



My Next Steps:

Unemployment Benefits for Spouses of Transitioning Service Members

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Resources at a Glance

- CareerOneStop [State Unemployment Benefits Finder](#)
- [Spouse Education and Career Opportunities](#)
- [Locate](#) an employment support resource on your installation
- [American Job Center](#)



Question

Am I eligible for unemployment benefits if I leave my current job to relocate after my service member transitions from the military?



Answer

If you expect a break in employment due to relocation after transition from the military, you may be eligible to receive unemployment benefits, also referred to as unemployment insurance.

Unemployment insurance is a benefit provided to workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own. In some situations, spouses who relocate due to their spouses' job change, sometimes referred to as "trailing spouses," may be eligible for this benefit. If you meet the eligibility requirements for your state, while you are searching for work, you may be able to receive a weekly income benefit.

Begin by reviewing your state's unemployment compensation program eligibility requirements. Use CareerOneStop's "Unemployment Benefits Finder" search function to find information about your state's unemployment benefits. Remember that the state in which you are currently working is the state from which you will request benefits. If you claim the Military Spouse Residency Relief Act and pay taxes to a state other than the one you are currently working in, you may want to speak with a professional to determine the state in which you should file for unemployment insurance. You can seek guidance from a military legal assistance office for help.

For assistance with filing for unemployment benefits and with your job search, visit a local American Job Center. There, you will have access to computers, fax machines and employment assistance professionals that can help.

After your unemployment benefits application is received by your state, you will be notified of approval or denial. If your claim is approved, many states require a waiting period before you can begin receiving benefits. Your unemployment insurance payment will be a percentage of what you earned in your previous job. Unemployment benefit limits and conditions will vary by state and may also be subject to state and federal taxes.

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If you file for unemployment benefits and are denied, you have the right to appeal. Instructions for the appeal process may be printed on your denial notice. Note that there may be a deadline for appeal. Follow the instructions carefully and seek additional support if needed. The American Job Center near you may be able to provide assistance.



Answer (cont.)

If you know where your family will be settling after transition, begin your job search right away, especially if your profession requires licensing. The transition assistance office on your installation offers classes, seminars and workshops that can assist you and your service member with employment support prior to transition. There are also employment support resources on your installation and in your community that can help, and you can receive assistance from anywhere using the Spouse Education and Career Opportunities program's career coaching services for up to a year after transition.

Military spouses are sometimes eligible for unemployment insurance due to a military-connected move, however transition out of the military may impact your eligibility. Remember, unemployment benefits are temporary and will offer limited support as you find your next job. Plan ahead for your family's transition by determining your eligibility for unemployment benefits and accessing the resources available to help you and your service member find new employment.



Steps to Consider

These "Steps to Consider" are not meant as a checklist. Use the suggestions to facilitate a discussion with your service member.

- If your family will be relocating after transition from the military and you will have to leave your current job, begin looking for jobs in your new location as soon as you know where you will be moving. Use the employment support resources on your [installation](#) to help. You are also eligible to use [Spouse Education and Career Opportunities](#) coaching services up to a year after transition. Review the Employment Assistance section of MySTeP to help you identify resources to assist with your job search.
- Attend transition training with your service member. You are eligible for the many employment-related classes and resources offered to help you and your service member prepare for and find employment. [Contact](#) your installation's transition assistance office to learn about upcoming classes, workshops and additional employment support resources.
- Review application requirements, taxes, and conditions of eligibility for the state you will be applying to for unemployment benefits. Use the [Unemployment Benefits Finder](#) to find contact information for each state.
- If you claim the Military Spouse Residency Relief Act, you may want to speak with a professional to determine the state in which you should file for unemployment insurance. You can [seek](#) guidance from a military legal assistance office for help.
- Discuss your moving timeline with your service member. Your state may have rules about the length of time between your last day on the job and when you can file a claim. Review your state's guidelines before notifying your employer that you will resign from your position.
- Apply for unemployment benefits as soon as you can after relocating. Many states have a waiting period, so the sooner you apply, the sooner you may begin receiving unemployment benefits.
- Get personal support to help with job assistance and unemployment benefits by contacting your local [American Job Center](#).
- If your claim is denied, you have the right to appeal. Instructions for the appeal process may be printed on your denial notice. For additional information about your state's unemployment benefits appeal process, contact your local [American Job Center](#).



Resources

General and Virtual Resources

- CareerOneStop State Unemployment Benefits Finder: <http://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/UnemploymentBenefits/find-unemployment-benefits.aspx>
- American Job Center Finder: <https://www.careeronestop.org/Veterans/Toolkit/find-american-job-centers.aspx>



- Call 800-342-9647, or visit <https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil>
- SECO Career Coaching Services: <https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/home/secocounseling>

To locate the transition office on your installation: <https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/>

- To find employment support on your installation: <https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/>

- To locate a military legal assistance office near you: <https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/>

- Select “Program or Service” from the drop down menu. Next, input “Legal Services/JAG” in the text field. Then, enter desired installation or zip code.

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Employment Assistance

- Online Employment Support Resources for Spouses of Transitioning Service Members
- Local Employment Support Resources for Spouses of Transitioning Service Members

- Focusing on your Career as Your Family Transitions from the Military: Overcoming Employment Challenges
 - Unemployment Compensation for Transitioning Service Members
- Transition Assistance Training**
- Military-Sponsored Transition Resources and Training