

St. Charles County Region

Veteran Priority of Service

Updated May 2021

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OWD Issuance 10-2016 defines “priority of service” with respect to a “covered person” as a 1) veteran or 2) eligible spouse of a veteran.

- 1) Veteran – a person who served at least 1 day in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged/released under any condition other than “dishonorable”. Active service includes full-time service in the National Guard or a Reserve component, other than full-time duty for training purposes
- 2) Eligible Spouse – a spouse, widow, or widower of any veteran who died of a service-connected disability; or of any living veteran who has a 100% disability rating resulting from a service-connected disability; or of a member of the US Armed Forces on active duty, who at the time of the spouse’s application has been listed for more than 90 days as:
 - a) Missing in action; or
 - b) Captured in the line of duty; or
 - c) Forcibly detained in the line of duty by a foreign government or power

NOTE: Priority of Service does not change the *eligibility requirements* or the *intended function* of a program or service. To receive priority for a program or service, covered persons still must meet all statutory eligibility and program requirements for participation.

Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses supersedes Priority Level I and II when applicable.

Identifying and Informing Covered Persons

The St. Charles Region will identify covered persons at point of entry (either in person or virtually) or provide the veteran or eligible spouse an opportunity to self-identify.

Once identified, the LWDB will provide timely and useful information on “priority of service” to include:

- Their entitlement to priority of service; and
- The full array of programs and services available to them under priority of service; and
- Any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/or services (only statutory requirements are applicable.)

Implementing priority of service to be applied across 3 different types of qualified job training programs:

- Universal access programs that do not target specific groups (i.e., WIOA Adult State Formula-Funded Grants and W-P State Formula-Funded Grants. Veterans and eligible spouses receive the first level of priority in universal-access programs.
- Discretionary targeting programs that focus on certain groups but are not mandated to serve target group members before other eligible individuals.
- Statutory targeting programs that are mandated by federal law to provide priority or preference to certain groups. Under these programs, priority goes first to:
 1. Covered persons who meet the program’s mandatory priorities; then
 2. Non-covered persons who meet the program’s mandatory priorities; and finally
 3. Covered persons outside of the program’s mandatory priorities

Priority of service does not permit establishing tiers of veterans.

Income calculations

For those programs that have income guidelines, the Final Rule for WIOA implementation states that,

“any amounts received as military pay by any person who served on active duty, and certain other specified benefits must be disregarded for the veteran and for other individuals for whom those amounts would normally be applied in making and eligibility determination.”

For a service such as classroom training, priority of service applies to the selection procedure, as follows:

- 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 the list.
- Priority of service applies up to the point at which an individual is both approved for funding and accepted or enrolled in a training class

The St. Charles Regions will not allow priority of service to “bump” a non-covered person who has been both approved for funding and accepted/enrolled in a training class.

Proof of Status

Verification of the status of a veteran, or eligible spouse, will not be required at the point of entry, unless the individual who self-identifies as a veteran or eligible spouse:

- a) Is to immediately undergo eligibility determination and be registered or enrolled in a program; and
- b) The applicable federal program rules required verification of veteran or eligible spouse status at that time

Even in those instances in which eligibility determination and enrollment occur at the point of entry, a veteran or eligible spouse will be enrolled and provided immediate priority and then permitted to follow-up subsequently with any required verification of his or her status as a veteran or eligible spouse.