

## SkillBridge Program Types and Criteria

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### 1. Purpose

All industry partner and employer (herein referred to as “partner”) proposed SkillBridge programs must first be reviewed and cleared by the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Force Education and Training (herein referred to as “OSD”). Once OSD has reviewed the proposed program and signed the Memorandum of Understanding submitted by the partner, OSD will send the signed MOU to the partner as well as the SkillBridge program managers at the respective military Services where all stakeholders, to include installation level commanders, can develop further implementation plans *if* the proposed program meets Service and installation needs. All proposed programs must meet the following general qualifying criteria and at least one of the categories of SkillBridge program outlined below to be considered.

### 2. General Qualifying Criteria

All SkillBridge programs must meet the following requirements:

- a. Be provided at minimal to no cost to the Service member. Examples of minimal costs include requirement to purchase work boots or cost of industry specific physical examination.
  - b. Be in an occupational area in sufficient demand in the civilian workforce with high probability of post-service employment by the Service member in that occupation following separation.
  - c. SkillBridge training providers must commit to an average: 85% program graduation rate; 100% of participants completing the SkillBridge program will be referred for a job interview; and 90% of the interviewees will be offered civilian employment upon transition off active duty status.
  - d. Offer a rate of pay in the civilian workforce that is commensurate with the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to successfully perform the occupation. The SkillBridge training provider must provide a salary which is equivalent to other employees performing the same job. SkillBridge training costs will not be recouped by a reduced starting salary. The salary should be equal to or greater than the median salary for both occupation and job location, as defined by the DOL’s Career One Stop Salary Finder (<https://www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/wages/find-salary.aspx>). Other factors may be considered, for a lower starting salary, such as salary increases as part of a registered apprenticeship program.
  - e. Offer reasonable prospects of career advancement, especially if employment is an entry-level position.
- Additionally, for a program to qualify for SkillBridge, it must meet the specific criteria for one of the four categories, as listed in paragraphs 3a through 3e.

### **3. Categories and Criteria**

#### **3a. Apprenticeship and Pre-apprenticeship Programs**

*a.* A registered apprenticeship is an employer-driven system for learning the practical and theoretical aspects of a skilled occupation through a combination of on-the-job-learning and related classroom instruction.

*b.* To qualify as an Apprenticeship, the program must meet the standards for a DOL registered apprenticeship.

*c.* To qualify as a Pre-apprenticeship, the program must:

(1) Prepare the participant to enter and succeed in a DOL registered apprenticeship program as defined in 29 CFR § 29. Specific detail must be provided as the compliance for sections § 29.4 through § 29.7.

(2) Be offered by an industry-related organization that has a documented partnership with at least one, if not more, DOL registered apprenticeship program(s).

*d.* All references to “DOL registered apprenticeship”, in paragraphs 3a(a). through 3a(c). refer to registered apprenticeships as administered by the DOL Office of Apprenticeship (DOL/OA). Programs must meet these standards regardless of whether the registration and oversight of the program are handled by an approved State apprenticeship agency or by the DOL/OA. (refer to <https://oa.doleta.gov/bat.cfm>).

#### **3b. Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Programs (IRAP)**

*a.* An Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Program (IRAP) is a high-quality apprenticeship program that includes a paid-work component and an educational or instructional component wherein an individual obtains workplace-relevant knowledge and skills.

*b.* To qualify as an Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Program (IRAP), the program must meet the standards apprenticeship as defined in 29 CFR § 29.

#### **3c. Specific Criteria for On-the-Job Training (OJT)**

*a.* On-the-Job Training (OJT) is a method of preparing individuals to perform specific tasks by providing information about the task, demonstrations of how the tasks are performed, opportunities for the individuals to perform the tasks, and assessments of each individual’s level of performance.

*b.* To qualify as an OJT the program must meet at least one of the criteria in paragraphs (1) through (5) below:

(1) Be an Education and Job Training Program approved by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). (Refer to the VA “Search for Approved Education and Job Training Programs” web site at <http://inquiry.vba.va.gov/weamspub/buildSearchInstitutionCriteria.do>.)

(2) Be a certificate program accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) (refer to ANSI’s “Directory of Accredited Certificate Issuers, Applicants, and Suspended Issuers” at <https://www.ansica.org/accreditation/credentialing/default.aspx>) or the Institute for Credentialing Excellence Accredited Certificate Program (refer to “ICE Accredited Certificate Programs”

(3) Be accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the DE (refer to the DE’s database of accredited programs and institutions at <http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/index.html>).

(4) Be a National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA) approved Education, Training, License, or Certification Program (refer to the NASAA “Search for Approved Education, Training, License, Certification, and National Exam Programs” at <http://www.nasaa-vetseducation.com/programs.aspx/>).

(5) Be a training program accredited by the Council on Occupational Education (COE). (refer to COE’s list of accredited training programs at <http://council.org/membership/>)

#### **3d. Employment Skills Training**

*a.* Employment Skills Training is training or education to acquire the skills required to obtain employment, advance in employment, or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace.

*b.* To qualify as an Employment Skills Training the program must meet at least one of the criteria in paragraphs (1) through (5) below:

(1) Be an Education and Job Training Program approved by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). (Refer to the VA “Search for Approved Education and Job Training Programs” web site at <http://inquiry.vba.va.gov/weamspub/buildSearchInstitutionCriteria.do>.)

(2) Be a certificate program accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) (refer to ANSI’s

“Directory of Accredited Certificate Issuers, Applicants, and Suspended Issuers” at <https://www.ansi.org/Accreditation/credentialing/certificate-issuers/Directory>

(3) Be accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the DE (refer to the DE’s database of accredited programs and institutions at <http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/index.html>).

(4) Be a National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA) approved Education, Training, License, or Certification Program (refer to the NASAA “Search for Approved Education, Training, License, Certification, and National Exam Programs” at <http://www.nasaa-vetseducation.com/programs.aspx/>).

(5) Be a training program accredited by the Council on Occupational Education (COE). (refer to COE’s list of accredited training programs at <http://council.org/membership/>)

### **3e. Internships**

*a.* Internships may be completed in Federal, State, or local government or in the private sector (either for-profit or not-for-profit).

*b.* Internship programs seeking consideration into the SkillBridge program must submit complete course curriculum, or program of instruction for the length of the internship program. This document should outline roles, tasks and responsibilities for both intern, and employer for the length of the program.

*c.* Participation in an internship is based on strict adherence to all criteria in paragraphs (c) through (i) below.

*d.* Eligible Service members may participate in SkillBridge internships offered by training providers that meet the following criteria:

(1) The participating Service member must receive full military pay and benefits while participating in the internships.

(2) The participating Service member must not be requested or permitted to work more than 40 hours in any work week. If a Service member participates in less than 20 hours per week, they shall return to work and not be on administrative leave status.

(3) During the internship, the participating Service member must not act as an agent for the employer before any agency or department of the United States government, consistent with 18 U.S.C. § 205.

*e.* SkillBridge internships with private for-profit employers must comply with all seven criteria included in the Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division in Fact Sheet #71: Internship Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (January 2019):

(1) The extent to which the intern and the employer clearly understand that there is no expectation of compensation. Any promise of compensation express or implied, suggests that the intern is an employee – and vice versa.

(2) The extent to which the internship provides training that would be similar to that which would be given in an educational environment, including the clinical and other hands-on training provided by educational institutions.

(3) The extent to which the internship is tied to the intern’s formal education program by integrated coursework or the receipt of academic credit.

(4) The extent to which the internship accommodates the intern’s academic commitments by corresponding to the academic calendar.

(5) The extent to which the internship’s duration is limited to the period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning.

(6) The extent to which the intern’s work complements, rather than displaces the work of paid employees while providing significant educational benefits to the intern.

(7) The extent to which the intern and the employer understand that the internship is conducted without entitlement to a paid job at the conclusion of the internship.

*f.* SkillBridge internships with private non-profit employers and public agencies must meet the following criteria:

(1) The internship must be designed primarily for the benefit of the participating Service member rather than the employer.

(2) The participating Service member is prohibited from receiving compensation from the employer per 1143(e) Title 10 U.S.C.

(3) The participating Service member must not displace any regular employees but must work under close supervision of the employer's existing staff.

*g.* An internship is a workplace learning experience that assists participants to prepare for employment by observing and performing, within the employer's operating environment, the work activities performed by members of the employer's workforce.

*h.* The Service member will work under the close supervision of the organization's staff for the duration of the program.

*i.* The intern/SkillBridge participant will not complete or exclusively support tasks for which the employer is being compensated through Department of Defense awarded funding.