
Department of Defense – Department of Labor
Military Spouse Career Advancement Initiative
Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. How will military spouses benefit from Career Advancement Accounts?

A1. Education, training and certification/licensure in portable career fields will greatly increase military spouse employment opportunities and reduce the period of time spouses are unemployed between moves.

This funding will allow eligible military spouses to invest in education and training programs that can be completed in less than two years in programs that will enable them to obtain employment and advance in high-growth, high-demand, and nationally portable career fields. Spouses can use their Career Advancement Accounts to pay for expenses directly related to post-secondary education and training, including tuition, fees, books, equipment necessary to complete the education or training, and credentialing and licensing fees.

Q2. Who is eligible for a Career Advancement Account as part of this demonstration?

A2. This demonstration is specifically targeted to military spouses with a high school diploma or GED and/or some level of post secondary education. To be eligible for a Career Advancement Account, spouses of military service members/sponsors must:

- Be married to a service member/sponsor on active duty;
- Be married to a service member/sponsor at the E-1 through E-4 levels (junior enlisted service members), E-5 level (non-commissioned officers), or O-1 through O-3 levels (junior commissioned officers);
- Be married to a service member/sponsor who is assigned to a demonstration site OR reside in the state at the time of eligibility determination when the service member/sponsor spouse is deployed or on an unaccompanied military tour from a demonstration site;
- Be married to a service member/sponsor with a minimum of one year remaining at the demonstration installation duty assignment; with the exception of duty assignments that will require relocation as part of the Base Realignment and Closure Act of 2005 (BRAC 05);
- Have a high school diploma or GED;
- Not be receiving Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) or Workforce Investment Act (WIA)-funded Individual Training Accounts.

Q3. How will military spouses apply for a Career Advancement Account?

A3. A military spouse can begin the application process at the military installation's Family Support Center, Voluntary Education Center, or at a One-Stop Career Center.

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Q4. Are Career Advancement Accounts limited to education for high-growth, high-demand industries and occupations?

A4. Due to their frequent moves, military spouses need access to education and training for careers that are portable and high-growth nationally. Therefore, accounts awarded under the demonstration will be targeted to nationally identified high-demand industry sectors that provide the greatest opportunity for career portability. Military spouses may use their Career Advancement Account to receive education or training in one of these fields:

- Health care (for jobs such as nurses, dental hygienists, and pharmacy technicians);
- Information technology (for jobs such as network analysts and database administrators);
- Education (for jobs such as teachers and teacher’s assistants);
- Financial services (for jobs such as claims adjusters, credit analysts and bank tellers); and
- Construction/skilled trades (for jobs such as carpenters and electricians).

Q5. What other services are available to recipients of Career Advancement Accounts?

A5. Participating military spouses may receive career counseling, interest and aptitude testing, skill assessments, and career guidance from One-Stop Career Centers and their military installation Voluntary Education Centers or Family Support Centers. Spouses may also receive referrals to supportive services, such as child care and transportation assistance, through these organizations.

Q6. Where are One-Stop Career Centers located?

A6. There are over 3,000 One-Stop Career Centers located across the country. The One-Stop Career Centers near the participating military installations will be partnering directly with the installation Voluntary Education Centers and Family Support Centers. The One-Stop Career Center staff will be located on or near the installation. Interested spouses should contact their installation programs for information and referrals.

Q7. What is a Workforce Investment Board? Where are they located?

A7. The Workforce Investment Boards – WIBs – are entities created to implement the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. For each local Workforce Investment Board, a chief elected official appoints community and business members as Workforce

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Investment Board members. There are also designated seats for representatives from labor unions and educational institutions, such as community colleges. The Workforce Investment Board's main role is to direct federal, state and local funding to workforce development programs. It also oversees the One-Stop Career Centers, where job seekers can get employment information, find out about career development training opportunities and connect to various programs in their area. One-Stop Career Centers also provide many no-cost services to employers as well.

Q8. Where can spouses who are not located at installations included in this demonstration project go to get employment support? Are there other programs available to them?

A8. Employment support is available for military spouses at their installation's spouse employment program as well as through their local One-Stop Career Center. Spouses can visit www.MilSpouse.org to find out more information about how to locate these programs as well as find Internet-based career guidance and workforce information.

Q9. Where can spouses go for more information?

A9. For information online, see www.MilSpouse.org. Military spouses are encouraged to visit their local One-Stop Career Centers and military installation Voluntary Education Centers or Family Support Centers for more information and career support.