



**THE  
VETERAN  
DEVELOPMENT  
GROUP**

**THEVDG.ORG**

## **Military to Civilian Transition Checklist**

*Built by veterans to help guide what comes next*



**Created by The Veteran Delopement Group**

*Supporting service members and veterans through informed, intentional transitions.*

2026 Edition | [www.TheVDG.org](http://www.TheVDG.org)

# THE VDG's MILITARY TRANSITION CHECKLIST (EAS Version)

*Below is the general outline of a VDG smooth transition roadmap for EAS'ing Service Members. Connect and engage with The VDG's community, courseware, and mentorship opportunities for 1on1 assistance in tailoring your unique transitional checklist (Example; Retiree, Career-oriented, Geographic relocation).*

---

## SECTION 1 — +24 MONTHS OUT (EARLY PREPARATION)

### Education & Career Foundations

- Identify potential career fields of interest.
- Meet with Education Office to discuss long-term degree plans.
- Begin taking classes using Tuition Assistance (TA).
- Take CLEP/DSST exams to knock out general education requirements.
- Explore Credentialing Opportunities Online (COOL) certifications.
- Create or update LinkedIn profile.
- Start tracking accomplishments in civilian-friendly language.

### Medical Documentation

- Schedule annual physical and ensure results enter official medical record.
- Record any recurring pain, injuries, or conditions.
- Request referrals to specialists when needed.
- Document behavioral health concerns early (if applicable).
- Start keeping personal copies of medical records and imaging results.

### Housing & Finance Foundations

- Review credit score and begin improving credit profile.
- Begin long-term savings for transition (goal: 3–6 months of expenses).
- Research VA Home Loan benefits and long-term housing areas.
- Consider early home purchase if beneficial (e.g., rental property later).

### Networking & Professional Growth

- Join professional associations or groups.
  - Attend at least one career fair (for exposure).
  - Conduct informational interviews with veterans in civilian industries.
  - Join veteran mentorship programs (ACP, Veterati).
  - Begin building a professional network outside the military.
-

## **SECTION 2 — 18–24 MONTHS OUT (PRE-SEPARATION PLANNING)**

### **Assessment & Career Strategy**

- Complete career assessments (O\*NET, TAP tools, personality tests).
- Identify your top 2–3 potential civilian career paths.
- Continue building education & certifications relevant to those careers.
- Start forming your transition team (TAP, VSO, mentors, family).

### **Documentation**

- Start collecting copies of NCOERs/OERs, awards, training records.
  - Start recording accomplishments in measurable (quantified) terms.
- 

## **SECTION 3 — 12–18 MONTHS OUT (CAREER PREPARATION)**

### **Employment Prep**

- Translate military skills into civilian terms.
- Build a polished civilian résumé.
- Create multiple résumé versions (industry-specific).
- Refine LinkedIn headline, summary, and work history.
- Begin targeted networking in selected fields.

### **Education & Credentialing**

- Finalize remaining TA-funded courses.
  - Complete relevant certifications (COOL, industry credentials).
  - Research schools if considering college after separation.
- 

## **SECTION 4 — 6–12 MONTHS OUT (BENEFITS & LOGISTICS)**

### **Transition Program & Benefits**

- Schedule and attend all TAP courses.
- Confirm GI Bill status and understand transfer rules.
- Verify eligibility for SkillBridge and apply if desired.
- Research state-level veteran benefits for relocation areas.

### **Medical & Disability Preparation**

- Gather copies of all medical records.
- Ensure every condition is documented in medical records.
- Begin preparing for VA Disability Claim.
- Review VA BDD (Benefits Delivery at Discharge) requirements.

## **Housing & Relocation**

- Research housing markets in target relocation areas.
- Decide renting vs buying.
- Build a PCS/relocation budget (moving costs, deposits, etc.).

## **Professional Development**

- Conduct mock interviews.
  - Attend industry conferences or networking events.
  - Apply to apprenticeships or pre-hire programs (if relevant).
- 

# **SECTION 5 — 0–6 MONTHS OUT (FINAL PREPARATION)**

## **VA & Medical**

- Submit VA Disability Claim (BDD) if within 180 days.
- Print or save complete medical, dental, and mental health records.
- Obtain copies of line-of-duty (LOD) documentation.

## **Employment & Education**

- Apply to jobs weekly (5–10 minimum).
- Confirm job offer OR finalize education enrollment.
- Prepare for salary/benefits negotiations.

## **Finance & Insurance**

- Build a civilian budget accounting for loss of BAH/BAS.
- Decide between VGLI vs. private life insurance.
- Review TSP rollover options (IRA, employer 401(k), etc.).

## **Housing & Relocation**

- Secure housing for post-separation.
  - Finalize moving plans (PPM/DITY vs movers).
  - Update address in DEERS and MyPay.
- 

# **SECTION 6 — 0–3 MONTHS AFTER SEPARATION (IMMEDIATE TRANSITION)**

## **VA & Healthcare**

- Complete C&P exams (if required).
- Enroll in VA healthcare.

- Update your VA.gov profile and direct deposit info.

### **Employment & Education**

- Begin new job or start academic program.
- Continue networking to support career growth.
- Update résumé with new civilian experience.

### **Finance**

- Adjust budget based on civilian income.
- Create a savings plan (if not already done).
- Review emergency fund status.

---

## **SECTION 7 — 3–12 MONTHS AFTER SEPARATION (LONG-TERM STABILIZATION)**

### **Career Development**

- Evaluate career satisfaction and growth potential.
- Seek additional certifications or training.
- Network consistently (monthly minimum).

### **Benefits & Healthcare**

- Review VA disability rating for accuracy.
- Explore additional VA or state-level benefits.
- Confirm long-term healthcare coverage.

### **Finance & Life Planning**

- Reassess insurance coverage.
- Increase retirement savings contributions.
- Review long-term goals (home ownership, relocation, career growth).

---

### **PERSONAL TRANSITION NOTES:**

**What is your Long-Term Goal (Detail the version of YOU that makes you smile 5-10 years out)**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**What are some short-term goals (Smaller goals that help you reach your Long-Term Goal)**

---

---

---

---

---

**Questions for TAP/VSO/VA:**

---

---

---

---

---

**Notes:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---