

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF
Labor & Workforce Development
NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Christie Administration Highlights Veterans Employment Services in November

Labor Department Participates in Veterans Job Fairs and Service Events Across the State

EAST BRUNSWICK, N.J., November 4, 2016 – In honor of the upcoming Veterans Day holiday, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development is highlighting the importance of hiring veterans and the many programs and services available to assist returning servicemembers and veterans.

“As we honor our veterans and thank them for their service, we are reminded of our duty to support them in every way possible here at home,” said Acting Commissioner Aaron R. Fichtner, Ph.D., of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. “My department has a wide range of services available to help connect returning servicemembers and veterans with rewarding career pathways. While we have made significant progress in lowering the veteran unemployment rate in New Jersey, we will not be satisfied until every veteran who wants a job has one.”

Today, Labor Department staff participated in a Veterans Job and Services Fair at American Legion Post 177 in East Brunswick. The event was a joint effort among the Middlesex County Workforce Development Board, Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development, New Jersey Small Business Development Center at Rutgers and the state Labor Department. Veterans and their families were able to connect with prospective employers, business start-up resources and training providers. Staff was also available to provide resume assessment and review.

The department also hosted an informational event for veterans at the Ocean County One-Stop Career Center in Toms River this morning. The Disabled American Veterans Mobile Service Office was on-site to offer advice and assistance about U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs benefits.

Yesterday, Acting Labor Commissioner Fichtner attended the Fifth Annual Stand Down for Veterans in Whippany, where he helped hand out bagged lunches to approximately 300 homeless and at-risk veterans. Labor Department staff was also on hand to share information about the department’s many services for veterans.

As of 2015, New Jersey was home to 397,000 veterans, according to the latest Current Population Survey report, which is compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Of those veterans, 182,000 were counted as being in the state labor force and 172,000 were listed as employed. The state’s annual average unemployment rate for veterans was 5.4 percent for 2015, compared to 5.7 percent for nonveterans, and down from 10.8 percent in 2013.

The state Labor Department maintains a staff of approximately 40 veterans representatives, most of whom are former military personnel, who work with the veteran population to develop resumes that communicate their aptitude and skill sets to employers. Veterans receive first priority referral to all job and training opportunities for which they qualify. The representatives also assist veterans with networking skills and to match veterans to job openings. The department works with approximately 12,000 veterans per year at its 29 One-Stop Career Centers throughout the state.

Veterans with a 30 percent or more service-connected disability are also encouraged to participate in the biannual "Schedule A" Hiring Events coordinated by the department's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Schedule A refers to a hiring authority for federally-funded agencies that allows individuals with disabilities to obtain competitive status in civil service. These targeted hiring events are unique in that registrants are pre-screened and matched with positions based on their skills. The next Schedule A event will be held in Camden on December 14, 2016.

More information about the resources available to veterans can be found at <http://careerconnections.nj.gov/veterans/>.

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Kevin Kurdziel, Director of the Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development; Labor Department Chief of Staff Gregory Townsend; and State Veterans Program Coordinator Wayne Smith at the Middlesex County Veterans Job and Services Fair.



Labor Department Chief of Staff Gregory Townsend (center) discusses veterans services with Veterans Business Representative Veronica Jones and State Veterans Program Coordinator Wayne Smith at the Middlesex County Veterans Job and Services Fair.