

Transition Handbook

2016

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

UPDATED: DEC 2015



USCG Alaska Transition Information

Developed to provide information and resources during the transition process to active duty and reserve personnel along with their families.

USCG schedules the five day TAP GPS class once annually in Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan and Valdez based on enrollment needs.

Kodiak schedules three or four classes annually based on projected needed.

A current class schedule is provided in this handbook.

USCG personnel stationed in Anchorage and other locations around Alaska may request to attend a class at Joint Base Elmendorf - Richardson (JBER) when space is available.

If travel is required to attend a TAP GPS class 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/>

For Questions or
Information
Contact

USCG Transition Manager
All Units in Alaska:
Debbie Bower
HSWL Kodiak
Debbie.J.Bower@uscg.mil

TRM office and classroom in Kodiak is located inside the BASE Education Center in Barracks 4, Building 7 on Windrider Drive.

WHAT IS TAP GPS?

A Transition Assistance Program (TAP) to assist military families with their transition from military life to civilian life. Goals, Plans, Success (GPS) is curriculum based classes consisting of mandatory and optional employment information and Veteran Benefits.

HOW DO I START THE PROCESS:

1.) CONTACT YOUR UNIT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE FOR PRE-SEPARATION COUNSELING AND DD-2648.

2.) CONTACT USCG Transition Manager for guidance in enrolling into a TAP GPS class.
(See page 5 for enrollment form)

- First step is always (**Pre-Separation Counseling & Completing DD-2648**) provided and signed by **your unit representative**. Check with your Unit Admin Office. Online class is available to all members and provides detailed information in all areas of DD-2648.
 - Complete Form DD-2648 with LMS Module (Course Code 100061) located on <https://elearning.uscg.mil/>
 - Each section is printable from the drop down menu to print if desired.
 - Print your ITP (Individual Transition Plan) to work on independently and **BRING TO CLASS**
 - Unit Admin must sign and date the DD-2648. **E-Mail to TRM** or **BRING TO CLASS**
- Establish your E-Benefits Premium account at www.ebenefits.va.gov using a government computer with CAC card. (**Premium Account: means you have a DS Login & Password to use from personal computer.**)
 - Print confirmation e-mail provided - **BRING TO CLASS**
- Print out your Joint Services Transcript <https://jst.doded.mil> - **BRING TO CLASS**
 - If attending a DOD TAP class you will use the JST Transcript in the place of a VMET (Verification of Military Education and Training) **USCG members do not have a VMET**

WHO SHOULD ENROLL IN CLASS:

- Retirement or Retirement Eligible Personnel: May request a class 2 years in advance or at their 20th year of service.
 - **Retirees must request exemption in ADVANCE of class from 3 day Department of Labor Employment Class if they do not plan on attending.**
 - **Retirees may enroll to attend only VA Benefits and Retirement Information briefs.**
- End of Enlistment Personnel: May request 1 year in advance if considering departure from service.
- All other personnel under other circumstances should request as soon as possible.
- Personnel located at units where local USCG Classes are held (Kodiak, Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, Valdez)
 - **MAY** request attendance in advance of these time when seats available and unit has granted approval.
 - Classes are a great opportunity for information when space available seats are available.

USCG CLASS ENROLLMENT:

- Kodiak: **January 25-29** or **April 25-29** or **September 12-16** or **December 5-9, 2016**
 - Ketchikan: **February 8-12, 2016**
 - Sitka: **March 7-11, 2016**
 - Valdez: **April 4-8, 2016**
 - Juneau: **November 14-18, 2016**
1. **Fill out enrollment sheet enclosed and e-mail to debbie.j.bower@uscg.mil USCG Transition Manager or call 907-487-5341. (See page 5 of package for enrollment form.)**
 2. **All attendees must complete the two online courses below and BRING CERTIFICATE TO CLASS**
 - **Personal Financial Planning Class (TGPS-US003)** on Joint Knowledge Online (JKO) <http://jko.jten.mil/> - CG SUPRT 855-247-8778 is available to assist with Transitional Budget.
 - **MOC Crosswalk Class (TGPS-US002)** on Joint Knowledge Online (JKO) <http://jko.jten.mil/>
 3. **RETIREEES requesting EXEMPTION from 3 day DOL Employment Class please note your request on enrollment form. EXEMPT individuals DO NOT need to complete the MOC Crosswalk Class and will be enrolled to attend the two days of class that includes information on Retired Pay, Survivor Benefit Plan, TRICARE and Veteran Benefits.**

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF RICHARDSON (JBER) ENROLLMENT:

- **Completed DD-2648 signed by unit should be sent to debbie.j.bower@uscg.mil and brought to class.**
- **Completed confirmation of course at JBER should be sent to TRM Debbie Bower for documentation.**

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.**
- **Transportation:**
 - **Your unit is responsible for providing and funding your travel orders. Please work with your unit.**

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**

Resources Available Online:

Pre-Separation Counseling

- LMS Module (Course Code 100061) located on <https://elearning.uscg.mil/>

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

Mandatory classes located on Joint Knowledge Online (JKO) <http://jko.jten.mil/>

- 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
- 5. TGPS-US005 Federal Employment 4 hours
- 6. TGPS-US006 VA Benefits I 1 hour
- 7. TGPS-US007 VA Benefits II 3 hours

Optional classes located on Joint Knowledge Online (JKO) <http://jko.jten.mil/>

- 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

CG SUPRT is always available to provide our members with a financial coach to address budgets, 12 month transitional budgets, funding higher education, getting out of debt and improving your credit score or how to fund college!

- **Free service while on active duty**
- **855-247-8724 or www.cgsuprt.com or 855-CG SUPRT**

TRANSITION ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP REGISTRATION FORM - AK UNITS

Rank & Name: _____

Unit: _____ Years in service: _____ Married: _____

Spouse attending class: _____ Name if attending: _____

Select one:

____ Voluntary Retirement ____ Involuntary Retirement ____ Medical Board
____ Voluntary Separation ____ Involuntary Separation/Discharge

Please provide approximate dates if known:

Retirement Date: _____ Orders Received: _____

Separation/Discharge Date: _____ Orders Received: _____

Member request enrollment in Transition GPS Class: (Select from dates & locations below)

KODIAK, ALASKA

Monday: Retired Pay, SBP, TRICARE Brief

Tue-Thur: Career Employment Brief

Friday: VA I and VA II Brief

____ January 26-29, 2016 with retiree brief meeting on Tuesday Jan. 5th this class only!

____ April 25-29, 2016

____ September 12-16, 2016

____ December 5-9, 2016

KETCHIKAN, ALASKA

____ February 8-12, 2016

VALDEZ, ALASKA

____ April 4-8, 2016

SITKA, ALASKA

____ March 7-11, 2016

JUNEAU, ALASKA

____ November 14-18, 2016

AK Mainland Units with access to JBER/Anchorage

Members wishes to enroll and attend a class at JBER in Anchorage select preference.

____ JBER Elmendorf Schedule

____ JBER Ft Richardson Schedule

ALL TRAVEL TO CLASSES MUST BE FUNDED THROUGH UNIT FUNDS.

ALL OTHERS WILL COMPLETE ONLINE CLASSES THROUGH JKO.

Pre-Separation Counseling and DD-2648 in most cases must be completed in advance of attending class.

Scan completed form and e-mail to: Debbie.J.Bower@uscg.mil

Questions please contact me directly at 907-487-5341

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.

Assistance with VA Paperwork and Filing your VA Disability Claim:

It is always recommended that you use a Veteran Service Organization (VSO) to help you!

Where can I find help:

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.**
- **Travel schedule to more remote areas is available when you call the above offices.**

Attending a USCG class location:

- ***Kodiak, Alaska Appointments with Vietnam Veteran of America - Lucy Gifford***
 - ***Contact Debbie Bower for appointment 907-487-5341***
 - ***Tentative Kodiak Dates for 2016***
 - ***January 4-8, 2016***
 - ***April 25-29, 2016***
 - ***September 12-16, 2016***
 - ***Several other VSO representatives visit Kodiak annually. Contact Anchorage offices directly.***
- ***Ketchikan, Sitka and Valdez Alaska Classes - Vietnam Veteran of America - Lucy Gifford***
 - ***Contact Debbie Bower 907-487-5341 for appointment during TAP class enrollment***
 - ***Appointments are held during TAP Class when possible.***
- ***Juneau - Vietnam Veteran of America - Lucy Gifford - Office is located in Juneau contact her directly for all appointments. Office: 907-465-4211 or lucygifford38@yahoo.com or toll free 1-855-565-4211***
- ***Leaving the state of Alaska without any assistance. A listing of VSO's is available on the VA website at www.va.gov and many states have State Veteran Affairs office that can assist you in locating services. Check out your state web page for more information.***

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 (**Veterans and CHAMPA VA Families**)
 - VGLI Life Insurance Conversion: www.va.gov
- Research Supplemental Health Care Policy if needed with TRICARE Standard: 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
 - 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
- 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
- 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.

USCG Transition Office

Debbie Bower, HSWL Base Kodiak, Alaska

Debbie.J.Bower@uscg.mil

907-487-5341

Providing departing service members with:

- Transition Resources
- USCG Transition Class Schedules
- Federal Resume Information & Resources
- Civilian Resume Information & Resources
- Retirement & Survivor Benefit Information
- Thrift Savings Plan Information
- VA Resources
- Veteran Service Organization Information
- Retiree Dental Information
- TRICARE Transitional Information & POC's



As a Transition Manager with the United States Coast Guard, I look forward to working with you and your family through the transition process.

I have 23 years in Alaska working with USCG and Navy families and know the real key to success in transition is having a plan, starting early, and self advocating through the process.

My office is available to provide resources, referrals and assistance in regards to your questions and concerns. Please feel free to contact me before, during and after your transition class.

Debbie Bower