



# Illinois Department of **Veterans' Affairs**

# **IDVA Recruitment Plan FY15**



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## DEPARTMENT MISSION

The mission of the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA) is to empower veterans and their families to thrive. We do this by assisting them in navigating the system of federal state and local resources and benefits; by providing long-term health care for eligible veterans in our Veterans' Homes; and by partnering with other agencies and non-profits to help veterans address education, mental health, housing, employment, and other challenges.

The department is composed of the central office in Springfield, the Chicago administrative office, the Veterans' Services Division, the State Approving Agency, and Illinois Veterans' Homes at Quincy, Manteno, LaSalle and Anna.

## DEPARTMENT HISTORY

On June 13th, 1945, the Illinois Veterans' Commission was defined and its powers were approved by the Illinois legislature. An administrator was appointed, administrative offices were established in Springfield and Chicago and programs and benefits were established.

On June 20th, 1975, the General Assembly created the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs and it became the successor agency to the Illinois Veterans' Commission effective January 1, 1976.

Over the years, the Department has assumed the responsibility of one of the oldest veterans' homes in the nation and has since established three additional homes for the aging veteran population. The Department established and continues to administer educational grants for the dependents and/or survivors of eligible veterans and created bonus payments and compensation for veterans and/or survivors who served during specific conflicts. The Department approves and supervises programs of education and training for veterans utilizing their Montgomery G.I. Bill benefits and continues to serve veterans throughout the State with full-time field offices and itinerant sites.

## DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

The Department is under the direction of a Director and an Assistant Director that are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Illinois State Senate.

There are two administration offices located in Springfield and Chicago with the majority of the administration being centralized in Springfield. Central Office houses Fiscal, Operations, Human Resources, Grants, Information Technology, Supply and Services and a Legislative Division. The Field Division maintains local field offices throughout most Illinois counties.

The Fiscal Division is responsible for all centralized accounting and vouchering functions and the preparation and execution of the annual budget; coordinates all GAAP, property control, lease and procurement activities of the Department; and oversees fiscal operations at each veteran's home through their respective business office.

The Operations Division maintains administrative oversight of the Illinois veterans' homes ensuring activities and operations are conducted in compliance with federal and State long-term care standards of care; ensures the Homes are operated to allow residents to live in a safe, comfortable environment that meets their medical and psychosocial needs; conducts long range planning for the future long-term care needs of Illinois veterans; interfaces with the Capital Development Board for capital improvement projects; and ensures federal grants are applied for and received to reduce State expenditures.

The Human Resources Division is responsible for all employment, payroll, insurance, time and attendance, worker's compensation and unemployment; and oversees personnel operations at each veteran's home through their respective personnel office.

The Grants Division is responsible for the administration of the numerous grants that the Department offers, including education and bonuses. Housing more than 1.5 million records dating from the Civil War era to the present, the Grants Division is responsible for recording discharges and maintaining an honor roll of deceased veterans in Illinois.

The Information Technology Division is responsible for managing and supporting technological innovation, improving veterans' services with the use of technology and storing computerized data. They are the hub of communication and the central link for supporting technologies employed at our veterans' homes and the field offices located throughout the State.

Supply and Services works in conjunction with all other divisions in providing supplies; responsible for the printing needs of forms and brochures for the Department; responsible for all incoming and outgoing correspondence including all ground and air deliveries; and assuring all maintenance and upkeep of the Central Office automobile fleet.

The Legislative Division is tasked with working in conjunction with the Governor's legislative office, elected officials, the Senate and House staffs and committee staffs; provides assistance with constituent questions and concerns; drafts legislation pursuant to Department needs; and testifies in committee on issues pertaining to veterans' issues.

The Field Division is responsible for full time and itinerant service offices staffed by nationally accredited service officers. They assist veterans and their survivors/dependents in securing all State and federal benefits in which they are entitled to under existing law.

The State Approving Division is a federally funded program that approves and supervises veterans' education and training programs available at colleges, universities and vocational training for veterans utilizing their Montgomery G.I. Bill benefits.

Effective July 1, 2004, the Illinois Veterans Advisory Council was formed by PA93-0779. The Council is comprised of veterans' organizations, members of the General Assembly and a wide array of representatives from the veteran community. The goal of the Council is to assure that Illinois veterans and their dependents/survivors are aware of and are being offered the best assistance available.

The greatest mission of the Department is the care of our aging veterans. Illinois Veterans' Homes located in Anna, LaSalle, Manteno and Quincy provide skilled nursing care to veterans and their spouses. A wide variety of services and activities are provided at the Homes, including physical and occupational therapy, social services, apartment living, libraries and quality skilled nursing care. Illinois Veterans' Homes house over 1000 veterans and their spouses.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

It is the policy of the IDVA that all employees and applicants for employment are guaranteed equal employment opportunity. Essentially, this means that we will not discriminate against any employee or job applicant on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, or disability.

Recruitment, selection, placement, transfer, promotion, reinstatement, training and education, tuition assistance, compensation and layoff decisions made by the agency will be based upon job-related criteria only. Employees who apply for and are qualified for promotions or transfers will be given equal consideration.

It is our policy that all hiring authorities shall be made aware that they must use only objective, job-related criteria when selecting workers for any employment-related action, including hiring, training, promotions and terminations. They shall receive periodic training courses in administering the IDVA's equal employment opportunity policy.

All IDVA employees will be provided initial training regarding their rights under basic employment laws and information regarding the agency's policies and procedures in regard to equal employment opportunity, sexual harassment prevention, discrimination, and retaliation prohibitions. All employees will receive refresher training as needed.

All other personnel policies and practices of the Department, including compensation, discipline, safety and health programs, and any other employment activity not specifically mentioned, will be administered and conducted without regard to an individual's race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin or disability.

To the extent possible, reasonable accommodation shall be made for religious needs and for individuals with disabilities.

As an employer, IDVA will continually review our personnel practices and procedures to ensure that all supervisors and directors are adhering to our commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity principles, but our commitment extends beyond current practices and procedures. The agency will exercise good faith efforts to provide hiring and promotional opportunities for members of target groups, including minorities and women, persons with disabilities and veterans.

## PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this plan is to outline the responsibilities for the IDVA for Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention and provide goals and strategies for increasing the number of minorities, females and disabled individuals at the Department. IDVA is committed to maintaining a diverse workforce at all levels. The Recruitment Plan applies to all positions in all pay plans and exempt status. To meet its challenges and goals, IDVA shall continuously strive to hire a diverse workforce that reflects the population of our state and promote IDVA as a dynamic place where people want to work for generations to come.

The Department's Human Resource Office and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer oversees the recruitment and networking activities conducive to identifying, hiring, retaining and promoting qualified minorities and persons with disabilities. EEO staff partners with the Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS) and other State agencies, at employment related informational events to recruit and encourage minority and disabled candidates to apply for positions at IDVA. In addition to career days and job fairs, we participate in mentorship programs at high schools, colleges and universities and speak directly with individuals about an interest in pursuing a career in health services.

## RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

***“Successful recruitment in government boils down to a complex formula: get the right people in the right position at the right time with the right skills to perform the right role to achieve the agency’s mission.” anonymous***

Recruitment is the foundation of any personnel selection process. Agencies cannot hire the best employees if they do not attract the best applicants. The best use of the resources available for attracting the best applicants can only come about through a well thought out plan. Recruitment planning takes into account workforce demographics and trends,

the Department’s “mission critical” job classifications, future workforce needs as well as current ones, the Department’s strengths and weaknesses, achieving or maintaining diversity in the workplace, and feedback from new and existing employees. All of these factors are taken into consideration in adopting recruitment goals and the strategies.

The Department recognizes there is an underutilization of minorities, females and persons with disabilities. In order to overcome this hurdle and achieve diversity the department shall make it a priority to do a better job of recruiting, hiring and retaining these individuals. By utilizing effective recruitment and outreach efforts, the Department will continue to build and establish relationships. Moving forward, to assist us in our recruiting efforts, we are taking a broader and proactive approach to recruitment. We are collaborating with CMS Diversity Enrichment Program, ISP, IDES, as well as other partners such as IAMG, IAHS, Interagency Committee on Employees with Disabilities (ICED), and institutions of higher learning which have diverse student populations. We have also partnered public service organizations, such as fraternities and sororities, faith-based communities, Chicago-based Clergy groups, community leaders, professional and alumni organizations, and similar agencies from other states.

In addition to job/career fairs, the Department has partnered with IDES to conduct informational meetings at IDES locations throughout the state where there is a high concentration of African-Americans, Hispanics and Asian. A couple areas of recruitment that the Department will focus on are recruiting for Registered Nurses, Veteran Nursing Assistant-Certified and Licensed Practical Nursing positions. We plan to partner with IDES to determine the number of minority veterans in the system, what is the demographic areas and/or zip codes that have a high concentration of minority veterans.

To assist veterans in navigating the complex web of services and benefits available, IDVA runs 49 full-time and 35 part-time (itinerant) offices in 80 out of the 102 counties. These offices are staffed by more than 60 individual Veteran Service Officers (VSO’s), fellow veterans who are experts on federal, state and local veteran resources.

Our VSO’s are trained and accredited by the US Department of Veterans Affairs to provide free assistance to veterans and their dependents and survivors. This includes not only applying for federal and state benefits but also providing resources related to employment.

Another program IDVA is actively promoting to assist Veterans with State Licensing is our Military Medics to Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) program. Military medics are qualified to be a CNA and are exempt from training if they have proof of completing a hospital corpsman or medical service specialist training from the Air Force, Army, or Navy (certificate or DD 214). If they have one of these, then they would only need to have a skills check-off and pass the written competency exam.

We are also endeavoring to develop programs to which would better facilitate the Department's ability to hire recent college graduates. The Veterans' Home Nurse Loan Repayment Program provides for the payment of eligible educational loans as an incentive for nurses to pursue and continue their careers at State of Illinois veterans' homes. The annual award to qualified registered professional nurses and licensed practical nurses may be up to \$5,000 to repay their student loan debt. This award may be received for up to a maximum of four years.

In connection with the licensure of EMTs, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has the authority and responsibility to review applications for EMT licensure from honorably discharged service members with military emergency medical training. Applications shall be filed with IDPH within one year after military discharge and shall contain certain identifying information that clearly demonstrates that the training and experience meets prescribed standards. If applicants satisfactorily meet the requirements, IDPH will offer the applicant the opportunity to successfully complete an IDPH-approved EMT examination for which the applicant is qualified and upon passage of an examination, issue a license.

### **Minority and Female Recruitment Initiatives**

- African American Recruitment:

By total EEO category, the Department is underutilized by 11 African Americans. At all recruitment related events, recruitment staff encourages African Americans to apply and emphasizes the intent of the IDVA leadership to diversify the Agency. The HR Staff and EEO Officer Office work with and seek guidance from the African-American Advisory Council, IAMG, NAACP, Community organizations, The General Assembly, CMS and State agencies to increase the diversity of our workforce in an attempt to reflect the diversity of the State and the Illinois communities we serve.

- Female Initiative:

By total EEO category, the Department is underutilized by 6 Females. The Department consistently identifies and targets institutions, geographical areas and community/ business networks conducive to the recruitment of qualified Female candidates. The HR Staff and EEO Officer will work and seek guidance from CMS, State agencies, Community organizations and female employee groups to foster relationships to increase the diversity of our workforce in an attempt to reflect the diversity of the State and the Illinois communities we serve. .

- Asian Initiative:

By total EEO category, the Department is underutilized by 2 Asians. The Department consistently identifies and targets institutions, geographical areas and community/ business networks conducive to the recruitment of qualified Asian candidates. The HR Staff and EEO Officer Office will work with and seek guidance from the Asian-American Advisory Council, Community organizations, The General Assembly, CMS, and State agencies to increase the diversity of our workforce in an attempt to reflect the diversity of the State and the Illinois communities we serve.

- Hispanic Initiative:

By total EEO category, the Department is underutilized by 8 Hispanics. The Agency consistently identifies and targets institutions, geographical areas and community/ business networks conducive to the recruitment of qualified Hispanic candidates. The HR Staff and EEO Officer Office will work closely with and seek guidance from the Hispanic Advisory Council, IAHSE, Community organizations, The General Assembly, CMS and State agencies to increase the diversity of our workforce in an attempt to reflect the diversity of the State and the Illinois communities we serve.

## Summary of Workforce Analysis by Region

Agency: IDVA

Reporting Period: 4/1/14 - 6/30/14

Grand Total

EEO Category	MALES										FEMALES										PERCENTAGES																			
	Total					A/ NH AN OPI D					Total					B/AA H/L A AN OPI D					W					F					M					B/AA H/L A AN OPI D				
	W	B/AA	H/L	A	A/ NH AN OPI D	W	B/AA	H/L	A	A/ NH AN OPI D	Total	W	B/AA	H/L	A	A/ NH AN OPI D	Total	W	B/AA	H/L	A	A/ NH AN OPI D	Total	W	B/AA	H/L	A	A/ NH AN OPI D	Total	W	B/AA	H/L	A	A/ NH AN OPI D						
Officials / Administrators	24	1	1	1	3	32	2	1	1	1	36	32	2	1	1	1	36	32	2	1	1	1	60.00%	88.33%	5.00%	3.33%	1.67%	1.67%	6.67%	60.00%	88.33%	5.00%	3.33%	1.67%	1.67%	6.67%				
Professionals	60	5	2	2	5	193	17	1	6	1	218	193	17	1	6	1	218	193	17	1	6	1	78.42%	87.77%	7.91%	1.08%	2.88%	0.36%	6.47%	78.42%	87.77%	7.91%	1.08%	2.88%	0.36%	6.47%				
Technicians	184	8	6	2	9	112	21				135	112	21				135	112	21				73.37%	78.80%	15.76%	3.26%	1.09%	1.09%	10.87%	73.37%	78.80%	15.76%	3.26%	1.09%	1.09%	10.87%				
Protective Service	17	3				2	1				3	2	1				3	2	1				17.65%	76.47%	23.53%					17.65%	76.47%	23.53%								
Para-professionals	495	11	3		1	330	91	13	6	1	441	330	91	13	6	1	441	330	91	13	6	1	89.09%	74.75%	20.61%	3.23%	1.21%	0.20%	2.42%	89.09%	74.75%	20.61%	3.23%	1.21%	0.20%	2.42%				
Office / Clerical	52	2			4	39	2				41	39	2				41	39	2				78.85%	92.31%	7.69%				13.46%	78.85%	92.31%	7.69%				13.46%				
Skilled Craft	25					1					1	1					1	1					4.00%	100.00%						4.00%	100.00%									
Service / Maintenance	221	11	2		7	124	109	11	3	1	124	109	11	3	1	124	109	11	3	1	1	8					6.79%	56.11%	87.33%	9.95%	2.26%		0.45%	6.79%						
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,332	41	14	5	29	818	145	18	12	6	999	818	145	18	12	6	999	818	145	18	12	6	75.00%	81.91%	13.96%	2.40%	1.28%	0.45%	5.71%	75.00%	81.91%	13.96%	2.40%	1.28%	0.45%	5.71%				

<b>Grand Total Employees:</b>	Males:	333	Females:	999	Total Minorities:	241
		25.00%		75.00%		17.64%
White: 1,091	Black/African American: 186	Hispanic/Latino: 32	Asian: 17	A/IAN: 6	NHOPI: 76	Disabled: 76
81.91%	13.96%	2.40%	1.28%	0.45%		5.71%

W=White B/AA=Black or African American H/L=Hispanic or Latino A=Asian A/IAN=American Indian and Alaska Native NHOPI=Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander D=Disabled  
 DHR-9 (Rev. Feb. 2012)

# Underutilization Summary by Region

Name of Agency: IDVA      Fiscal Year: FY15

Name of Agency: IDVA      Fiscal Year: FY15

Region	Officials and Administrators				Professionals				Technicians				Protective Service Workers						
	Women	B/AA	H/L	A	A/IAN	NHOPI	Women	B/AA	H/L	A	A/IAN	NHOPI	Women	B/AA	H/L	A	A/IAN	NHOPI	
1							3												
2																			
3																			
4																			
5						1													
6																			
7	1																		
8						1													
9																			
10																			
11																			
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Region	Paraprofessionals				Office and Clerical				Skilled Craft Workers				Service-Maintenance						
	Women	B/AA	H/L	A	A/IAN	NHOPI	Women	B/AA	H/L	A	A/IAN	NHOPI	Women	B/AA	H/L	A	A/IAN	NHOPI	
1																			
2																			
3																			
4																			
5																			
6																			
7																			
8		5	3																
9																			
10																			
11		3											1						
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Total underutilization for Women: 6      Total underutilization for Black or African American: 11      Total underutilization for Hispanic or Latino: 8  
 Total underutilization for Asian: 2      Total underutilization for American Indian and Alaska Native: 0      Total underutilization for Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: 0

Note: If no calculations are necessary in any region where the agency does not have a facility or because there are less than ten employees in the EEO category in that region, leave that box blank.

W= Women    B/AA = Black or African American    H/L = Hispanic or Latino    A = Asian    A/IAN = American Indian and Alaska Native    NHOPI= Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
 DHR 11-AAP (Rev. Feb. 2012)

## **Statistically Under-represented Groups**

In determining statistically under-represented EEO groups within the Department, the IDVA used statewide workforce statistics as a benchmark. These statistics are compiled by the U. S. Census, 2011 American Community Survey (ACS), 5-Year Estimate (2006 - 2010). IDVA then compared the Department's workforce as of June 30, 2014 to the statewide civilian workforce to determine where the Department fell short of the civilian workforce in the employment of minorities and women.

The tables above identify the IDVA FY 15 workforce underutilization and the make-up of the Department at the end of fiscal year 2014. The numbers represent the amount of under-representation for the following categories. If there is no number in the box, the category is sufficiently represented in IDVA's workforce. These numbers will guide the Department in identifying areas that recruitment efforts will be focused.

### **Continued Review of Agency Statistics**

At the beginning of each Fiscal year when the EEO statistics are captured by the EEO/AA Officer in the Affirmative Action Plan, the Human Resources Department will review workforce statistics to determine the Department's under-represented EEO categories and to assess the effectiveness of recruitment efforts during the previous fiscal year. Adjustments will be made to the recruitment plan, as needed.

### **Affirmative Action Plan and Recruitment Plan Communication**

The Affirmative Action Plan and the IDVA Recruitment Plan shall be communicated to all employees by posting it on the agency's SharePoint site and providing the location of the plan to employees through newsletters and mass e-mail distribution. The plan shall also be posted conspicuously in areas where applicants hand-deliver applications and on the agency's Internet site for public view. An updated recruitment plan will be filed with the Governor's Office annually.

Communication of this plan is intended to ensure that all of the agency's employees and the public at large are aware of IDVA's commitment to providing equal employment opportunity to all applicants and employees of the agency. To further emphasize the agency's commitment to this policy, the statement "Equal Opportunity Employer" or "EOE" shall be utilized in recruitment advertisements and literature.

## **Quarterly Recruitment Schedule**

### **July – September**

Survey management staff to determine:

- Facility needs/upcoming vacancies
- Upcoming job fairs/Workshops and coordinate with Veterans Service Officers and EEO/AA Officer.
- Mail recruitment letters to local universities with job announcements
- Establish travel funding limits for fiscal year from finance department.
- Prepare opportunity descriptions.
- Update printed recruitment materials.
- Identify recruitment conferences and exhibit possibilities.
- Identify underutilization numbers
- Update community partners contact list
- Identify staff who need to attend Rutan training

### **October - December**

- Meet with administrators to establish recruitment priorities.
- Analyze annual turnover rates – breakdown and categorize
- Review age of workforce (retirements, etc.) for recruitment, organizational changes, planning, etc.
- Review generational categories of employees for planning, determining trends, etc.
- Conduct employee surveys - morale, climate, culture, job satisfaction, work environment, growth and development, training, etc.

### **January - March**

- Write other healthcare administrators in the region regarding a search for healthcare providers for the community.
- Contact state licensure board for names of provider licensees and send letters to.
- Contact military installations in region for names of providers leaving service and ask about opportunities to communicate with them.
- Contact medical specialty associations to obtain information on meetings, publications and placement services.
- Identify provider recruitment opportunity fairs for the coming year.
- Request nursing school alumni affairs office to publicize opportunities.
- Post-employment opportunities/vacancies with state health department, nursing training programs and state primary-care associations.
- Obtain available provider computer lists for mailing to next year's graduating students.
- Visit nursing training programs.

### **April - June**

- Actions implemented in the Recruitment Plan will be tracked and measured as appropriate for utilization statistics.

## **Recruitment Events Attended for FY14**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Sponsor</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>
August 1, 2013	Harper College, Asian American	Palatine
September 4, 2013	Wright College, Workshop for Counselors	Chicago
October 19, 2013	Veterans Advisory Committee	Manteno
October 25, 2013	IAHS, Annual Conference	Chicago
October 26, 2013	Veterans Advisory Council	Anna
November 6, 2013	Threshold, Veterans	Chicago
November 6, 2013	Morton College, Resources fair 2013	Chicago
November 8, 2013	Truman College, Veterans	Chicago
December 10, 2014	Job fair	Quincy
December 14, 2014	Mini Job fair-John Wood Community College	Quincy
February 26, 2014	College of Lake County, State Employment Workshop	Chicago
February 27, 2014	J.O.B.S Fair	Champaign
March 18, 2014	Veterans Advisory Committee	LaSalle
March 21, 2014	Islamic Job Fair and Workshop	Villa Park
April 19, 2014	Veterans Advisory Committee	Manteno
April 24, 2014	NEIU (El Centro and Co-sponsored Rep. Berrios	Chicago
April 26, 2014	Veterans Advisory Council	Anna
May 14, 2014	Spoke to Graduating Class – John Wood Community College	Quincy
May 23, 2014	Meet the Graduates Program – John Wood Community College	Quincy
May 8, 2014	Nat. Latino Ed. Uns. And Career & Resource Expo	Chicago
May 21, 2014	SERS and Veterans Job fair	Chicago
June 25, 2014	Elgin Community College and State EmPLY. Workshop	Chicago

## Recruitment Planning Strategy

Strategy	Issue	Description	Possible Tactics	Individual/s Responsible
Online Recruitment	Not reaching majority of applicants, especially young college grads		<a href="http://www.Monster.com">www.Monster.com</a> <a href="http://www.CareerBuilder.com">www.CareerBuilder.com</a> <a href="http://www.Jobs.net">www.Jobs.net</a> <a href="http://www.ides.illinois.gov">www.ides.illinois.gov</a> <a href="http://www.illinoisworknet.com">www.illinoisworknet.com</a> <a href="http://work.illinois.gov">work.illinois.gov</a> <a href="http://illinoisjoblink.com">illinoisjoblink.com</a>	HR
Campus Recruiting and Job Fairs	Need to improve overall applicant pool	<p>Both professional and paraprofessional applicants can be effectively recruited at job fairs sponsored by state workforce development agencies.</p> <p>College recruiting can be a very effective method for attracting applicants for professional jobs.</p>	<p>Send team of HR representatives with an experienced direct care or frontline supervisor to fairs – provides an opportunity for job seekers to ask both job specific and hiring process/benefits questions.</p> <p>Send an “ambassador” from the agency to classrooms of healthcare majors to “guest lecture” or provide a Department overview.</p> <p>Schedule experienced employees or supervisors to speak on a “hot topic” in the human services field at a brown bag luncheon at a local college or university.</p>	HR, EEO, VSO’s
University Partner-ships	Not enough applicants with specialized degrees	Developing a variety of recruitment strategies with area universities, community colleges and Schools of Nursing/Healthcare to encourage students to pursue careers in those fields	<p>Send team of HR representative with an experienced nursing worker or frontline supervisor to fairs – provides an opportunity for job seekers to ask both job specific and hiring process/benefits questions.</p> <p>Send an “ambassador” from the Department to classrooms of nursing majors to “guest lecture” or provide a Department overview.</p> <p>Schedule experienced employees or supervisors to speak on a “hot topic” in the healthcare field at a brown bag luncheon at a local college or university.</p>	HR
Targeted Recruitment	Lack of diversity in targeted job/s	Need a more diverse workforce that better reflects the population you serve. For example, we may need to recruit employees with specific language skills, or with specialized degrees (e.g., RN’s MDS Coordinators, LPN’s).	Target community job fairs to increase diversity among new recruits. Develop relationships and partnerships with various diverse groups and organizations.	HR, EEO
Word of Mouth	Need to improve overall applicant pool	If current employees are happy in their jobs, they become one of the best sources of recruitment. Some agencies are so well regarded as a “great place to work” that they turn away quality applicants.	<p>Even if employees are not actively referring vacancies to friends and acquaintances, their positive “word of mouth” about the Department is a powerful recruitment source.</p> <p>Great frontline supervisors in organizations that engage and value employees are critical to being considered a “great place to work.”</p>	All Staff
Hiring Process	Need to reduce time to fill vacancies	Currently, it takes up to 60 days to fill a vacancy	<p>Continuous Postings for frequently posted positions</p> <p>Post vacancies as soon as EPARS are entered</p> <p>Ensure hiring documents are current</p>	HR

## CONCLUSION

It is very important that IDVA appropriately reflects the diversity of the population of the State of Illinois in the makeup of its staff. There are some obstacles over which the Department has no control; however, the IDVA is committed to exploring and executing actions over which it does have control, and that will address the goals mentioned above.



## ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

PAT QUINN • GOVERNOR  
RODRIGO GARCIA • ACTING DIRECTOR



# STATE EMPLOYMENT TIPS FOR VETERANS

## STATE EMPLOYMENT PROCESS / APPLICATION

- **ONLINE JOB PORTAL** – The Central Management Service (CMS) website is the focal point for all State job opportunities. All available positions within the State are listed on the *Job Postings* section within the CMS website. *Job Postings* are organized by: name, location, agency, and category. Once a job is found in the database, job seekers can click on the *apply* link to create an application. To find the State job database, please visit: <http://work.illinois.gov/>.
- **LIST ALL MILITARY RANKS**– Leadership and technical skills developed during a military career are in high demand, but translating those experiences and skills to a civilian employer can be difficult. The first step is demilitarizing your resume. Remove any military jargon and replace with other soft skills gained through your experience, such as small team leadership or logistics distributor. Secondly, ranks and duties need to be broken down into *each rank achieved* and the *associated duties and responsibilities*. Also, be sure to provide any additional information requested on the application such as dates of service for each rank, average hours worked per week, supervisory responsibilities, etc.
- **BE AS DESCRIPTIVE AS POSSIBLE** – Complete the application for a job vacancy by tailoring the specific military duties you performed to those associated with the position vacancy.
  - Example: An *Infantry Squad Leader* is a manager of personnel with additional skills in interpersonal communications, organizational planning, and decision making for project management in austere and dynamic environments resulting in mission accomplishment.

## EMPLOYMENT COUNSELING

- **CMS** – CMS offers free employment counseling services as part of the Veterans Outreach Program. The career counselor will explain the application process in detail, review your application, and recommend job titles for which you are qualified. Counseling is provided at five locations throughout the state. Please visit: [work.illinois.gov/vetsopgm.htm](http://work.illinois.gov/vetsopgm.htm) to find the nearest location.

## CMS TESTING

- **ACE THE EXAMINATIONS** – Some jobs require an actual test to obtain a grade while grades for other jobs are based on your training and experience. You must submit an application for each position to CMS and obtain a grade before an agency can consider you for appointment. Obtaining a passing grade is the first step to state employment. Applicants can view the application procedures, examination procedures, and test information guides online at the state's website: [work.illinois.gov/procedures.htm](http://work.illinois.gov/procedures.htm).

## VETERANS PREFERENCE

- **CLAIM VETERAN STATUS** – Did you know qualified veterans receive points added to passing grades and have absolute hiring preference for state employment under the Governor? Under state law, qualified veterans must be considered for interview and employment before non-veterans in the same grade category. A certified copy of your most recent DD214/215 is required to verify veteran status. Other military documents may be required.

*For questions related to state employment opportunities, please contact the CMS Veterans Outreach Coordinator at (800) 643-8138. For general questions, contact your local IDVA Veteran Service Officer at (800) 437-9824.*

# Veteran's Preference

Applicants claiming veteran's preference MUST submit documentation verifying eligibility for veteran's preference at time of testing. If documentation is not submitted at this time, your name will NOT be included on the eligible list as having veteran's preference. After CMS receives appropriate documentation and verifies your eligibility, you will be awarded veteran's preference, and a revised grade notice will be mailed to you. However, lists of eligibles sent to hiring agencies on or before the date that your eligibility is verified by CMS will not be revised or rescinded.

To receive veteran's preference, separation from active duty must have been under **HONORABLE** conditions, and one of the following conditions must be met:

- Served a total of at least six months in federal service;
- Released from active duty because of a service-connected disability;
- Discharged on the basis of hardship; or
- Served for the duration of hostilities regardless of the length of engagement.

Effective January 1, 2000, applicants requesting veteran's preference must submit the most recent certified copy of DD214/DD215 or NGB 22 that states discharge was under HONORABLE conditions. See below for required documentation. Once veteran's preference is established, documentation is not required unless there is a change in veteran status. Certified copies will remain the property of CMS.

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## **Listing of Required Military Documentation Stating Honorable Conditions**

### **Veteran**

Certified copy of DD214/DD215

### **Illinois National Guard/United States Military Reserves**

#### ***Activated into federal service and still serving:***

Certified copy of DD214/DD215 and letter from unit personnel indicating HONORABLE service

#### ***Activated into federal service and discharged under HONORABLE conditions:***

Certified copy of DD214/DD215, certified copy of NGB 22, discharge orders or DD256 certificate

#### ***Never activated into federal service and currently serving:***

Letter from unit personnel indicating HONORABLE service

#### ***Never activated into federal service and discharged:***

Certified copy of NGB 22, discharge orders, or DD256 certificate

### **Disabled Veteran/Purple Heart Recipient**

Certified copy of DD214/DD215 and award letter issued within the last year from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs indicating service-connected disability. Call (800) 827-1000 to obtain a current letter. If Purple Heart recipient, certified copy of DD214/DD215, orders, or certificate awarding decoration.

### **Unremarried Spouse or Parent of Disabled or Deceased Veteran**

Certified copy of DD214/DD215 and award letter issued within the last year from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs indicating service-connected disability or death. A death certificate or Report of Casualty for the deceased veteran is required. Ask for CMS 255 form.

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### **It is a Class A misdemeanor to fraudulently represent yourself as a veteran.**

**Questions regarding veteran's preference may be directed to:** Illinois Department of Central Management Services Veterans Outreach Program at 800/643-8138 or the Illinois Relay Center (for hearing impaired) at 800/526-0844.

**Certified copies of DD214/DD215 may be obtained from:** Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs at 800/437-9824 or TTY 217/524-4645; National Personnel Records Center at [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov), or the County Clerk's office where you registered your military service.



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