

Spotlight on Public Affairs: Most Veterans Say Military Service Boosted Civilian Job Prospects

2025 Veterans Insight Panel Survey

The Veterans Insight Panel (VIP) is a joint effort between NORC at the University of Chicago and RAND that captures the voices of U.S. Veterans who aren't already connected to services from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This study, funded by NORC, includes only interviews from NORC's AmeriSpeak® panel.

Funded and conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago.

Interviews: 9/26-10/23/2025

1,627 Veterans, ages 18-94

Margin of sampling error: ± 3.46 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level

NOTE: All results show percentages among all respondents, unless otherwise labeled..

AGE

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
18-44	372
45-59	387
60+	868
N=	1,627

SEX

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
Male	1,428
Female	199
N=	1,627

TIME SINCE SEPARATION

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
0-2 years	53
3-5 years	71
6-10 years	116
11-20 years	255
21+ years	1,122
**No answer	9
N=	1,627

TOTAL YEARS IN MILITARY

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
< 1 year	56
1 to less than 4 years	546
4 to less than 7 years	512

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
7 to less than 11 years	168
11 to less than 21 years	173
21+ years	149
**No answer	23
N=	1,627

CL1_25. Did you serve in a combat zone during your military service?

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
Yes	548
No	939
Prefer not to say	134
N=	1,627

VP3B. From which branch of the Armed Forces were you LAST released from active duty?

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
Army	734
Navy	336
Air Force	296
Marine Corps	211
Coast Guard	25
Other	23
SKIPPED	2
N=	1,627

CL5_25. How do you feel about your military service today?

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
Very positive/ Somewhat positive (NET)	1,252
Neutral	250
Somewhat negative/ Very negative (NET)	119
N=	1,627

CL2_25. What was your primary reason for choosing to serve in the military?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
Sense of duty/patriotism	808
Path to independence/ Opportunity to leave home	648
Educational benefits	602
Financial stability	498
Career preparation	358
Family tradition	318
Other	249
SKIPPED	3
N=	1,627

CL3_25. How useful, if at all, was your military service in helping you get a job in the civilian workforce?

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
Extremely useful/ Somewhat useful (NET)	1,117
Not very useful/ Not at all useful (NET)	472

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
Not applicable (e.g., retired, never sought civilian employment)	30
SKIPPED	9
N=	1,627

CL4_25. Did your military experience help you develop skills relevant to your current or most recent civilian job?

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
Yes	695
No	887
SKIPPED	6
N=	1,627

CL6_25. Which of the following do you consider the greatest benefits of your military service?

SELECT UP TO THREE.

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
Self-discipline and personal growth	1,031
Fulfillment of duty/patriotism	727
Financial benefits (e.g., GI Bill, housing)	655
Travel or life experience	647
Sense of community/belonging	336
Preparation for civilian workforce	185
Other	72
SKIPPED	15
N=	1,627

CL7_25. Would you recommend military service to others?

	NORC 9/26-10/23/2025
Yes	1,180
No	212
Depends	229
SKIPPED	6
N=	1,627

Study Methodology

This survey was funded and conducted by NORC. Data were collected using AmeriSpeak®, NORC’s probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. During the initial recruitment phase of the panel, randomly selected U.S. households were sampled with a known, non-zero probability of selection from the NORC National Sample Frame and then contacted by U.S. mail, email, telephone, and field interviewers (face-to-face). The panel provides sample coverage of approximately 97 percent of the U.S. household population. Those excluded from the sample include people with P.O. Box-only addresses, some addresses not listed in the USPS Delivery Sequence File, and some newly constructed dwellings.

Interviews for this Spotlight study were conducted from September 26 to October 23, 2025. We sampled all panelists recruited in 2025 or earlier who reported having previously served in the military. All eligible panel members were drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,627 completed the survey. Invitations were sent by email.

A total of 1,607 interviews were conducted in English and 20 in Spanish. Respondents were offered a small monetary incentive (\$3) for completing the survey. The final stage completion rate is 25.9 percent, the weighted household panel recruitment rate is 26.3 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 78.0 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 5.3 percent.

The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 3.46 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of sampling error may be higher for subgroups.

Sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error and there may be other unmeasured errors in this or any other survey.

Quality assurance checks were conducted to ensure data quality. In total, 79 interviews were removed for nonresponse to at least 50 percent of the questions asked of them, and

for completing the survey in less than one-third of the median interview time for the full sample. These interviews were excluded from the data file prior to weighting.

Once the sample had been selected and fielded, and all the study data had been collected and made final, a poststratification process was used to adjust for any survey nonresponse as well as any noncoverage or under- and oversampling resulting from the study-specific sample design.

Poststratification variables included age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region, urbanicity, military branch, and year released from active duty. Weighting variables were obtained from the August 2024 Veterans CPS Supplement. The weighted data reflect the U.S. population of Veterans age 18 and over.

Additional information on the AmeriSpeak panel methodology is available at: <https://www.norc.org/services-solutions/amerispeak/about.html>.

For more information about the Veterans Insight Panel, visit <https://www.norc.org/services-solutions/veterans-insight-panel.html> or contact VIP-BD@norc.org.

About the NORC Spotlight on Public Affairs

NORC at the University of Chicago's Spotlight on Public Affairs is a series of quick-hitting national surveys and analyses on issues shaping civic life, governance, and public policy conducted using AmeriSpeak's probability-based panels.

About NORC at the University of Chicago

NORC at the University of Chicago conducts research and analysis that decision-makers trust. As a nonpartisan research organization and a pioneer in measuring and understanding the world, we have studied almost every aspect of the human experience and every major news event for more than eight decades. Today, we partner with government, corporate, and nonprofit clients around the world to provide the objectivity and expertise necessary to inform the critical decisions facing society.