



Fact Sheet

Spouse Education and Career Opportunities Counselors

What is SECO?

To help military spouses reach their education and career goals as they balance work-life priorities and interests, the Department of Defense established a comprehensive, holistic, spouse-centered program called SECO: Spouse Education and Career Opportunities. The program seeks to strengthen the education and career opportunities of military spouses worldwide. It offers comprehensive information, tools and resources to support career exploration, education and training, employment readiness and career connections.

Fast facts

- ✓ **100 percent** of counselors have **master's degrees**.
- ✓ **100 percent** of counselors **hold certifications** including the following:
 - Certified Workforce Development Professional (CWDP)
 - National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWPD)
 - National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)
 - National Commission for Certifying Agencies (National Certified Counselor, NCC) credential

Spouse employment plays a key role in the financial and personal well-being of military families, and spouse satisfaction is an important factor influencing the retention of service members in the military. The DoD is committed to enhancing quality of life through programs like Military OneSource and Spouse Education and Career Opportunities.

Spouses can access SECO services through the Military OneSource SECO Career Center at 800-342-9647 and through the [MySECO](#) website. Comprehensive counseling services are available at no cost to all eligible military spouses through the career center staffed by certified career counselors.

What does a counselor do?

The certified SECO Career Counselors are knowledgeable and experienced in education and career counseling and effective at helping military spouses use their education, training and skills to find a career. They offer resources, support and ideas to help spouses, including the following:

- Identify current skills and determine needed skills
- Clarify career goals and investigate career options
- Decide on an education path and how to pay for it
- Prepare for a job search and maximize job search efforts
- Learn how to self-market and build networks
- Investigate the skills and training needed to become an entrepreneur

Career exploration

The certified SECO Career Counselors have a variety of resources to help spouses identify their career interests and aptitudes. They provide information about today's job market and work opportunities, including transferable skills, entrepreneurship and federal employment options.

Individual career plans

Military spouses have the opportunity to develop a customized individual career plan with the help of a certified SECO Career Counselor, or spouses can log on to MySECO to use the self-service MyICP option. Counselors work one-on-one with spouses to discuss their career goals and objectives, the steps they need to take and what tools, resources and information are available to them for each stage of the SECO lifecycle. The individual career plan integrates the spouse's work-related experiences, education and job preferences and provides a well-defined career path to help spouses arrive at their ultimate career goal.

The importance of career counseling

The certified SECO Career Counselors are a valuable resource for military spouses. They provide individualized attention and support and can target a spouse's specific issues, questions or needs to ensure spouses meet their education and career goals. Skilled professionals, the counselors understand the challenges facing military spouses and have solutions to help them. As new needs arise, information is researched and vetted to ensure spouses receive the most up-to-date and beneficial information available for their particular situation.

Education guidance

Certified SECO Career Counselors work with spouses to research education options for all levels from high school completion through doctoral and professional credential programs. They help identify schools and programs of study, provide the spouse with tools that compare the costs of education and determine the best-fit education program. Counselors also provide information on scholarships, financial aid and financial planning.

Licensing and credential support

Certified SECO Career Counselors are knowledgeable about licensure and credential requirements. They offer assistance and resources to ease the stress involved with the transfer of licenses and credentials when military spouses relocate to an installation in another state. They help guide military spouses through the [Department of Labor's CareerOneStop](#) Web portal and the [Department of Defense USA4MilitaryFamilies](#) website that have the latest information on licenses and credentials.

What can spouses expect when they call?

Spouses can expect customer service professionals who are dedicated to assisting them with their education and career needs. The certified SECO Career Counselors provide a variety of career lifecycle services to assist a spouse on their path to complete their education and career goals.

Top three issues

Spouses call about a wide range of topics, but the current top three issues include the following:

- 1 Education funding
- 2 Employment assistance
- 3 Relocation inquiries

Spouses answer the question: Why certified SECO Career Counselors?

"I know we just got off the phone, but I didn't get a chance to truly thank you for all the time and effort you have given me through this difficult transition. When I first called, I was very skeptical of the help I would get and unsure of where I stood professionally in my career. However, after working with you this past month or so, I am no longer a skeptic and am more confident about my career change than I have been in a long time. Thank you for taking the time to listen, to test, and to provide all the resources you provided."

The Spouse Education and Career Opportunities program provides expert education and career guidance to military spouses worldwide. For more information, visit MySECO <https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil>.