

For the period ending in March 2012, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that the unemployment rate for the general population (ages 16 and over) was 8.2%, which has changed very little compared to February 2012. However, the employment situation for veterans has changed compared to February 2012. Specifically, the rate of unemployment among post-9/11 veterans was at 10.3%, up from 7.6%. The rate for the WWII, Korean, and Vietnam veterans was at 7.3%, up from 6.6%. For the period ending in March 2012, post-9/11 veterans under the age of 25 still experienced one of the highest unemployment rates, 17.8%. This represents a 6% increase from February 2012. Post-9/11 veterans between the ages of 25-34 and 45-54 also experienced an increase in unemployment for the month of March, 13.2% and 7.3%, respectively. These rates are higher than their nonveteran counterparts. In general, male and female post-9/11 veterans have also had an increase in unemployment, 10.2% and 10.8%. Both of these rates are higher than the male and female nonveteran population, 8.9% and 7.5%. Hispanic post-9/11 veterans also experienced an increase in unemployment for the month of March. The rate was at 12.9%, up from 4% in February, representing almost a 9% increase. White post-9/11 veterans also experienced an increase in unemployment. This rate was at 11% in March, up from 7.5% in February. Overall, post-9/11 veterans had general increases in unemployment for the month of March, while nonveterans had decreases in unemployment.

Demographics & Trends

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 These are unpublished data from the Current Population Survey, not seasonally adjusted, and represent the period ending March 2012.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR:	MARCH 2012	FEBRUARY 2012	CHANGE (+/-)	ANNUAL AVERAGES 2011
All Americans	8.10	8.50	-0.40	8.70
All Veterans	7.50	7.00	0.50	8.30
Gulf War era II (Post-9/11) Veterans	10.30	7.60	2.70	12.10
Gulf War era I Veterans	5.60	5.80	-0.20	7.00
WWII, Korean War and Vietnam Veterans	7.30	6.60	0.70	7.60
All Nonveterans	8.20	8.60	-0.40	8.70

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. (1) Rates are not shown where base is less than 35,000.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR GULF WAR ERA II (POST-9/11) VETERANS				
Category	March 2012	February 2012	Change (+/-)	Annual Averages 2011
18-24	17.80	12.40	5.40	30.20
25-34	13.20	10.10	3.10	13.00
35-44	4.80	2.70	2.10	6.00
45-54	7.30	3.70	3.60	4.10
55-64	(1)	1.50	0.00	7.80
65 years and older	(1)	(1)	0.00	6.70
Male	10.20	7.60	2.60	12.00
Female	10.80	7.40	3.40	12.40
White	11.00	7.50	3.50	11.40
Hispanic or Latino	12.90	4.00	8.90	17.00
African-American	8.20	10.60	-2.40	14.30

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR NONVETERANS				
Category	March 2012	February 2012	Change (+/-)	Annual Averages 2011
18-24	14.80	15.90	-1.10	16.10
25-34	8.90	9.20	-0.30	9.30
35-44	6.80	7.30	-0.50	7.30
45-54	6.60	7.10	-0.50	7.00
55-64	6.50	6.20	0.30	6.50
65 years and older	5.70	6.30	-0.60	6.40
Male	8.90	9.30	-0.40	9.30
Female	7.50	7.90	-0.40	8.20
White	7.30	7.80	-0.50	7.70
Hispanic or Latino	10.50	11.20	-0.70	11.20
African-American	13.80	14.20	-0.40	15.80

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.

- H.R. 4072, Consolidating Veteran Employment Services for Improved Performance Act of 2012 - Transfers, as of October 1, 2013, to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) specified veterans-related programs of the Department of Labor (DOL), including: (1) job counseling, training, employment, and placement services; (2) administration of employment and reemployment rights of members of the reserves; and (3) homeless veterans reintegration programs. The act directs the president, for fiscal year 2014 and thereafter, to include in the budget request funding for the VA for such functions. The act also establishes a Deputy Undersecretary for Veterans' Employment and Training, to formulate all VA policies and procedures with respect to veterans' employment, unemployment, and training programs. Additionally, the act consolidates provisions establishing VA disabled veterans' outreach program specialists and local veterans' employment representatives into a single provision establishing veteran employment specialists, which shall perform both tasks. To learn more, visit <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/112/hr4072>.
- A House subcommittee advanced H.R. 3670, Aviation and Transportation Security Act, to ensure veterans' continued employment at the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). After Sept. 11, 2001, Congress exempted TSA from certain employment provisions, including some afforded by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). The rationale was that TSA needed flexibility with its hiring practices in order to quickly fill positions. Under the bill, TSA would be required to comply with the employment guarantees afforded by the USERRA. The Economic Opportunity Subcommittee approved the measure by a voice vote, and the full committee could take it up sometime after the Easter recess. To read more about the legislation, visit <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/112/hr3670>.
- The DOL's Employment and Training Administration created My Next Move for Veterans, an online tool that allows veterans to enter information about their experiences and skills in the field, and match it with civilian careers that put that experience to use. The site also includes information about salaries, apprenticeships, and other related education and training programs that will aid U.S. veterans in identifying career options. To learn more, visit <http://www.mynextmove.org/vets>.
- The Walt Disney Co. announced plans to hire 1,000 former military over the next three years. The company-wide hiring initiative was announced by Disney president and CEO Robert Iger at the annual shareholders meeting. The company will hire, train, and support returning military veterans in a campaign called "Heroes Work Here." The goal is to add more volunteer opportunities and financial sponsorship to support veterans' education. To learn more, visit http://corporate.disney.go.com/news/corporate/2012/2012_0313-heroes-work-here.html.
- General Electric Co. (GE) announced a commitment to hire 5,000 military veterans over the next five years, double its engineering internships, and partnering with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to provide hiring training for veterans in 50 U.S. cities. In total, the company will invest \$580 million into aviation manufacturing, research, and development. The company said its multi-pronged plan is part of an effort to address U.S. competitiveness. GE will work with the chamber at 400 veterans job fairs this year as part of the "Hiring our Heroes" initiative, and at 50 of those fairs, will offer extra hiring training and services. To learn more, visit <http://www.genewcenter.com/Press-Releases/GE-HIGHLIGHTS-WHAT-WORKS-IN-AMERICA-FOCUSES-ON-MANUFACTURING-INNOVATION-JOBS-AND-TRADE-3662.aspx>.
- A five-year apprenticeship program is being offered by the United Association's Veterans in Piping Program, which trains men and women in challenging trades while upholding the ideals of trade unionism. Veterans may receive training in plumbing, pipefitting, sprinkler fitting, HVAC service, or welding. To learn more, visit <http://uavip.org/veterans.asp>.

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

Many companies offer Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), employer-sponsored services that assist employees and their families with managing work and life's daily challenges. With the continuously changing issues that impact the workforce, these programs should be continually updated with new tools and resources to address current employee challenges. Veterans and military families, in particular, face various challenges that can be addressed using EAPs.

Companies like Aon Corp., GE, and MetLife provide employees with access to useful services through employee assistance programs. Aon Corp.'s EAP provides counseling and other aid to veterans. As a company incentive, GE provides a counselor for veterans returning to work, family and employee assistance through daycare and helping to place children in school, and educational sessions to train veterans about its products. MetLife's "Workplace Warriors" is the company's corporate response to deployment and reintegration. As part of the program, MetLife published its best practices in human resources and disability management. Among the recommendations were evaluating EAPs for their ability to identify and address PTSD and other behavioral health related issues, suggesting that while many companies offer employee assistance programs, these services can vary and may not be equipped to address the full spectrum of behavioral health issues that affect a significant percentage of workplace warriors and civilian employees in war zones. Citing particular challenges, such as PTSD and depression, as well as personal, family, and financial strains that can result from deployment or lengthy overseas assignments in dangerous locations, MetLife recommends that professionals administering these services maintain a positive, encouraging attitude to help returning employees transition back to their daily lives.

Overall, these companies recommend that large employers ensure that returning citizen soldiers have access to support services—such as EAPs that can address mental health, family, and personal issues—and provide mentoring as they transition back into the workplace. For small businesses, EAP services may be difficult to offer. Small businesses may be able to join other small businesses to form a consortium to offer these types of services to veteran employees.

The National Resource Directory—an online tool for wounded, ill, and injured service members, veterans, their families, and those who support them—can be helpful in the development of EAPs, providing access to thousands of services and resources at the national, state/territory and local levels. To access the National Resource Directory, visit <https://www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov>.

To read more about MetLife's best practices, visit http://whymetlife.com/downloads/MetLife_DMEDC_Think_Tank.pdf.