



# FACTSHEET

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## WOMEN VETERANS

Equally Valued. Equally Qualified. Equally Served.

### Equally Valued

Women have volunteered to serve in the U.S. military since the American Revolution, and yet, all too often that service has gone unrecognized. While there is still work to be done, today the needs of women veterans are considered more than ever before in history. While we must continue efforts to address the needs of women veterans, we must also ensure women veterans are valued, not victimized. Women veterans, who comprise 10 percent of the veteran population, but only 2 percent of all working women in America, are a critical segment of today's workforce.

### Equally Qualified

You may have heard that women veterans have higher unemployment rates than male veterans. To explore how to best address the employment needs of women veterans, the Department of Labor (DOL) Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) Women Veteran Program conducted broad meta-analysis of the employment situation for women veterans. This review clearly demonstrated that there are no employment challenges that are exclusive to women veterans, that no two women veterans will have identical experiences or needs, and that women veterans are highly qualified and bring strong attributes to the civilian labor force.

Women veterans are the minorities of both the veteran population and the working women population. They are also younger, more highly educated, more likely to be of minority status, and more likely to be in the civilian labor force than male veterans. As such, women veterans are more likely to be in the subpopulations that have higher unemployment rates, such as veterans currently enrolled in school, those under 35 years old, and those who served in Gulf War II. For example, in 2014, 11% of women veterans in the labor force

between the ages of 18 and 54 were enrolled in school, as compared to 6% of male veterans in the labor force of the same age groups. Overall, the unemployment rates for women veterans are trending down, and differences in the annual average unemployment rate for all women veterans and all women non-veterans was not statistically significant in 2013 or 2014 (6.9% vs. 6.8% and 6% vs. 5.9%, respectively).

### Equally Served

You may know that veterans (including women) receive priority of service for all employment and training programs funded directly, in whole or in part, by DOL. These include programs operated by nearly 2,500 American Job Centers nationwide. You may also know that VETS offers intensive employment services to veterans with significant barriers to employment through the Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program (JVSG). Through JVSG, the veterans most in need of employment assistance are case managed by Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists.

What you may not know is that JVSG services are associated with better employment outcomes, specifically for women veterans. Women veterans who utilize these services experience higher entered employment rates and higher wages than their non-veteran female peers. In fact, the wage gap is considerably smaller for women veterans served by JVSG than it is for non-veteran women.

These services are delivered equally to veterans of either gender, and they are successful because they are customized for each veteran.

For additional information, contact Dr. Nancy A. Glowacki in DOL VETS at (202) 693-4700.  
<http://www.dol.gov/vets/womenveterans>.

## Facts and Statistics about Women Veterans

### All Women Veterans

- The current projected percentage of U.S. Veterans who are women is 10 percent. For the most recent projections, visit [VetPOP 2011](#). <sup>1</sup>
- In FY 2009, the average age of women Veterans was 48 years, compared to 63 years for their male counterparts.
- In FY 2009 and FY 2010 PTSD, hypertension, and depression were the top three diagnostic categories for women Veterans treated by VHA. <sup>2</sup>
- About 1 in 5 women seen in VHA respond "yes" when screened for Military Sexual Trauma (MST). <sup>3</sup>
- Though rates of MST are higher among women, because of the disproportionate ratio of men to women in the military there are actually only slightly fewer men seen in VA that have experienced MST than there are women. <sup>4</sup>

### Women Veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND)

- Women make up nearly 11.6 percent of OEF/OIF/OND Veterans.
- 57.4 percent of women OEF/OIF/OND Veterans have received VA health care; of these, 89.8 percent have used VA health care more than once. <sup>5</sup>
- Nearly 51.3 percent of female OEF/OIF/OND Veterans who used VA care during FY 2002-2011 were born in or after 1970 (aged 43 or younger) compared to nearly 48 percent of male OEF/OIF/OND Veterans. <sup>6</sup>