

# Transition Handbook

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD - HEALTH SAFETY WORK LIFE - INFORMATION FOR KODIAK ALASKA

UPDATED: JULY 2016



## USCG Transition Information Kodiak, Alaska

**Information and resources about the transition process for active duty personnel and their families.**

### **Base Kodiak:**

Several Transition GPS classes are held on Kodiak Island each year to accommodate individuals stationed here and their families. Our goal is to help all involved to successfully navigate the process of transitioning from active duty service to civilian life.

Classes are held based on need so sign up early! The bigger the need the more classes held.

All service members departing service must attend a class or complete congressionally mandated courses through online classes. Classes are available at (JBER) Joint Base Elmendorf - Richardson although travel is limited and can only be funded through your unit.

**If travel is required you should request funds from your unit. If travel funding is not available to the most cost effective class then online classes are available from:**

**Joint Knowledge Online (JKO)** <http://jko.jten.mil/>

**Departing members are advised to enroll 1 year in advance from separation or 2 years in advance for retirement.**

Questions or Information

Contact

**USCG Transition**

**Manager**

**Debbie Bower**

**HSWL Kodiak**

[Debbie.J.Bower@uscg.mil](mailto:Debbie.J.Bower@uscg.mil)

**907-487-5341**

Office and classes located inside the BASE Education Center (Barracks 4, Building 7) on Windrider Drive.

### **What is Transition (GPS) Goals, Plans, Success?**

A Transition Assistance Program that provides information and tools to military families that will help them plan their departure from military life to civilian life. Transition Goals, Plans, Success (GPS) program is curriculum based classes (web based and live instruction) that can be used to increase knowledge and create a plan to successful transition.

All program classes are introduced in this handbook. **Members MUST complete congressionally mandated by law sections before departing service.** All other information is highly recommended by the Agency or optional for members on as needed basis.

### **What topics are covered in the live class?**

★Transition GPS Classes on Kodiak consist of 5 full days for retirees and 4.5 days for separating members where we provide information on the following subjects:

- \*Applying for Retired Pay, Survivor Benefit Information & TRICARE (1 day)
- \*Veteran Affairs Benefits Briefs I & II (Required by Law - 1 day)
- \*Department of Labor Employment Class (Required by Law - 3 days)

Participating in a live class is the most effective way to meet the congressional law and provides the best information available to the service member and spouse.

**RETIREES:** May request an exemption from the 3 day DOL Employment Class. Request in advance and note exemption on enrollment form.

### **How do I enroll in a class?**

★Contact **Debbie Bower** ([debbie.j.bower@uscg.mil](mailto:debbie.j.bower@uscg.mil))- Kodiak Transition Manager for enrollment form. Fill out form, return it and gain unit permission to attend.

### **What do I have to complete by mandated law before leaving service?**

★**Before departing active duty congressional law states you **MUST** by complete the following:**

1. **Preseparation Counseling & DD-2648 with unit signature. Copy TRM Office.**
2. **Establish E-Benefits Premium Account. Copy TRM Office with proof e-mail.**
3. **VA I & VA II Briefs (in class or online). Copy TRM Office with Certificate if online.**
4. **DOL Employment Workshop (in class or online). Copy TRM Office with Certificate if online.**
5. **All exemptions to employment workshop for retirees by request from Debbie Bower office contact 907-487-5341 or [debbie.j.bower@uscg.mil](mailto:debbie.j.bower@uscg.mil)**

## ***Frequently Asked Questions:***

### ***1. Can my spouse attend the class?***

**Yes.** Spouses are invited and encouraged to attend. You will transition as a family so it is always helpful to have a partner to help with the process. If spouses are enrolled in the 3 day employment class they **MUST** attend all 3 days. They may also be enrolled just into the days involving VA Briefs, Retirement and TRICARE information.

### ***2. Preseparation Counseling: What is it and how do I get started?***

- **This is a class mandated by congressional law you must complete.**
- LMS Module (Course Code 100061) on <https://elearning.uscg.mil/>
- Form DD2648 - You will be prompted to print this form when you start class.
- All subjects on DD-2648 **do not apply to everyone. You may select no & fast forward class.**
- Each section is printable from the drop down menu to print if you want to save for notes.
- Print your ITP (Individual Transition Plan) to work on independently. This can help with your planning.
- After completing class your Unit Admin must sign and date the DD-2648.
- Forward copy or bring to class a copy of DD-2648. Debbie Bower needs visual to log data completion.

### ***3. What is E-Benefits and How do I establish a Premium account?***

- ★ **This account mandated by congressional law you must complete online.**
- ★ E-Benefits is a very important account that you may need to access after service. It can be used for many different things: to name a few - to print VA form letters, look for employment, track your VA Disability package and for Post 911 education.
- ★ Establish your E-Benefits Premium account online at [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov) using a government computer with CAC card. Establish your **DS Login & Password** to be used from a personal computer and **forward the account activation e-mail generated to Debbie.J.Bower @uscg.mil or bring to class.**

### ***4. Other resources available to assist me and my family?***

- ★ **Joint Services Transcript** <https://jst.doded.mil> - Print it out! This is a compiled list of training during your military career and possible college credit. It can be useful for future education options and also during class building your resume! **Bring it to class with you.**
- ★ **CG SUPRT** - Always available to provide our members with a financial coach, assistance making a 12 month transitional budget, getting out of debt and improving your credit score!
  - Free service while on active duty
  - 855-247-8724 or [www.cgsuprt.com](http://www.cgsuprt.com) or 855-CG SUPRT
  - Utilize your resources while they are FREE!

### **USCG Office of Work-Life Programs Transition Website:**

[http://www.uscg.mil/worklife/transition\\_assistance.asp](http://www.uscg.mil/worklife/transition_assistance.asp)

★**Joint Knowledge Online (JKO)** <http://jko.jten.mil/> Availability to full Transition Classes online self paced!  
★Also used if member does not have ability to attend a live class to meet mandatory class completions.

- 1. TGPS-US001 Transition Overview 1.5 hours
- 2. TGPS-US002 MOC Crosswalk 1.5 hours
- 3. TGPS-US003 Personal Financial Planning 3 hours
- 4. TGPS-US004 DOL Employment Workshop 15 hours\*(Mandatory if live class is not available)
- 5. TGPS-US005 Federal Employment 4 hours
- 6. TGPS-US006 VA Benefits I 1 hour\*(Mandatory if live class is not available)
- 7. TGPS-US007 VA Benefits II 3 hours\*(Mandatory if live class is not available)
- 8. TGPS-US008 Career Technical Training Track 8 hours
- 9. TGPS-US009 Accessing Higher Education Track 4 hours
- 10. TGPS-US010 Entrepreneur Track 9 hours

## **5. Why do I need assistance from a Veteran Service Organization and where do I find help?**

★*It is always recommended that you use a Veteran Service Organization (VSO) to help you understand your VA Benefits but especially when you are filing a claim for service connected disabilities! Service Organizations are Veteran Advocates and trained in how to assist you. Where can you find help?*

★ *When you know for sure you are departing service and attending a Transition Class in Kodiak, Alaska contact Debbie Bower for assistance. Lucy Gifford VSO with Vietnam Veterans of America Juneau office when funded attends the Kodiak classes assisting with private appointments.*

★*Departing Alaska to reside in another state and need help! A listing of VSO's is available on the VA website at [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) and many states have State Veteran Affairs office that can assist you in locating services. Check out your state veterans web page for more information.*

★*There are also several office located in Anchorage if you plan to reside in Alaska and seek assistance and some travel to Kodiak several times annually.*

*VSO's offices located in Anchorage, Alaska:*

- **DAV – Disabled American Veterans** – (907) 257-4803 or 1(888)353-7574 X 4803
- **American Legion** – (907) 257-4802 or 1(888)353-7574 X 4802
- **VFW – Veterans of Foreign Wars** (907) 257-4801 or 1(888)353-7574 X 4801
- **Military Order of the Purple Heart** (907) 257-4760
- **Vietnam Veterans of America** (907) 333-9080
- **Offices are located in the Alaska VA Healthcare System at 1201 North Muldoon Road or just outside the JBER Muldoon gate.**

## **6. What about service medical records and my DD-214?**

★**MEDICAL RECORD:** *Make sure your medical record is complete and make two copies of all the written notes in your file. One copy will always be in your possession and the other will be used most likely when you file your disability claim under the Fully Developed Claim (FDC) program after departing service.*

★**DD-214:** *Make sure that all of your information is correctly listed in Direct Access. Review DD-214 in detail before signing for correctness, changing a DD-214 after departing service is not an easy or fast process!*

### **Transition Services & Classes available in Anchorage:**

**Services are available at JBER but approval to attend and travel funding will be the responsibility of the members unit. If travel funds are limited or not available online classes at Joint Knowledge Online (JKO) may be the only alternative for the member.**

### **JOINT BASE ELMENDORF RICHARDSON (JBER) ENROLLMENT:**

**Registration: (Classes are usually held monthly but can fill up fast)**

- **Elmendorf AFB Transition Center.**
  - **Class Registration Number is: (907)552-6619 or 9290**
  - **Follow all instructions given by AFB Transition Office**
  
- **Ft. Richardson Soldier for Life (SFL)**
  - **Class Registration Number is: (907)384-3501**
  - **Follow all instructions given by SFL Transition Office**
  
- **Berthing/Lodging/Class Details:**
  - **Joint Base Lodging: (907) 552-2454 1118 for reservations. Note: Please advise the desk clerk where attending (Elmendorf or Ft Richardson class).**
  - **Full Details should be given when you register! Please abide by them.**
  - **Usual class times are: 0730 – 1630 all week**
  - **No uniforms: - suitable civilian attire.**

### **JBER Resource Center:**

The Military Family Readiness Center (MFRC - AKA Log Cabin) staff available to assistance you with job search, resumes and job applications.

### **JBER Military Pre-Retirement Briefings:**

A four hour class held monthly for retiring personnel that provides information on topics such as TRICARE, Survivor Benefit Plan (SPB), ID Cards, Life Insurance, Space Available Flights, Retired Pay and many other retirement benefits not covered in the five day TAP GPS class.

- **Class Registration Number is: (907) 384-3500**
- **Normal class hours: 0830-1230**

- ★ **Completed DD-2648 signed by unit should be sent to [debbie.j.bower@uscg.mil](mailto:debbie.j.bower@uscg.mil) and brought to class.**
- ★ **Completed confirmation of class completed should be sent to TRM Debbie Bower for documentation.**

# USCG RETIRED PAY INFORMATION AND SURVIVOR BENEFIT INFORMATION

[HTTPS://WWW.USCG.MIL/PPC/RAS/](https://www.uscg.mil/ppc/ras/)

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**ALL INFORMATION IN REGARDS TO RETIREMENT PROCESSING, ENTERING YOUR GLOBAL PAY ACCOUNT OR INFORMATION THAT IMPACTS YOUR RETIREMENT OR BENEFITS CAN BE FOUND ON THE WEBSITE PRIOR TO AND AFTER YOUR RETIREMENT!**

★An information booklet on filling out your CG4700 (Application for Retired Pay) can be printed from this page. SELECT BOX ON TOP OF PAGE “Retirement Package” print it out and follow all directions.

★Online Retired Pay and Survivor Benefit Premium Calculators are available through this site.

★ Retiree newsletters are available.

★You will establish your Global Pay Self Service account from this page and can connect to the login page by selecting boxes on top of page.

**IF YOU ARE RETIRING FROM SERVICE THIS IS YOUR INFORMATION WEB PAGE!**

**IF YOU ARE RETIRING FROM SERVICE IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE YOUR APPLICATION FOR RETIRED PAY (CG 4700) IS CORRECTLY FILLED OUT AND RECEIVED AT USCG PAY & PERSONNEL CENTER (PPC), RETIREE & ANNUITANT SERVICES (RAS) BRANCH 60-90 DAYS PRIOR TO YOUR RETIREMENT DATE.**

**800-772-8724 - PPC RAS CONTACT NUMBER**



## **Get Started Before Class - Create Your Career Portfolio**

A **Career Portfolio** is a compiled representation of work related and educational documents that represent your skills, abilities, accomplishments, training and education. This can be a vital tool in helping you create the targeted resumes you will need to find civilian employment. The first step to be well prepared for the Transition GPS class!

### ***A Well-Prepared Portfolio Contains:***

Skills, abilities, & achievements documented throughout a career.

Training, certification & education documentation.

Volunteer activities documenting skills used and duration of participation.

Awards earned in a career.

### ***How to Organize:***

A 3-ring binder or electronic document organizing information chronological order such as:

- **Career Information:** OER's, job evaluations, letters of achievement, any/all documentation providing information on your skills and achievements accomplished while assigned to a unit. Including volunteer work that may provide skills to individuals changing careers.
- **Training:** Training and certifications that apply to employment including description of course and dates completed.
- **Education:** All transcripts (Joint Services Transcript) and college information along with High School Diploma.
- **Awards:** Awards received and dates received.

### **Other Items to Include:**

- Volunteer experiences (Coordinated events, PIE Program, Morale Events etc.)
- Program from an event you planned or in which you participated as part of a class project or campus organization if a student applicant.
- Conferences and workshops you attended and description.
- Technical or computer skills.
- Academic and Professional Organizations and Offices held.
- Newspaper articles that address achievements and honors.
- Business and personal references and how to contact. (address, e-mail and phone contact)

**Targeted resumes and cover letters are easy if you have the information available to compile career information into the necessary format.**

## **Preparing to Transition – A Suggested Timeline for Transitioning Members**

**(Suggested timeline and topics to help a military family prepare for their transition from service. )**

### **Timelines are prior to departure from service.**

#### **12 to 24 months:**

- Schedule your Pre-Separation Counseling appointment.
- Complete DD-2648 Pre-Separation Counseling Checklist to identify service providers.
- Print Joint Service Transcript <https://jst.doded.mil>
- Develop your ITP (Individual Transition Plan) self directed at home. Seek assistance when needed.
- Schedule to attend a Transition Workshop.
- Start looking at life decisions. (continue working, career change) set future goals.
- Prepare for new career goals while you are financially still stable. Identify training or education needed and start classes if possible.
- Develop resume, research job and salary market, make listing of possible employers in career field, join a professional association in your career field.
- Learn about your education benefits.
- Involve family and evaluate family needs (college tuition, elder care, spouse employment, location of new home.)
- Determine post military income requirements, pay off debts, and determine future income needs.
- Secure Retired Pay Projection **Retirees** - <http://www.uscg.mil/ppc/ras/>
- Research Survivor Benefit Plan **Retirees** - <http://www.uscg.mil/ppc/ras/>
- Retirement Process or Information: **Retirees** - <http://www.uscg.mil/ppc/ras/>
- Research Health, Dental, Life and Long Term Health Coverage needed and cost.
  - TRICARE: <http://www.tricare.mil/> Anchorage POC: Marshall Watson 907-264-6761
    - **Separating:** Continued Healthcare Coverage and/or TAMP Coverage
    - **Retirees:** TRICARE Prime or Standard & Extra
  - Delta Dental: <http://www.trdp.org/> (**Retirees & family**)
  - VA DIP Dental: [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) (**Veterans and CHAMPA VA Families**)
  - VGLI Life Insurance Conversion: [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)
- Research Supplemental Health Care Policy if needed with TRICARE Standard: [www.federalpublishing.com](http://www.federalpublishing.com) has a listing of policies and cost that can be very helpful.
- Research new home locations for state taxes using your state web pages or [www.kiplinger.com](http://www.kiplinger.com)
  - Taxes include: State tax on earned income and retired income, State Use Tax for moving items into states that need tags (camper, car, trailer etc). Home property tax and area sales tax.
- Research IRS Taxes on Income (**Retirees especially**) [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)
- Consider whether you will take terminal leave or cash in unused leave.
- Establish your 12 month Transition Budget – A financial coach from **CG SUPRT can help you call 855-247-8778 and request one!** Web Page: [www.cgsuprt.com](http://www.cgsuprt.com)
- Start to identify medical & dental problems and start to arrange treatment. (you & family)
- Consider spouse education and career desires.
- Update legal documents (will, power of attorney, etc.)
- Review medical record to make sure all records are contained from private appointments and/or from prior duty stations.

### **12 months:**

- Attend a second Transition Workshop if available and needed.
- Establish a 12 month Transitional Budget for after departure from service. This helps to establish a plan for making ends meet during your transition.
- Review your personnel record.
- Request timeframe for separation physical from medical clinic.
- Research Veteran's Preference, Special Appointment Authorities, and Federal Employment Opportunities. You may be able to apply as early as 8 months in advance of terminal leave date.

Set up appointment with visiting Veteran Service Officer in remote locations.

### **180 days:**

- Print Retired Pay Handbook <http://www.uscg.mil/ppc/ras/> and prepare your retirement and survivor benefit plan paperwork. (Paperwork can be sent to PPC 4 months prior to retirement date, confirm with PPC all paperwork is correct and received prior to leaving on terminal leave. Make sure you work with your unit ADMIN Office)
- APPLY! APPLY! APPLY! Apply for civilian & federal jobs! Interview! Attend Job Fairs if possible. You should be employment focused and tailoring resumes for each position that you apply for at this time.
- Review and make 2 copies of your medical and dental records.
- Schedule medical and dental appointments as needed.
- Develop alternate plan in case first career plan fails.
- Plan your retirement ceremony.

### **120 - 150 days:**

- Continue to focus on goals, career search, networking and applying for employment.
- Send retirement form to PPC RAS office if orders have been approved. **(Retirees)**
- Schedule separation physical with clinic if not already done.
- Research Reserve Programs if needing benefits **(Separations)**
- Make 2 full copies of your medical record. (One for you and one for your VA disability claim)

### **90 days:**

- Arrange household move counseling research options for shipment and storage.
- Schedule final dental exam.

### **60 days:**

- Choose Transitional Health Care Option: (TRICARE Prime or Standard, TAMP, CHCBP, Reserve Select or VA or ACA or Employment Plan)
- Start looking at timeline for enrollment if needed from your research on:
  - Transitional Dental Care Option: (Retiree Dental, VA DIP or Employment Plan)
  - Life Insurance Options: (Veteran Group Life or Independent Plan)
  - Supplemental Health Care Policy (If using TRICARE Standard) **(Retirees)**
- Confirm PPC RAS has Retired Pay account set up if not already done. **(Retirees)**

### **30 days or at Separation/Retirement:**

- Review DD-214 for correct information. **MAKE SURE** it is correct!
- Submit VA Disability package at separation/retirement. **(FDC at Retirement)**
- If unemployed you may be eligible for unemployment compensation at separation. Visit your local state employment office with your DD-214 for information. **(Separating members especially retirees make too much to draw usually on retirement checks)**
- Veterans may seek assistance at local state employment offices for employment with front of the line privileges for service.