



**Veterans Resources Task Force Meeting**  
**January 10, 2024, 10:00 – 11:00 am EST**  
**Via zoom**

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**Attending:** Commissioner Whitney Allen, Jad Davis, Summer Morgan, Chip St. Charles, Dallas Kratzer, David Best, Derek Poor, Everett Bracken, John Miles, Kristina Slattery, Molly Bode, Paula Payne, Sarah Stoll, Stephen Burchett, Robbin Higgins, Richard Carullo, Zach Morgan

**Administrative Staff:** Alisher Burikhanov, Debbie Dennison, Elishah Taylor, LaChrista Ellis

**Welcome and Overview**

**Whitney Allen, Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Veteran Affairs (KDVA)** welcomed everyone and thanked them for their time. He spoke about the importance of all the resources available to veterans, military personnel, transitioning service members, and their families (et al). He shared that the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) Staff has started pulling together a list of all Kentucky's military resources. During this meeting they will review the list of resources, find what is missing, point out the gaps, and talk about next steps. Commissioner also introduced a few of the new members he asked to join this discussion: David Best, Robin Higgins, and Everett Bracken.

He asked **Debbie Dennison, Deputy Executive Director, KWIB** to lead the discussion. Debbie thanked the Commissioner and everyone for being in attendance. She gave a brief summary of the [June 2023 Education and Workforce Collaborative \(Collaborative\) Board meeting](#) and how the Veterans Resources Taskforce was started. The June 2023 Collaborative meeting focused on one of the untapped workforce groups, veterans. Kentucky has many military resources, but they are not widely publicized or known. The recommendation of a taskforce was made to create a master list of resources, find the gaps, and get this information out throughout Kentucky to help support all military populations. Debbie introduced, **Alisher Burikhanov Executive Director KWIB** to share additional information.

**Alisher** thanked everyone for joining. He went over the strategic plan goals of the state workforce development board and explained the purpose of the Governor appointed strategic board. He further explained that the Collaborative is made up of Cabinets that have workforce development components in their purview and are able to act on the innovative ideas of the KWIB. Alisher went over the [Kentucky Workforce Pipeline](#) and the different

untapped talents that include veterans. The Collaborative board, led by Deputy Secretary Brinly lifted up the task to identify all resources that support veterans and businesses wishing to employ them and their families.

### **Group Discussion:**

**Commissioner Allen** commented that they would review the list started at the previous taskforce meeting and reminded the group that they need the right resources on this list that will support each veteran population. He asked Debbie to lead that discussion. The [google document link](#) was provided in the chat and **Debbie** asked each member to open the link, view the resources that had been provided, and add and edit information as needed. She also asked the group to think about where this resource list might reside for employers and end users to best access.

Discussion was had around missing resources, gaps in service to these populations, who the populations are and where the resources might reside for easiest access.

A short list of **missing resources** includes:

[Fort Knox](#) and [Fort Campbell](#) Transition Sites; resources for active-duty folks, resources for veteran families, [Blue Grass Army Depot](#); Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVS) - resource navigators at JVS connect with people all over the world; [Veteran Services Organization](#); colleges that support veterans need to be listed; [Volunteers of America](#); CHFS [KYNECT](#) web portal of resources for veterans; [PACE](#) Program; cross reference resources from the Federal Government; [Army Career Skills Program](#) (CSP); Veterans Affairs, [Skill Bridge](#), and [Warrior Scholar Program](#).

Additional resources were shared that included the Federal Department of Labor (DOL) VETS program and also resources that had been identified by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS). KWIB staff will add these and keep the google doc link open for sharing.

**Gaps in services to veteran populations** identified include:

The emerging of more programs requires veterans to serve at least one day of active duty before they can qualify for certain resources. It is worth looking into ways to assist veterans who do not meet the state or federal definition of a veteran by providing them with necessary resources. The military and veterans' recruitment efforts should work together in order to effectively support our servicemen and women. Recruitment should be equipped with knowledge of military and veteran terminology. Additionally, it is important for larger companies entering Kentucky to receive training in order to better assist veterans. To support veterans in finding employment, we should create a list of [veteran ready employers](#) and [veteran-owned small businesses](#).

**The various veteran populations** of those who have served or trained to serve include more than veterans were discussed including:

The following groups of people could benefit from assistance: new guardsmen and women, reservists who are transitioning out of training and need help, as well as those stationed at Fort Knox and Fort Campbell who can be recruited to stay in Kentucky. Additionally, transitioning military personnel, retirees, Kentucky veterans who have left the state, veteran families, and special groups such as veteran-owned small businesses may also require assistance.

Finally, discussion around where these resources might reside was had to include, being **available in the transition centers** and possibly can be updated by the staff in the centers. More discussion and collaboration is needed on this topic.

### **Immediate Objectives to Accomplish and Next Steps**

**Commissioner Allen** stated that the next steps should be getting these resources organized, create a strategic plan for marketing to these populations, and to figure out where the lists should live. It was suggested that an aggressive timeline should be pursued to complete these tasks.

The **timeline discussed** included completing the resource guide by March 1, 2024, disseminating the resources within 90 days to sites and personnel needing the information, and to create messaging and marketing to attract and retain veteran and military populations in Kentucky, within 120 days. Another goal is to develop a strategic marketing plan for these populations and recommendations to do so by the end of the fiscal year was made.

Additional discussion was had around **converting military skills to civilian jobs** and that is currently a challenge. There are limited resources currently providing this service. It was also suggested that the timeline might back into Veteran's week in November 2024 and to share these resources at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Veterans Symposium. Additional marketing should take place sharing the information with businesses and educate human resource departments on the benefits of hiring Kentucky veterans. Some programs from other states were mentioned and include the Rapid Technology Program, which assigns veterans to teams to complete projects for various companies, an employer program in the City of Atlanta, and a program called the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Model.

**Commissioner Allen** thanked the task force members for their ideas and participation. He recommended next agenda topics will include finalizing the resource lists, discussing the webpage set up and further strategic plan items.

**11:11 am EST ADJOURNMENT**