

Hiring Veterans in the Federal Public Service

Information for members of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates April 30, 2019

This document provides an overview of the hiring of veterans in the federal public service with respect to the provisions of the *Veterans Hiring Act* that amended the *Public Service Employment Act*. It includes background information on priority entitlements; key information about the *Veterans Hiring Act* and data on appointments; and outlines Public Service Commission (PSC) initiatives to support veteran hiring.

Background information about priority entitlements

Priority entitlements at a glance

- Priority entitlements are rights provided for by the *Public Service Employment Act* and the *Public Service Employment Regulations* to help people cope with career changes and life events. By providing greater access to job opportunities, they assist in re-employment into the federal public service.
- As described in the table below, there are 11 [types of priority entitlements](#).

TYPES OF PRIORITY ENTITLEMENTS

Outlined in the Act (precedence of persons with regulatory priority entitlements)

STATUTORY

› Order of consideration for appointments

- 1 Members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) released for medical reasons attributable to service
- 2 Surplus employees within their own organization
- 3 Employees returning from a leave/replacing an employee on leave
- 4 Laid-off employees

Outlined in the Public Service Employment Regulations

REGULATORY

› No order of consideration for appointments

- CAF members released for medical reasons not attributable to service
- Employee who becomes disabled
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police members discharged for medical reasons
- Reinstatement
- Relocation of spouse or common-law partner
- Surplus employee from another organization
- Surviving spouse or common-law partner if the death is attributable to the performance of duties

- 2 types of priority entitlements apply to medically released Canadian Armed Forces members:
 - those released for medical reasons **attributable to service**
 - those released for medical reasons **not attributable to service**

- All federal departments and agencies subject to the *Public Service Employment Act* (currently 75 departments and agencies) must consider persons with a priority entitlement before making an appointment to a position.
- Priority entitlements provide hiring managers with a talent pool of potentially qualified individuals who can be appointed quickly and efficiently.
- Persons with a priority entitlement are to be appointed ahead of all others — if they are found qualified for the position (see Annex B for more details).

Roles and responsibilities in administering priority entitlements

Public Service Commission

- The PSC is responsible for administering and overseeing priority entitlements in accordance with the *Public Service Employment Act* and the *Public Service Employment Regulations*. The PSC sets and interprets policies, directives, guides and procedures to support departments and agencies in administering priority entitlements.

Home and hiring departments and agencies

- Home and hiring departments and agencies are expected to respect the priority entitlement provisions of the *Public Service Employment Act* and the *Public Service Employment Regulations*, and are accountable to the PSC for their role in administering the entitlements.
- Departments and agencies are also responsible for providing support to their own persons with a priority entitlement, and for showing consideration of the circumstances of persons with a priority entitlement in all interactions.

Key information about the *Veterans Hiring Act*

On July 1, 2015, the *Veterans Hiring Act* amended the *Public Service Employment Act* to help the transition of Canadian Armed Forces members and veterans into federal public service positions for which they are qualified. For more information about the history of priority entitlements, key dates and mechanisms related to the hiring of veterans in the federal public service, please see Annex A.

The following 3 provisions were introduced by the *Veterans Hiring Act*.

Priority entitlement provisions for veterans

- Canadian Armed Forces members who were medically released for service-related reasons have top statutory priority for appointment to any job for which they are qualified.
- Canadian Armed Forces members whose medical release is **not** attributable to service continue to have a regulatory priority entitlement.
- In order to qualify for the priority entitlement, Canadian Armed Forces members released for medical reasons must be certified to be ready to return to work within 5 years from their date of release for medical reason.

- Once activated, both the statutory and regulatory priority entitlements are for 5 years, or until the person is permanently appointed to a position in the federal public service.

Preference for appointment

- Applies to veterans with a minimum of 3 years of service who were honourably released in the past 5 years.
- Veterans have preference for appointment in job postings open to the general public. If found qualified for the position, they must be appointed ahead of other candidates (but only if there are no persons with a priority entitlement qualified for the position).

Mobility provision

- Provides access to public service jobs for veterans and Canadian Armed Forces members who are not indeterminately (permanently) employed in the federal public service.
- Canadian Armed Forces members and veterans can apply to jobs that are open only to current federal public service employees.
- Canadian Armed Forces members must have served a minimum of 3 years.
- Veterans must have a minimum of 3 years of Canadian Armed Forces service, and must have been honourably released in the past 5 years.

Overall results since the *Veterans Hiring Act* came into force in July 2015

This section presents the registration and appointments for the 3 *Veterans Hiring Act* provisions.

Veterans released for medical reasons who activated their priority entitlement:

1 440 medically released veterans (for reasons attributable to service, or not) activated their priority entitlement from July 1, 2015, to March 31, 2019 (see table below for more details).

Registration of priority entitlement for Veterans released for medical reasons (attributable to service, or not) July 1, 2015, to March 31, 2019	
Period	Number of registrations
July 1, 2015, to March 31, 2016	545
Fiscal year 2016-17	323
Fiscal year 2017-18	306
Fiscal year 2018-19	266
Total	1 440

Source: Priority Information Management System

Appointments of veterans with a priority entitlement:

- A total of 799 veterans were appointed through the priority entitlement provisions from July 1, 2015, to March 31, 2019 (see table below for more details).

Appointments of veterans with a priority entitlement to departments and agencies under the <i>Public Service Employment Act</i> by type July 1, 2015, to March 31, 2019					
Priority type	July 1, 2015, to March 31, 2016	Fiscal year 2016-17	Fiscal year 2017-18	Fiscal year 2018-19	Total
Veterans released for medical reasons — attributable to service	20	107	156	154	437
Veterans released for medical reasons — not attributable to service	102	107	81	72	362
Total	122	214	237	226	799

Source: Priority Information Management System

- The table below indicates the top 10 hiring departments and agencies for veterans with a priority entitlement, from July 1, 2015, to March 31, 2019.

Departments and agencies	Number of appointments
National Defence	514
Canada Revenue Agency	34
Employment and Social Development Canada	31
Veterans Affairs Canada	29
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	28
Correctional Service Canada	25
Public Services and Procurement Canada	21
Shared Services Canada	19
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	17
Health Canada	13
Other departments and agencies	68
Total	799

Source: Priority Information Management System

- As highlighted in the table below, trends to date indicate that veterans are more likely to find a job in the public service during the first 2 years of their priority entitlement.

Appointments of veteran priorities per year						
Period	Total registered	Total appointed (2015-7-1 to 2016-3-31)	Total appointed (fiscal year 2016-17)	Total appointed (fiscal year 2017-18)	Total appointed (fiscal year 2018-19)	Total appointed As of 2019-3-31
July 1, 2015, to March 31, 2016	545	122/545 (22%)	135/545 (25%)	40/545 (7%)	20/545 (4%)	317/545 (58%)
Fiscal year 2016-17	323		79/323 (24%)	104/323 (32%)	25/323 (8%)	208/323 (64%)
Fiscal year 2017-18	306			93/306 (30%)	96/306 (31%)	189/306 (62%)
Fiscal year 2018-19	266				85/266 (32%)	85/266 (32%)
	1 440	122	214	237	226	799

Appointments through preference for appointment and mobility (permanent and term appointments):

- From July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2018, 269 veterans were appointed through the preference provision of the *Veterans Hiring Act*, and 380 Canadian Armed Forces members and veterans were appointed through the mobility provision of the *Public Service Employment Act*.
- Over the last 4-year period, starting July 1, 2015, the minimum number of appointments for the 3 provisions is 1 448, detailed as preference (269), mobility (380) and priority entitlements (799).

Key Public Service Commission initiatives to support the hiring of veterans

a) PSC’s veterans advisors

- As part of its efforts to support veterans, the PSC hired 2 veterans as veterans advisors. They are public servants who had a priority entitlement for medically released Canadian Armed Forces members. They specialize in providing guidance and advice concerning policies, practices and procedures related to priority entitlements to former Canadian Armed Forces members with a priority entitlement. PSC veterans advisors use the same language,

can relate to veterans and can explain how the priority system works by sharing their own experience and knowledge. They also consult with veterans to improve PSC services.

b) Consulting veterans

- Starting fiscal year 2017-18, the PSC's veterans advisors consulted 2 groups of veterans with a priority entitlement, for a total of 115 veterans, to gather intelligence on their experience and needs to date. The results show that veterans are generally satisfied with the job opportunities identified for them, but that they still need information about the processes related to public service staffing and priority entitlements.
- After these consultations were completed, PSC veterans advisors have continued to contact veterans registered in the Priority Information Management System¹ to offer assistance and key information (as of April 25, 75% of veterans registered in the System have been contacted). In some instances, the advisors were able to resolve veterans' public service staffing issues by providing personalized guidance. This approach also ensures that veterans have a contact at the PSC, should they have any questions about their priority entitlement or staffing process.
- During PSC consultations, the following reasons were mentioned by those veterans who were not actively looking for a position in the public service:
 - still grieving military life and navigating military career management process
 - experiencing psychological and/or physical after-effects
 - already have a job in the private sector (remain registered in the system in case they find a better job in the public service)
 - not interested in office type work
 - want to remain in their community

c) Orientation Program for Persons with a Priority Entitlement

- In December 2018, the PSC launched an [Orientation Program for Persons with a Priority Entitlement](#). The program provides persons with a priority entitlement, including veterans, with the information they need to increase the likelihood that their entitlement will lead to a public service job. It provides a guide, videos and orientation sessions to help them better understand, and make full use of, their priority entitlement.
- The orientation sessions are offered by the PSC on a regular basis, across the country, in person and through WebEx for those who cannot travel. A total of 49 veterans with a medically released priority entitlement have participated in one of 15 orientation sessions, 5 of which were offered on military bases in March 2019. A new series of orientation sessions will be offered over the next 5 months. A [calendar of these sessions](#) will be sent to all persons with a priority entitlement, and is posted on the Government of Canada website. By

¹ The Priority Information Management System is an automated, web-based tool developed and maintained by the PSC. It helps ensure that priority entitlements, as mandated by the *Public Service Employment Act* and the *Public Service Employment Regulations*, are valid, and that they are applied. It lists persons with a priority entitlement in an inventory which managers use to fill vacant positions, and is the primary tool used to match persons with a priority entitlement to job opportunities.

providing relevant and timely information, the PSC is helping persons with a priority entitlement:

- better understand how their priority entitlement works
- prepare to actively and effectively search for employment opportunities
- improve their likelihood of finding a job in the federal public service

d) Collaboration with other organizations

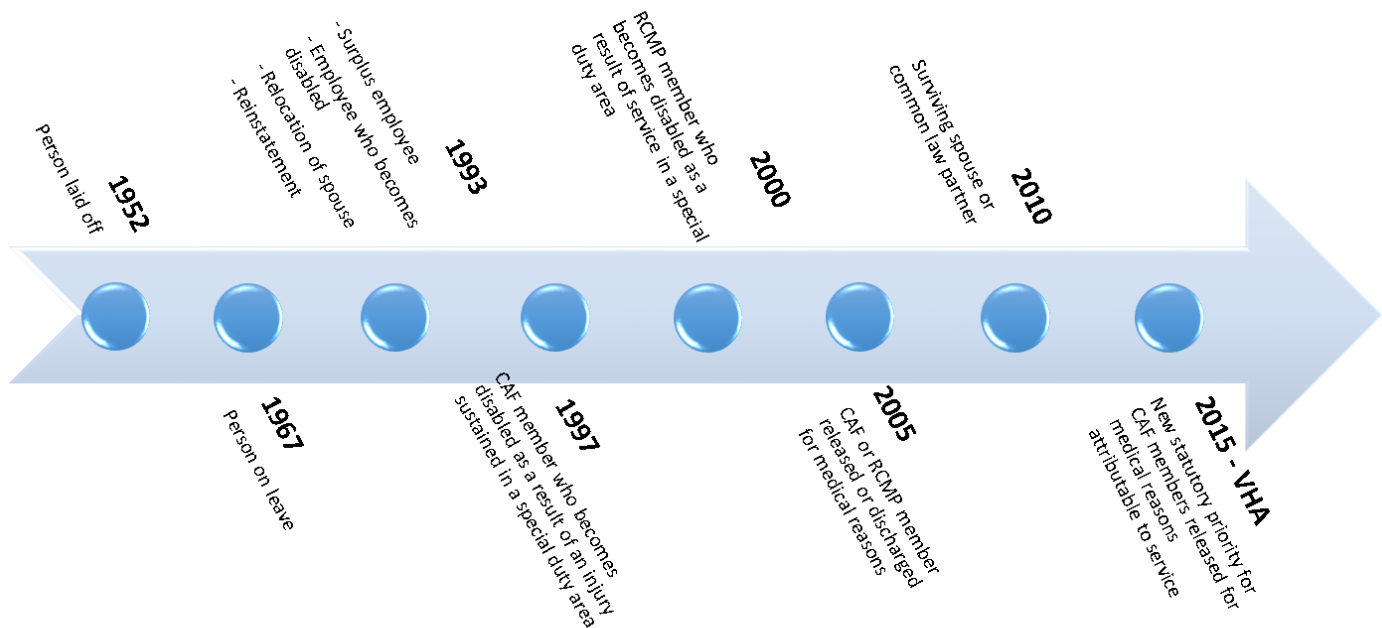
- Since 2015, the PSC has worked with other federal organizations to support veterans, including with the Department of National Defence and Veterans Affairs Canada:
 - to provide timely, adapted and targeted services to releasing Canadian Armed Forces members
 - to update the Second Career Assistance Network seminars, which help prepare releasing Canadian Armed Forces members for a return to civilian life
- The PSC also supported recruitment initiatives such as Veterans Affairs Canada's Vet-Select, Invictus Games and the Canadian Border Services Agency Facebook live event.

Looking ahead

- In the coming months, the PSC will continue to:
 - oversee cohort appointments to identify trends and challenges in the hiring of veterans
 - engage with veterans to gather intelligence on their experience and needs
 - promote and deliver orientation sessions to provide timely and relevant information
 - collaborate with partners to better support veteran hiring
 - further develop tools and strategies to improve the hiring of veterans in the federal public service

Annex A – History of priority entitlements

Introduction of priority entitlements in the *Public Service Employment Act* and *Public Service Employment Regulations*.



1) Key dates and mechanisms related to hiring veterans in the federal public service

Priority entitlement

March 1997: A new priority entitlement was established under the *Public Service Employment Regulations* for Canadian Armed Forces members who were disabled because of an injury sustained while on military duty in a special duty area **outside Canada**. The entitlement was for 2 years and the member had to be ready to return to work within 2 years after the member became disabled.

July 1998: The priority for appointment for members of the Canadian Armed Forces was amended to align the provision with the Canadian Forces Administrative Orders and thus correctly describe those who are eligible for the priority for appointment.

July 2004: The term “special duty area” (outside Canada) in the regulations was changed to “special duty service,” to expand the priority entitlement to members on special duty **in Canada**.

December 2005: The priority for appointment for members of the Canadian Armed Forces was amended to include members who were medically released, as opposed to only those who became disabled during special duty service. In addition, the eligibility period within which the Canadian Armed Forces member had to be certified as being ready to return to

work was extended from **2 years after the member became disabled** to **5 years after the day on which they were medically released**.

July 1, 2015: The *Veterans Hiring Act* amended the *Public Service Employment Act* to provide better access to public service employment opportunities for veterans. Canadian Armed Forces members who are medically released for service-related reasons now have **top statutory priority for appointment**.

2) Transition measures

Through transitional provisions of the *Veterans Hiring Act*, all medically released Canadian Armed Forces members who benefitted from a priority entitlement as of April 1, 2012, and who had not been indeterminately (permanently) appointed, were offered a new 5-year priority entitlement. At the time, 67 veterans took advantage of the transition measures. The priority for these veterans will expire on June 30, 2020.

Annex B

Consideration of persons with a priority entitlement (PPEs) - how it works

