

# Spouse Education and Career Opportunities Program Content Guide

Updated April 2025

The following established style guidelines reflect the practices of developers and editors of content for the Spouse Education and Career Opportunities program. They are consistent with the rules and guidance outlined in The Associated Press Stylebook and reflective of both the SECO program and the Office of Military Community and Family Policy and usage preferences.

## Content Tips

- Use “employer partners” to describe Military Spouse Employment Partnership partners.
- Use “Military Spouse Employment Partnership companies and organizations.”
- Use “corporations, small businesses, federal agencies and nonprofits” to describe Military Spouse Employment Partnership partners.
- Use “SECO Career Center.”
- Use “CareerOneStop” as one word with each word in the name capitalized.
- Use “Foundation” when referring to the “U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation” and its Hiring Our Heroes program.
- Write the terms “appropriated funds” and “nonappropriated funds” (one word) in lowercase.
- Pay attention to the overall organization and flow of articles. Organize information and ideas logically and provide some sense of continuity or flow from one idea to the next.
- Avoid redundancy.
- Write a concluding paragraph of two or three sentences.
- Direct readers to contact the SECO Career Center at the end of articles, when applicable.
- Write in gender-neutral terms.
- Flesh out and clarify statements and ideas.
- Use softening or qualifying words, such as “generally,” “may be,” “can be” or “might,” to avoid making blanket statements about how people feel or react in different circumstances.
- Use second person to offer a sense of conversation.
- Use “MSEP Job Search” rather than “Career Portal.”

- Use “more than” rather than “over” with numbers (Example: We currently have more than 850 partners.)
- Use “transferable skills.”
- Spell out “Spouse Education and Career Opportunities,” “Military Spouse Employment Partnership” and “My Career Advancement Account” on first use, then abbreviate for subsequent uses.
- Break articles up into short, easy-to-consume paragraphs.
- Use bulleted formatting for clarity when appropriate.
- Be concise.
- Keep sentences short.
- Make sure headings match body text.
- Insert transitions between paragraphs.

## **Things to Avoid**

- Capitalizing “partners,” even when it is following “Military Spouse Employment Partnership.”
- Referring to the SECO Career Center as a call center.
- Using “MSEPJob.”
- Making assumptions.
- Telling people how they feel.
- Telling people what they should/need to/must/ought/can’t/won’t do.
- Telling people what they always/never do.
- Using “portable careers” in the context of an actual occupation.
- Using statistics without citations.
- Using “over” with numbers (example: over 400,000 jobs).
- Using military “lifestyle.”
- Capitalizing career coach.
- Telling people to “call a career coach” – encourage them to schedule a consultation with a career coach or call the SECO Career Center.
- Abbreviating Military OneSource to MOS; spell it out in all instances.

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation or acronym	Full title
SECO	Spouse Education and Career Opportunities
MSEP	Military Spouse Employment Partnership
MyCAA	My Career Advancement Account
MySTeP	Military Spouse Transition Program
MSCAP	Military Spouse Career Accelerator Pilot

## Preferred Terms

Preferred	As opposed to
Spouse	husband, wife
mobile military life	military lifestyle
some or many	most or all
Can, may or might	will or are
often or generally	always
tend to, typically	Usually, normally
provided free to service members and their families	no cost
employment readiness	career readiness
career coach	certified Career Counselor
resume	résumé
career	job
armed forces	Armed Forces (capitalize in this usage – U.S. Armed Forces)
child care/health care	childcare/healthcare
internet	Internet
SECO Career Center	Spouse Career Center/call center
active duty (noun); active-duty (adj.)	

appropriated funds/nonappropriated funds	appropriated funds/non-appropriated funds
<p>assist/assists — use judgment in the use of <i>assist/assists</i> in replacing the word <i>help</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coaches <u>assist spouses in identifying</u> their career interests and aptitudes.</li> </ul> <p>They also <u>assist spouses in identifying, comparing and weighing</u> the costs of potential schools and programs to <u>help</u> them <u>reach</u> their education and career goals.</p>	help/helps
free	no cost or no-cost
installation	post, base, airfield
MSEP Job Search	MSEP Career Portal
<p>Guidance/support — use judgment in the use of <i>guidance</i> or <i>support</i> in replacing the word <i>advice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coaches provide personalized career <u>guidance</u> and <u>support</u> to military spouses worldwide.</li> </ul>	advice

## Definitions

<b>Career coach</b>	Career coaches provide education and career guidance to military spouses worldwide. These certified master's level career coaches work with spouses to provide information, resources and assessments to help spouses plan for and obtain jobs they love that fit their mobile military life. Spouses can also work with career coaches to create a plan of action that considers targeted educational programs, financial aid options, training program resources and credentialing or licensing information.
<b>Career Advisor</b>	Spouses who call the SECO Career Center will first be connected with a career advisor to triage the call and can then schedule a consultation with a SECO career coach.
<b>SECO Career Center</b>	The SECO Career Center connects military spouses with expert support from career professionals. They provide personalized attention and support and can target spouses' specific issues,

	questions or requirements to make sure they meet their education and career goals.
<b>Employment readiness specialists</b>	Installation employment readiness specialists are familiar with local area employers and education institutions. They can help spouses develop a network and connect with employers in their local communities. Employment readiness specialists offer face-to-face assistance with employment needs, interview skills, resume assistance, federal employment, child care and transportation planning, and more. They can help you with a wide range of employment-related areas through workshops, classes, small group instruction and one-on-one support.
<b>Military OneSource</b>	Twenty-four-hour services are available free to all active-duty, National Guard and reserve members (regardless of activation status) and their families. Consultants provide information and make referrals on a wide range of issues related to military life.
<b>Military Spouse Employment Partnership</b>	The Military Spouse Employment Partnership, or MSEP, is an employment and career partnership connecting military spouses to hundreds of partner employers who have committed to recruiting, hiring, promoting and retaining military spouses in fulfilling careers. Spouses are encouraged to self-identify when applying with or contacting these employment partners.
<b>Military Spouse Employment Partnership companies and organizations</b>	Hundreds of Military Spouse Employment Partnership companies and organizations have committed to recruiting, hiring, promoting and retaining military spouses.

<b>My Career Advancement Account Scholarship</b>	<p>The My Career Advancement Account, or MyCAA, Scholarship is a workforce development program that provides \$2,000 per year (up to \$4,000) of tuition assistance to eligible military spouses to help pay for licenses, certifications, national testing, certain continuing education credits or associate degrees to pursue an occupation or career field.</p> <p>Spouses of active-duty service members in pay grades E-1 to E-9, W-1 to W-3 and O-1 to O-3 who have the ability to request tuition assistance while their military sponsor is on Title 10 military orders, including spouses married to members of the National Guard and reserves in these same pay grades, are eligible for the scholarship.</p>
<b>Military Spouse Transition Program</b>	<p>The Military Spouse Transition Program, or MySTeP, is a self-directed, mobile-friendly online resource specifically designed for military spouses preparing for and navigating separation from military service. Videos, downloadable resources and specific links guide spouses toward programs and services on a wide range of topics, including making smart financial decisions, finding social support resources, managing moves and more.</p>
<b>Spouse Education and Career Opportunities</b>	<p>The Spouse Education and Career Opportunities, or SECO, program provides military spouses with free, comprehensive resources and tools to assist spouses throughout all stages of their career progression, helping them meet their education and career goals.</p>
<b>The Spouse Education and Career Opportunities website: MySECO</b>	<p>The MySECO website is a one-stop online career and education toolbox filled with valuable information, resources and interactive features to assist military spouses in navigating the challenges of finding education and building a portable career path.</p>
<b>Spouse Education and Career Opportunities Coaching Packages</b>	<p>Spouse Education and Career Opportunities coaching packages offer specialty consultations with career coaches designed to help military spouses succeed in the job market. Spouses can work one-on-one with SECO career coaches to explore interests, refresh their resumes and jump-start their careers.</p>
<b>Spouse Ambassador Network</b>	<p>The Spouse Ambassador Network is a group of like-minded organizations who are affiliated with the Military Spouse Employment Partnership and are dedicated to raising awareness of military spouse education and employment resources.</p>
<b>U.S. Chamber of Commerce</b>	<p>Hiring Our Heroes – a program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce</p>

<b>Foundation Hiring Our Heroes</b>	Foundation – is a nationwide initiative to help veterans, transitioning service members and military spouses find meaningful employment opportunities. Throughout the year, Hiring Our Heroes hosts exclusive military spouse hiring fairs and transition summits in hundreds of communities across the United States, focusing on career opportunities for spouses of active-duty, National Guard and reserve service members. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is a Military Spouse Employment Partnership organization. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation is the nonprofit arm of the chamber.
<b>Military Spouse Career Accelerator Pilot</b>	The Defense Department partnered with Hiring Our Heroes and Deloitte to launch the Military Spouse Career Accelerator Pilot, a three-year competitive program that offers 12-week, paid fellowships to career-ready spouses, with the goal of providing spouses with full-time employment. The program, which the DOD fully subsidizes, launched in December 2022 and will run through December 2025. Spouses can apply by visiting the MySECO website.
<b>Military State Policy Source</b>	The Defense-State Liaison Office works to provide state policymakers with expert insight on issues affecting military families and their quality of life. This initiative is part of the Defense Department’s efforts to identify and address the most pressing needs of service members and military families – offering a trusted resource, reliable information and research, knowledge of policies and processes, and assistance with legislation at the state level.
<b>USAJOBS</b>	USAJOBS connects job seekers with federal employment opportunities across the U.S. and around the world. As the federal government’s official employment site, USAJOBS provides resources to help the right people find the right jobs. Spouses can now use the MSEP Job Search to access federal employment opportunities pulled directly from USAJOBS daily.

## Official Resources

Program	Website
Military Spouse Employment Partnership	<a href="https://msepjobs.militaryonesource.mil/">https://msepjobs.militaryonesource.mil/</a>
MilSpouse Career Network LinkedIn Spouse Group	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12882168/">https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12882168/</a>
MSEP Job Search	<a href="https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/msep/jobs">https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/msep/jobs</a>
Military Spouse Employment Partnership Partner pages	<a href="https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/msep/partners">https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/msep/partners</a>
Military State Policy Source	<a href="https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil/">https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil/</a>
Plan My Move	<a href="https://planmymove.militaryonesource.mil/">https://planmymove.militaryonesource.mil/</a>
Spouse Education and Career Opportunities Facebook	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/DoDMilSpouse/">https://www.facebook.com/DoDMilSpouse/</a>
Spouse Education and Career Opportunities Instagram	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/dodmilspouse/">https://www.instagram.com/dodmilspouse/</a>
My Career Advancement Account Scholarship	<a href="https://mycaa.militaryonesource.mil/mycaa/">https://mycaa.militaryonesource.mil/mycaa/</a>
MySECO – Spouse Education and Career Opportunities website	<a href="https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/">https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/</a>
Military OneSource 800-342-9647	<a href="http://militaryonesource.mil/">http://militaryonesource.mil/</a>
Military OneSource for spouses	<a href="https://www.militaryonesource.mil/for-spouses">https://www.militaryonesource.mil/for-spouses</a>
Hiring Our Heroes U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation	<a href="https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/hiring-our-heroes">https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/hiring-our-heroes</a> <a href="https://www.uschamber.com/">https://www.uschamber.com/</a>
USAJOBS	<a href="https://usajobs.gov/">https://usajobs.gov/</a>
CareerOneStop	<a href="https://www.careeronestop.org/">https://www.careeronestop.org/</a>
Blue Star Families Careers	<a href="https://bluestarfam.org/careers/">https://bluestarfam.org/careers/</a>
Spouse Ambassador Network	<a href="https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/spouse-ambassador-network">https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/spouse-ambassador-network</a>
MilitaryINSTALLATIONS	<a href="https://installations.militaryonesource.mil">https://installations.militaryonesource.mil</a>