at the President's direction, has established a **Military Credentialing and Licensing Task Force** which will focus its initial efforts on manufacturing, first responders, healthcare, information technology, transportation and logistics industries. Within one year, the task force has goals to: (1) identify military specialties that readily transfer to high-demand jobs; (2) work with civilian credentialing and licensing associations to address gaps between military training programs and credentialing and licensing requirements; and (3) provide service members with greater access to necessary certification and licensing exams. To read more, visit: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/05/31/president-obama-calls-congress-act-veterans-job-corps-do-list-and-launch>.
- **Coca-Cola** announced a 2012 staffing initiative that will offer at least 800 job and career opportunities to military veterans. To guide its efforts in attracting military personnel, the company has developed a new military recruitment strategy, designed to identify and acquire military talent at all levels. The strategy includes specialized training for company recruiters and hiring managers; a military career website that launched in June; the development of partnerships with DOD agencies; and upcoming participation in key military career conferences, job fairs and networking events. To read more, visit: http://www.thecoca-colacompany.com/dynamic/press_center/2012/05/coca-cola-opportunities-for-military-veterans.html.

NOTE: The above is provided for information only. The listing of a given policy initiative or program does not imply an endorsement from the IVMF, or Syracuse University.

Outlook

Two recent publications address the issue of hiring military veterans from the perspective of companies. One, a study by the **Center for a New American Security (CNAS)**, "**Employing America's Veterans: Perspectives from Businesses**," conducted detailed and lengthy interviews with 87 individuals representing 69 companies and found that while translating military experience to the civilian workplace is one of the largest challenges, companies cited 11 major reasons they hire vets, emphasizing leadership and teamwork skills, character and discipline. In addition to reporting these findings, the study presents the business case for hiring vets and recommends several steps to increase veteran employment. The other, "**Guide to Leading Policies, Practices & Resources: Supporting the Employment of Veterans & Military Families**," published by the **Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF)**, combines academic research grounded in human resources and organizational behavior with practical experiences of employers, to highlight leading practices in the employment of vets and military family members and details resources situated in both the public and private sector, positioned to support employer efforts to cultivate and nurture a strategic approach to veteran employment. Reporting findings on the reasons to hire vets and the difficulties in doing so, similar to those of the CNAS study, the guide provides useful checklists for employers looking to hire and retain vets, discussions, descriptions and case studies illustrating leading corporate practices impacting veteran employment. Both publications provide substantial support for the business case for hiring vets and offer clear suggestions and steps that can be taken to achieve actionable results in recruiting and retaining vets in the workforce. This important research calls attention to issues in veteran employment, making efforts to educate and prepare employers to overcome challenges and capitalize on the strengths of vets in the civilian workforce. Though a number of veterans' employment initiatives are in place and making progress, these publications demonstrate that there is still much to be done to remedy the issue and efforts across companies, industries and the workforce, in general, will help military vets and their families gain employment. To learn more, visit: http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS_EmployingAmericasVeterans_HarrellBerglass.pdf and <http://vets.syr.edu/pdfs/guidetoleadingpractices.pdf>.