



GETTING CONNECTED GUIDE

Now that you have begun engaging internally with your leadership, staff and current veterans, it is time to start looking into your community and your co-op neighbors for support and collaboration. The purpose of this Getting Connected Guide is to help you build your network of supporters and to collaborate with organizations that can help you successfully attract, hire and retain your veterans and military spouses.

Step	Description	Action	Timeline
1	Connect with your state level co-op veteran working group. If your state has a co-op veteran working group reach out to participate. Otherwise, collaborate with other co-ops from your state and start a working group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with the co-ops in your state to collaborate on employing and honoring veterans. • If other co-ops in your state are participating in Serve our Co-ops; Serve our Country, follow steps 2 – 5 as a group to leverage the power and commitment of the coalition. • If not, follow steps 2 – 5 and then encourage your neighboring co-ops to participate. 	Upon joining the coalition.
2	Connect with your local Employer Support of the Guards and Reserve (ESGR) and your Local American Job Center. Share your interest and commitment in hiring veterans and ask how they can help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to www.ESGR.org and find your local ESGR. • Sign the Employer support statement of Guards and Reserve, if you haven't done that already. • Invite ESGR Representatives to speak at your events, such as veteran working group meetings, HR Association meetings, Managers meetings to help with education and collaboration. • Connect with your American Job Center Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) to share your veteran hiring goals and learn how they can help. 	Within 3 months of joining the coalition.



GETTING CONNECTED GUIDE (con't)

Step	Description	Action	Timeline
3	Connect with your local Chamber of Commerce. Share your interest and commitment in hiring veterans and ask how they can help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss your interest in hiring veterans with representatives of the Chamber of Commerce's Hiring our Heroes Program. • Participate in their Veteran Career Fairs. Represent not only your co-op, but the national network of 900+ co-ops across the country. • Request information about participating in their on-base job fairs (transition summits) and virtual job-fairs. 	Within 3 months of joining the coalition.
4	Talk to your Local Universities, Community and Technical Colleges. Share your interest and commitment in hiring veterans and ask how you can partner with them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote our commitment to veteran employment at their career centers. • Discuss opportunities to leverage the G.I. Bill benefits to attract veterans to participate in training programs, on-the-job training (OJT), or apprenticeships to prepare them for the utility industry. • Connect with Student Veteran Chapters and Yellow Ribbon Programs. Support their events, talk about your co-op and the national network of 900+ co-ops. • Attend career fairs on behalf of your co-op and the national network of 900+ co-ops. 	Within 5 months of joining the coalition.
5	Connect with the White House "Joining Forces" Program. If you have one within your state, share your interest and commitment to hiring veterans and ask how they can help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss your interest in hiring veterans with representatives of the White House "Joining Forces" Program. • Participate in their community engagement events. 	Within 6 months of joining the coalition.
6	Connect with your local national Guard and Reserve on their joining Community forces initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss your interest in hiring veterans with your local National Guard and Reserve and express your interest in participating in joining Community forces initiative within your state to empower veteran communities where your co-op operates. 	Within 6 months of joining the coalition.