



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  

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**OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING**

Chapter: 5 Section: 7  
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#### VETERANS PRIORITY OF SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

All program activities issued or executed by program operator, regardless of how they are procured, must be administered in compliance with priority of service requirements, including priority for veterans and eligible spouses.

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#### IDENTIFICATION OF VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE SPOUSES

Sub recipients and grantees must develop and implement processes to identify veterans and eligible spouses who physically Access service delivery points or who access service delivery programs through the Internet in order to provide veterans and eligible spouses with timely and useful information on priority of service at the point of entry.

1. Point of entry may include reception in-person through an Illinois workNet Center or virtually through Illinois workNet, as part of an application process for a specific program, or through any other method by which veterans and eligible spouses express an interest in receiving services.
2. The Veteran's Priority poster in the notices tab must be displayed in the Illinois workNet centers in a prominent location where applicants can see it upon entry to the center so that veteran applicants can easily be made aware of their priority of service.



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**OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING**

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**REQUIRED INFORMATION FOR VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE SPOUSES**

When identifying veterans and eligible spouses, Illinois workNet Center staff and other grantees and sub grantees must ensure that veterans and eligible spouses are made aware of the following:

1. Entitlement to priority of service. Under the Jobs for Veterans Act, a "covered person" is entitled to priority of service under twenty (20) DOL -funded workforce programs including WIOA Title I Adult , Youth, and Dislocated Worker programs, statewide activity programs, National Emergency Grants (NEG ) and the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program.
2. Applying Priority of Service. The application of priority of service varies by program depending on the eligibility requirements of the particular program.
  - A. Qualified Job training programs fall into two basic categories:
    - 1) Universal Access programs;
      - a) For workforce programs that operate or deliver services to the public as a whole without targeting specific groups, veterans and eligible spouses must receive priority of service over all other program participants.
      - b) Veterans and eligible spouses receive the first level of priority in universal access programs; and
    - 2) Programs that require prospective participants to meet specified eligibility criteria.
      - a) Eligibility criteria identify basic conditions that each and every Participant in a specific program is required to meet.
3. It is important to note that a Veteran or eligible spouse must first meet any and all of the statutory eligibility criteria in order to be considered eligible for:
  - A. Enrollment in the program;
  - B. Receipt of priority for enrollment in the program; and
  - C. Priority for receipt of services.



4. In addition to the eligibility criteria that all participants are required to meet, some programs also have priorities that establish a rank order to be observed in enrolling or serving participants. These priorities can be of two types:
  - A. Programs and services with Statutory requirements
    - 1) For a service such as classroom training, priority of service applies to the selection procedure as follows.
      - a) If there is a waiting list for the formation of a training class, priority of service is intended to require a veteran or eligible spouse to go to the top of that list.
      - b) Priority of service applies up to the point at which an individual is both:
        - i) Approved for funding; and
        - ii) Accepted or enrolled in a training class.
      - c) Therefore, once a non-covered person has been both approved for funding and accepted/enrolled in a training class, priority of service is not intended to allow a veteran or eligible spouse who is identified subsequently to "bump" the non-covered person from that training class.
    - 2) Verifying Status.
      - a) The Final Rule does not change or add to pre-existing program requirements regarding verification of the eligibility of a veteran or eligible spouse.
      - b) It is neither necessary nor appropriate for program operators to require verification of the status of a veteran or eligible spouse at the point of entry, unless the individual who self-identifies as a veteran or eligible spouse is:
        - i) To immediately undergo eligibility determination and be registered or enrolled in a program; and
        - ii) The applicable federal program rules require verification of veteran or eligible spouse status at that time.
      - c) Even in those instances in which eligibility determination and enrollment occur at the point of entry, a veteran or eligible spouse should be enrolled and provided immediate priority and then be permitted to Follow-up subsequently (prior to or at the time of enrollment in intensive or Training Services) with any required verification of his or her status as a veteran or eligible spouse.
      - d) For programs or services that cannot rely on self-attestation (e.g., classroom training), verification only needs to occur at the point at which a decision is made to commit outside resources to one individual over another.
        - i) In contrast, the commitment of program staff effort does not require verification of status by a veteran or eligible spouse.
        - ii) For more eligibility and document requirements, refer to the Eligibility section of this policy manual.
    - B. Programs and services with Discretionary priorities
      - 1) Some qualified job training programs may include a focus on a particular group or make efforts to provide a certain level of service to a particular group without the authorizing law specifically mandating that the target group be served before other eligible individuals.

- 2) Because a discretionary focus of this type is not a statutorily mandated priority or targeting requirement, veterans and eligible spouses must receive the highest priority for programs or services with a discretionary targeting requirement.
  - a) Non-covered persons within the discretionary targeting group then receive the second level of priority.
  - b) Non-covered persons outside the discretionary targeting group receive the third level of priority.
- 3) With respect to priority of service, the only feature that distinguishes discretionary targeting programs from universal access programs is the additional application of the discretionary targeting criterion to the non-covered persons.
- 4) Therefore, for veterans and eligible spouses, priority of service applies to discretionary targeting programs and services the same way that it applies to universal access programs, i.e., veterans and eligible spouses first.
- 5) Prior policy guidance on priority of service and the recently published regulations gave considerable attention to the application of priority of service to programs with discretionary priorities.
  - a) However, a review of qualified job training programs conducted in conjunction with the development of this guidance did not identify any prominent examples of programs that currently have discretionary priorities.
  - b) For additional guidance on the ways that priority of service interacts with eligibility criteria and statutory priorities see the TEGl in the references tab.