# THE ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT SITUATION OF VETERANS (2012)

Prepared by: Institute for Veterans and Military Families, Syracuse University (Released March 2013)





#### ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES

As the first institute of its kind in the nation, the Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University (IVMF) leverages the intellectual, programmatic and human capital resources of higher education in support of the post-service life course of the nation's veterans and military families. The IVMF focuses on developing impactful programming, cultivating actionable research, conducting policy analysis and providing technical assistance positioned to address the social, economic and public policy challenges facing the veterans' community. The IVMF team approaches this mission as a collaboration, forging enduring partnerships with government, private industry, institutions of higher education, philanthropic organizations and stakeholders committed to supporting transitioning service members, veterans and their families.

The IVMF issues monthly Employment Situation Reports on the first Friday of each month, representing the month-to-month change in the employment situation of America's veterans. Reports include an overview of noteworthy news, policy and public/private sector initiatives positioned to impact the employment situation of veterans. The IVMF also releases an annual analysis of this data.

## About This Report

n the report that follows, the IVMF deconstructs the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) annual report on the employment situation of veterans for the year 2012. The data that informs this report is drawn from Current Population Survey (CPS) 2012 annual averages and month-to-month unemployment situation reports published by the BLS.

Overall, the unemployment rate for veterans in 2012 was 7.0%, which is down from 8.3% in 2011. The unemployment rate for Gulf War era II (post-9/11) veterans was at 9.9% in 2012, down from 12.1% in 2011. The unemployment rate for those who were deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan, or both was at 10.9% (down from 11.6% in 2011), slightly different from the unemployment rate of Gulf War era II veterans who served elsewhere (11.3% in 2012 and 8.6% in 2011).

While Gulf War era II veterans between the ages of 20-24 still maintain the highest rate of unemployment (20.6%), they experienced a 9.3% decrease from the 2011 rate (29.9%). However, this segment of the veteran population continues to compare unfavorably to their non-veteran peers, ages 20-24 (13.2%). Within this age demographic, female veterans ages 20-24 experienced the highest rate of unemployment (23.9%; down from 35.4% in 2011). However, the rate of unemployment for young female veterans remains close to double the rate of non-veteran females ages 20-24 (12.1%). Male veterans, ages 20-24, were unemployed at a rate of 20% (down from 28.9% in 2011). Female Gulf War era II veterans, ages 25-39, showed a slight increase in unemployment rates from 2011 to 2012 (up 3.2%). Further, veteran males between the ages of 45-54, and those ages 60 and over, also experienced an increase in the rate of unemployment from 2011 to 2012.

To offer additional insight, the IVMF compared the overall unemployment rate (trend) for veterans and non-veterans from 2000 to 2012, and for Gulf War era II veterans from 2008 to 2012. Over this time period, the overall unemployment trend is slightly upward (higher) for all veterans and for non-veterans. Generally, the unemployment rate of Gulf War era II veterans has remained higher when compared to non-veterans. Female Gulf War era II veterans, especially, have experienced the highest unemployment rates during this five-year period. The average unemployment rate for female veterans was 11.1%, as compared to 7.1% for female non-veterans.

The unemployment rate for those who were deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan, or both was at 10.9% (down from 11.6% in 2011), slightly different from the unemployment rate of Gulf War era II veterans who served elsewhere (11.3% in 2012 and 8.6% in 2011).

## Demographics and Trends

he following tables and figures summarize the employment situation of veterans in America, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data. These are unpublished data from the Current Population Survey (CPS), annual averages (not seasonally adjusted) and represent the time period 2000 through 2012.

NOTE: 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 by the most recent period of service only. (1) Rates of unemployment are not reported in instances where the sampling population is not statistically significant.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR:	2010	2011	2012
All Americans	9.4	8.7	7.8
All Veterans	8.7	8.3	7.0
Gulf War Era II Veterans	11.5	12.1	9.9
Gulf War Era I Veterans	7.7	7.0	5.9
WWII, Korean and Vietnam Veterans	8.3	7.6	6.4
Other Service Periods	8.4	8.0	6.7
All Non-veterans	9.4	8.7	7.9

#### TABLE 1 - UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION, ALL VETERANS, 2010-2012

Note: Annual averages for population 18 and over, not seasonally adjusted

Table 1 displays unemployment statistics representative of the U.S. veteran population for the period ending (calendar year) 2010, 2011 and 2012. This table further depicts the unemployment situation for U.S. veterans based on period (era) of service.

From 2010 to 2011, the unemployment situation for veterans and non-veterans generally improved, with the notable exception being Gulf War era II veterans (post-9/11 generation). From 2011 to 2012, the positive employment trend generally continued for veterans and non-veterans, and also included an improved employment situation for Gulf War era II veterans. In general, Gulf War era II veterans continue to experience the highest rates of unemployment as compared to the broader veterans' community (and as compared to non-veterans). For the period ending 2012, Gulf War era II veterans experienced unemployment at a rate that was between two to four percent higher, as compared to veterans of other eras, or non-veterans. For context, a two percent difference equates to roughly 60,000 individuals.

G	ulf War Era II Veteran	IS			
UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR:	2011	2012	Change	UNEMPLOY	٢N
20-24	29.9	20.6	-9.3	20-24	
25-29	15.7	12.9	-2.8	25-29	
30-34	9.7	8.1	-1.6	30-34	
35-39	7.2	6.5	-0.7	35-39	
40-44	4.6	3.4	-1.2	40-44	
45-49	3.1	8.6	5.5	45-49	
50-54	5.9	6.5	0.6	50-54	
55-59	7.8	4.4	-3.4	55-59	
60-64	7.8	8.7	0.9	60-64	
65 and older	6.7	9.2	2.5	65 and ol	de
Male	11.9	9.4	-2.5	Male	
Female	12.3	12.6	0.3	Female	
White	11.3	9.3	-2.0	White	
African-American	13.9	13.0	-0.9	African-Ar	ne
Asian	7.1	6.7	-0.4	Asian	
Hispanic	17.0	11.7	-5.3	Hispanic	

#### TABLE 2 – UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION, GULF WAR ERA II VETERANS AND NON-VETERANS BY AGE, GENDER AND RACE, 2011-2012

No	n-veterans		
UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR:	2011	2012	Change
20-24	14.4	13.2	-1.2
25-29	10.1	8.8	-1.3
30-34	8.6	7.6	-1.0
35-39	7.5	7.0	-0.5
40-44	7.2	6.3	-0.9
45-49	7.4	6.2	-1.2
50-54	6.6	6.2	-0.4
55-59	6.4	5.9	-0.5
60-64	6.6	5.9	-0.7
65 and older	6.4	6.2	-0.2
Male	8.8	7.6	-1.2
Female	7.9	7.3	-0.6
White	7.4	6.7	-0.7
African-American	15.2	13.1	-2.1
Asian	6.7	5.6	-1.1
Hispanic	10.6	9.5	-1.1

Note: Annual averages for population 20 and over, not seasonally adjusted

Table 2 compares overall unemployment rates for Gulf War era II veterans and non-veterans, as a function of age, gender and race. The youngest Gulf War era II veterans (ages 20-24) experienced the highest unemployment in both 2011 and 2012, as compared to other post-9/11 veterans (and non-veterans). More broadly, the greatest difference in the employment situation of post-9/11 veterans-as compared to nonveterans-is represented by the 20-34 age groups. With the notable exception of the 45-49 age demographic, the employment situation of post-9/11 veterans—as compared

to non-veterans-is roughly equivalent for other age-based categories.

Considering gender-based differences, the overall unemployment rates for both male and female Gulf War era II veterans remains elevated as compared to their non-veteran counterparts. The most significant gains for 2012 were experienced by male Gulf War era II veterans (a 2.5% improvement). The employment situation of female Gulf War era II veterans remained unchanged from 2011 (12.6%), and remains significantly worse as compared to female non-veterans (7.3%).

Overall unemployment rate for

The employment situation of female **Gulf War era II veterans remained** unchanged from 2011 (12.6%), and remains significantly worse as compared to female non-veterans (7.3%).

African-American veterans of the post-9/11 generation remain high (13%), and changed little from 2011 (13.9%). While there was improvement in 2012, the unemployment situation of White, Asian and Hispanic Gulf War era II veterans continues to compare unfavorably to their non-veteran counterparts.

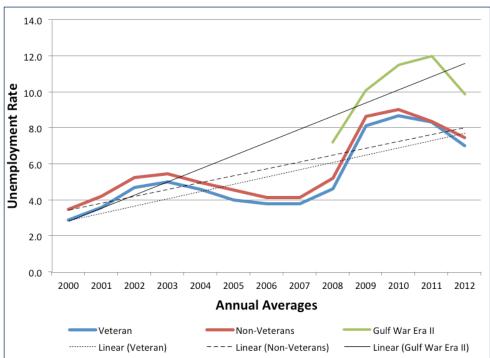
Figure 1 depicts the unemployment situation of veterans, non-veterans and Gulf War era II veterans for the period 2000 through 2012. The rate of unemployment experienced by all Americans, which improved in 2012, remains significantly elevated as compared to 2000 through 2006 levels. Unemployment among post-9/11 veterans was significantly higher-and worsened at an increased rate—as compared to other veterans and nonveterans throughout the period from 2007 to 2011. Data for 2012 suggests that while Gulf War era II veterans remain significantly disadvantaged when compared to other veterans and non-veterans, the employment situation representative of Gulf War era II veterans improved in 2012. In addition, gains experienced by post-9/11 veterans generally outpaced (as a simple percentage change) other veteran demographics and nonveterans last year.

There is more than a 12% difference when comparing unemployment rates of the youngest U.S. veterans in 2000 with their unemployment rates in 2012.

Figure 2 depicts the unemployment situation for veterans and non-veterans within the 20-24 age group, from 2000 to 2012. Veterans represented in this age group, starting in 2006, are reported as Gulf War era II veterans.

Based on 2012 data, the gap in the rate of unemployment experienced by veterans and non-veterans in the 20-24 age group has closed somewhat as compared to 2011. While this is a positive outcome, it must also be considered with caution and in the context of longitudinal trends. (Gap = difference in annual rate of unemployment)

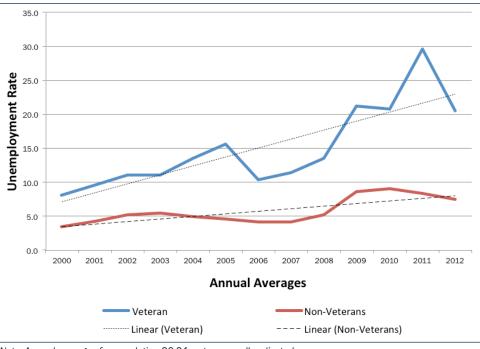
#### **UNEMPLOYMENT BY AGE**





Note: Annual averages for population 20 and over, not seasonally adjusted

## FIGURE 2 – ANNUAL UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION, VETERANS AND NON-VETERANS, AGES 20-24, 2000-2012



Note: Annual averages for population 20-24, not seasonally adjusted

Beginning in 2006, the unemployment gap between veterans and non-veterans in the 20-24 age group started to increase; that is, the unemployment situation of veterans in the 20-24 age group began to grow increasingly worse relative to their nonveteran peers (of equivalent age): 6.3% worse in 2006, 7.3% worse in 2007, 8.3% worse in 2008 and 12.6% worse in 2009. There was a slight improvement in 2010 (11.8%), and then jumped to 21.2% in 2011. For 2012, the difference in annual rate of unemployment between veterans and non-veterans ages 20-24 dropped to 13%. While this year-toyear improvement between 2011 and 2012 is positive, it's important to note that the difference in annual rate of unemployment between veterans and non-veterans ages 20-24 remains significantly higher as compared to pre-2004 levels – suggesting that veterans in this age demographic continue to experience employment challenges that are meaningfully different relative to their nonveteran, age group peers.

#### **UNEMPLOYMENT BY GENDER**

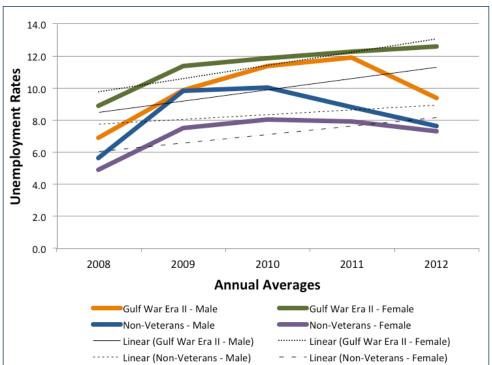


FIGURE 3 -UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION, GULF WAR ERA II VETERANS AND NON-VETERANS, BY GENDER, 2008-2012

Note: Annual averages for population 20 and over, not seasonally adjusted

Figure 3 depicts the unemployment situation of Gulf War era II veterans and non-veterans as a function of gender, for the period 2008 to 2012.

Female Gulf War era II veterans continue to experience unemployment (12.6%) at a

rate higher than their male counterparts (9.4%), and also higher than female nonveterans. Differences between female Gulf War era II veterans and their non-veteran counterparts have generally persisted over time. In 2008, female Gulf War era Female Gulf War era II veterans continue to experience unemployment (12.6%) at a rate higher than their male counterparts (9.4%), and also higher than female non-veterans.

II veterans were unemployed at a rate 4% higher as compared to female non-veterans. In 2012, female Gulf War era II veterans were unemployed at a rate 5% higher than female non-veterans.

Gulf War Era II Veterans				
UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR:	2011	2012	Change	
Male				
20-24	28.9	20.0	-8.9	
25-29	16.0	12.5	-3.5	
30-34	10.1	7.9	-2.2	
35-39	8.2	6.8	-1.4	
40-44	3.7	3.0	-0.7	
45-49	3.3	6.9	3.6	
50-54	3.6	3.9	0.3	
55-59	6.6	5.0	-1.6	
60-64	8.4	8.5	0.1	
65 and older	7.1	10.9	3.8	
Female				
20-24	35.4	23.9	-11.5	
25-29	13.5	15.2	1.7	
30-34	7.1	9.4	2.3	
35-39	3.7	4.9	1.2	
40-44	8.9	5.5	-3.4	
45-49	1.5	17.3	15.8	
50-54	23.5	21.7	-1.8	
55-59	13.1	1.9	-11.2	
60-64	(1)	11.3	-	
65 and older	(1)	(1)	-	

No	n-veterans		
UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR:	2011	2012	Change
Male			
20-24	15.4	14.2	-1.2
25-29	10.6	8.8	-1.8
30-34	8.5	7.4	-1.1
35-39	7.3	6.7	-0.6
40-44	7.7	6.2	-1.5
45-49	7.8	6.3	-1.5
50-54	7.0	6.1	-0.9
55-59	6.8	6.3	-0.5
60-64	7.3	6.3	-1.0
65 and older	6.2	6.0	-0.2
Female			
20-24	13.3	12.1	-1.2
25-29	9.5	8.8	-0.7
30-34	8.7	7.8	-0.9
35-39	7.7	7.4	-0.3
40-44	6.6	6.4	-0.2
45-49	7.0	6.1	-0.9
50-54	6.3	6.2	-0.1
55-59	6.1	5.6	-0.5
60-64	6.2	5.6	-0.6
65 and older	6.6	6.4	-0.2

#### TABLE 3 - UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION, GULF WAR ERA II VETERANS AND NON-VETERANS, BY GENDER AND AGE, 2011-2012

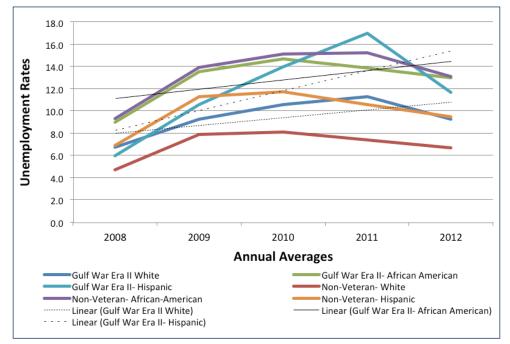
Table 3 reports the unemployment situation of Gulf War era II veterans and nonveterans, as a function of age and gender, for 2011 and 2012.

In general, unemployment rates for both male and female non-veterans decreased from 2011 to 2012. This is not the case for certain male and female Gulf War era II veterans. Older male Gulf War era II veterans had an increased unemployment rate from 2011 to 2012, and females between the ages of 25-39 and 45-49 also experienced an increase in their unemployment rate. Within the majority of the age breakouts, male and female Gulf War era II veterans have experienced higher unemployment rates than non-veterans.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>This high percentage could be due to a small sample of female Gulf War era II veterans between those ages.

#### **UNEMPLOYMENT BY RACE**

FIGURE 4 -UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION, GULF WAR ERA II VETERANS AND NON-VETERANS, BY RACE, 2008-2012



Note: Annual averages for population 20 and over, not seasonally adjusted

Figure 4 depicts the unemployment situation for White, African-American and Hispanic Gulf War era II veterans and non-veterans from 2008 to 2012. In general, African-American Gulf War era II veterans and non-veterans had higher unemployment rates overall. The only exception to this was in 2011, when Gulf War era II Hispanic veterans held the highest unemployment rates. White Gulf War era II veterans had higher unemployment rates than their non-veteran counterparts from 2008 to 2012. In 2008 and 2009, Hispanic non-veterans had slightly higher unemployment rates than their Gulf War era II veteran counterparts. However, from 2010 to 2012, Hispanic Gulf War era II veterans experienced much higher unemployment rates than their non-veteran counterparts. African-

### African-American Gulf War era II veterans and non-veterans had higher unemployment rates overall.

American non-veterans have had slightly higher unemployment rates as compared to African-American Gulf War era II veterans. The trends for White, African-American and Hispanic Gulf War era II veterans are all slightly increasing. The trend for Hispanic Gulf War era II veterans is increasing much higher as compared to White and African-American Gulf War era II veterans.

#### **UNEMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION**

Figure 5 depicts the unemployment situation for all veterans by educational attainment for 2012. Figure 6 shows unemployment rates by period of service and educational attainment for 2012. In general, the higher the educational attainment (regardless of period of service), the lower the unemployment rate. When examining unemployment rates by period of service and highest level of educational attainment, there are some differences between veterans and non-veterans. Veterans with less than a high school diploma have lower unemployment rates than their non-veteran counterparts. Gulf War era II veterans and veterans from other service periods with a high school diploma (no college) have higher unemployment rates than their non-veteran counterparts. Gulf War era II, World War II, Korean War and Vietnam era veterans with some college or an associate's degree have higher unemployment rates than their non-veteran counterparts. Gulf War era II, Gulf War era I, World War II, Korean War and Vietnam era veterans with a bachelor's degree and higher have higher unemployment rates than their non-veteran counterparts.

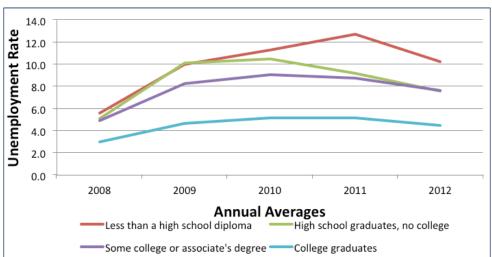
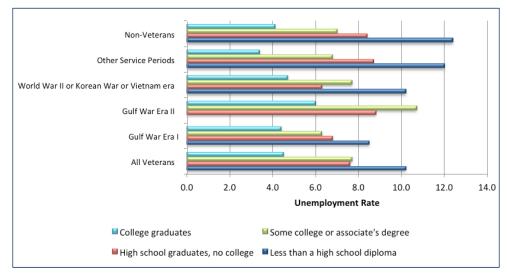


FIGURE 5 -UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION OF VETERANS, BY LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, 2008-2012

Note: Annual averages for population 25 and over, not seasonally adjusted

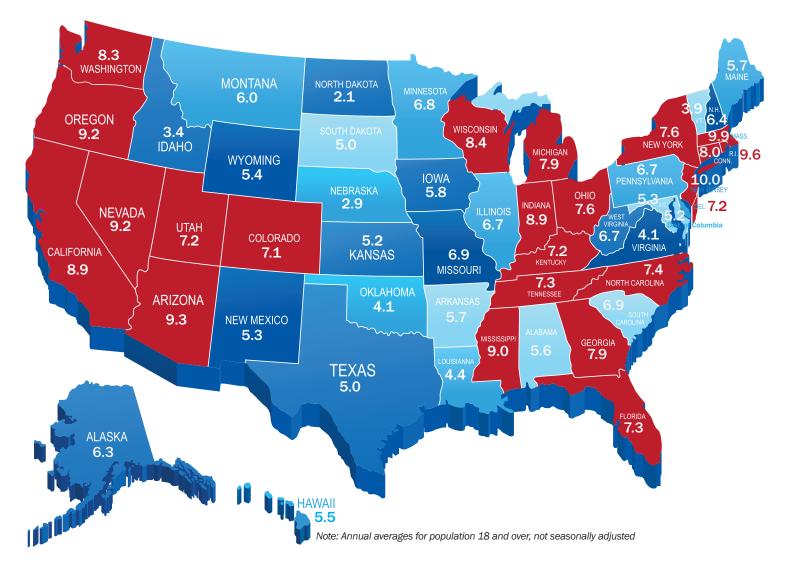


## FIGURE 6 -UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION, BY PERIOD OF SERVICE AND LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, 2012

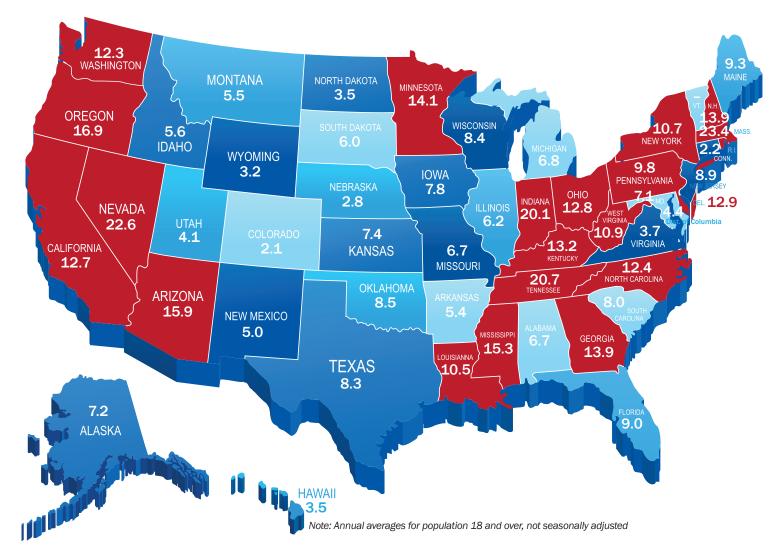
Note: Annual averages for population 25 and over, not seasonally adjusted

#### **UNEMPLOYMENT BY LOCATION**

#### FIGURE 7A -ALL VETERANS, NATIONAL AVERAGE IS 7.0%



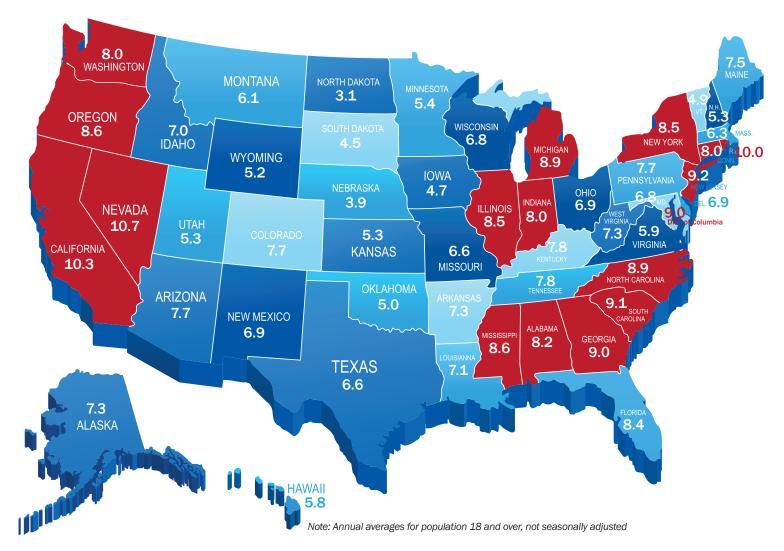
These maps show unemployment rates for all veterans, Gulf War era II veterans and non-veterans. States highlighted in red have higher than average unemployment rates: all veterans (7.0%), Gulf War era II veterans (9.9%) and non-veterans (7.9%). California, Georgia, Indiana, Mississippi, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island and Washington have higher than average unemployment rates for all veterans, Gulf War era II veterans and non-veterans.



#### FIGURE 7B - GULF WAR ERA II VETERANS, NATIONAL AVERAGE IS 9.9%

Some states showed a slight difference in unemployment between veterans and non-veterans in 2012. Massachusetts and the District of Columbia had the largest differences in unemployment rates between veterans and non-veterans. Massachusetts has a 3.6% difference between veteran (9.9%) and non-veteran (6.3%) populations. Conversely, the District of Columbia has a -3.8% difference between veteran (5.2%) and non-veteran (9.0%) populations.

Some states saw a difference in unemployment rates between all veterans and Gulf War era II veterans in 2012. Massachusetts, Nevada, Tennessee, Indiana and Oregon have the largest differences in unemployment rates between Gulf War era II veterans and all veterans. Massachusetts has a 13.5% difference between Gulf War era II veterans (23.4%) and all veterans (9.9%). Nevada has a 13.4% difference between Gulf War era II veterans (22.6%) and all veterans (9.2%). Tennessee has a 13.4% difference between Gulf War era II veterans (20.7%) and all veterans (7.3%). Indiana has an 11.2% difference between Gulf War era II veterans (20.1%) and all veterans (8.9%). Oregon has a 7.7% difference between Gulf War era II veterans (16.9%) and all veterans (9.2%).



#### FIGURE 7C - NON-VETERANS, NATIONAL AVERAGE IS 7.9%

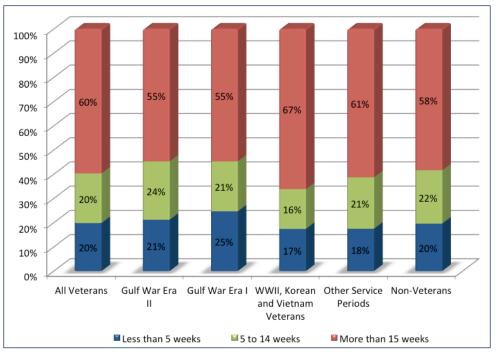
Some states saw a difference between Gulf War era II veterans and non-veterans. Massachusetts, Tennessee, Indiana, Nevada and Minnesota experienced the largest differences in unemployment between Gulf War era II veterans and non-veterans. Massachusetts has a 17.1% difference between Gulf War era II veterans (23.4%) and non-veterans (6.3%). Tennessee has a 12.9% difference between Gulf War era II veterans (20.7%) and non-veterans (7.8%). Indiana has a 12.1% difference between Gulf War era II veterans (20.1%) and non-veterans (8.0%). Nevada has an 11.9% difference between Gulf War era II veterans (22.6%) and non-veterans (10.7%). Minnesota has an 8.7% difference between Gulf War era II veterans (14.1%) and non-veterans (5.4%). <sup>1</sup>Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2012). Non-published employment status of the veteran population 18 years and over by period of service and state, not seasonally adjusted. Current Population Survey (CPS). An important aspect of the employment situation is represented by the duration of unemployment experienced by the individual. Figure 8 depicts the duration (weeks) of unemployment experienced by veterans and non-veterans. 60% of all veterans who experience an unemployment situation remain unemployed for more than 15 weeks, as compared to 58% of nonveterans. Alternatively, 20% of all veterans and non-veterans who experience an unemployment situation find employment within five weeks. Veterans of World War II. Korean War and/or Vietnam era (as a category) experience the greatest duration of unemployment; 67% of World War II, Korean War and/or Vietnam era veterans who experience an unemployment situation remain unemployed for more than 15 weeks.

- For the 771,000 U.S. veterans who are unemployed, the average duration is 43 weeks.
- For the 203,000 Gulf War era II veterans who are unemployed, the average duration is 31 weeks.
- For the 150,000 Gulf War era I veterans who are unemployed, the average duration is 36 weeks.
- For the 201,000 World War II, Korean War and/or Vietnam era veterans who are unemployed, the average duration is 59 weeks.
- For the 217,000 other service period veterans who are unemployed, the average duration is 46 weeks.
- For the 10,338,000 non-veterans who are unemployed, the average duration is 42 weeks.

Table 4 depicts the unemployment situation of all veterans, Gulf War era I veterans and Gulf War era II veterans as a function of disability status. The employment status of those with service-connected disabilities improved for all veterans in 2012. A noteworthy gain is represented by Gulf War era II reporting a service-connected disability, such that unemployment decreased by 4% from 2011 levels.

#### **DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT**

FIGURE 8 -DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT FOR VETERANS, BY ERA OF SERVICE, 2012



Note: Annual averages for population 20 and over, not seasonally adjusted

#### **UNEMPLOYMENT BY DISABILITY STATUS**

#### TABLE 4 - UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION, ALL VETERANS, 2010-2012

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR:	2011	2012	Change	
All Veterans				
With service-connected disability	8.5	6.5	-2.0	
Without service-connected disability	7.9	7.1	-0.8	
Gulf War Era II				
With service-connected disability	12.1	8.0	-4.0	
Without service-connected disability	9.5	12.5	3.0	
Gulf War Era I				
With service-connected disability	7.1	5.0	-1.9	
Without service-connected disability	6.9	6.3	-0.6	

Note: Annual averages for population 18 and over, not seasonally adjusted

#### DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED VETERANS BY INDUSTRY AND LABOR MARKET CATEGORY

#### FIGURE 9 - DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED VETERANS, BY INDUSTRY, 2012

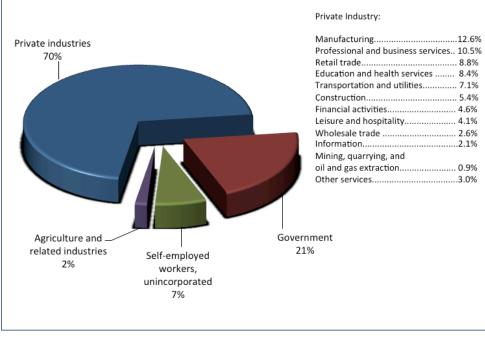


Figure 9 presents the distribution of veterans in the labor market, as a function of industry sector. 70% of all employed veterans work in private, nonagricultural industries, with manufacturing (12.6%), professional and business services (10.5%) and retail trades (8.8%) representing more than 30% of all veterans engaged with the private sector. Public sector employment remains an important channel through which veterans engage the labor market (21%), as does self-employment as a post-service vocation (7%).

Note: Annual averages for population 18 and over, not seasonally adjusted

## FIGURE 10 – DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED VETERANS AND NON-VETERANS, BY GENDER AND LABOR MARKET CATEGORY, 2012

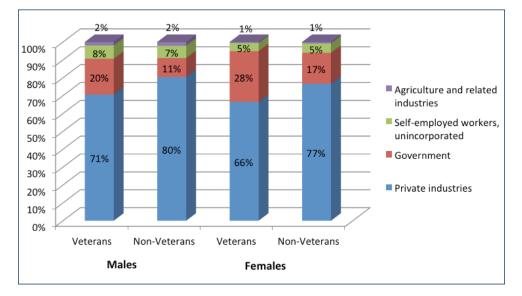
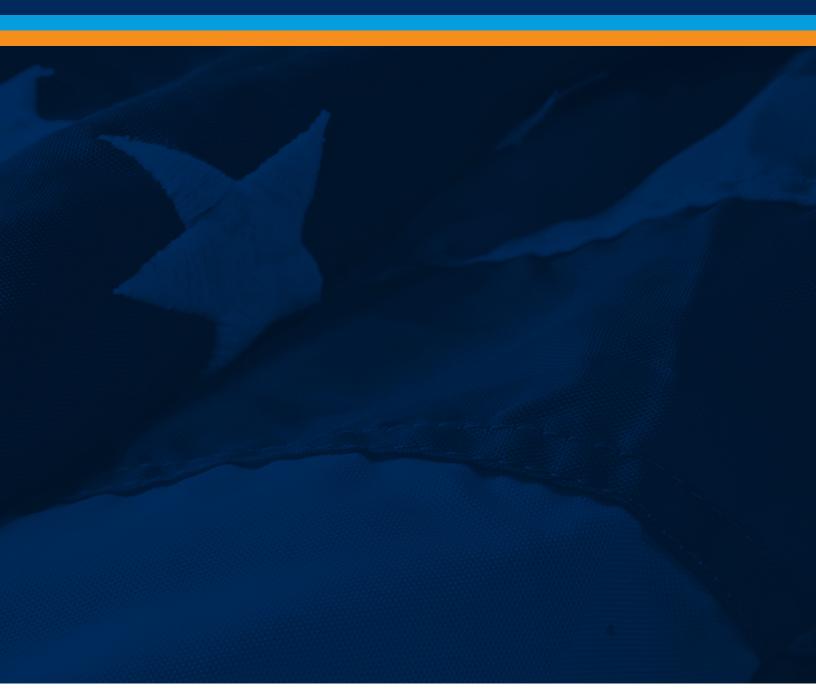


Figure 10 presents an overview of the nation's employment situation by labor market category, as a function of veteran status and gender. Summary data suggests that veterans are more likely to be employed by government, as compared to non-veterans. However, the overwhelming majority of veterans and non-veterans continue to be employed in private-sector, nonagricultural industries. Slightly more male veterans are self-employed (8%) as compared to male non-veterans (7%), while the self-employment rate for female veterans (5%) is equivalent to non-veterans (5%).

Note: Annual averages for population 18 and over, not seasonally adjusted





700 University Avenue, Suite 303 Syracuse, NY 13244-2530

p 315.443.0141
f 315.443.0312
e vets@syr.edu
w vets.syr.edu



