



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER  
JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, TEXAS**

## **Transition Assistance Program Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q: What are the mandatory events I have to attend?**

**A:** New legislation requires all service members to complete four mandates before separation or retirement:

1. Pre-separation Counseling, DD Form 2648
  - a. Members affected by Force Management must complete this form as soon as possible after notification of pending separation.
2. Transition Goals, Plans, Success Workshop
  - a. Department of Defense/Air Force Core Curriculum
  - b. Department of Labor Employment Workshop
3. Veterans Affairs Benefits Briefings
4. Capstone, DD Form 2958
  - a. Career Readiness Standards verified
  - b. Commander/designee signature required

### **Q: Is assistance available to help me prepare for separation?**

**A:** Transition assistance is available at your installation Airman and Family Readiness Center. Mandatory pre-separation counseling, which is the launching point of the Transition Assistance Program, should be completed first. This counseling provides in-depth information on benefits, entitlements and available resources for members and their families.

The Goals, Plans, Success -- or GPS -- Workshop should be the next step in the process. This is the only mandated step that has allowable exemptions. Exemptions apply for service members retiring with 20 or more years of active-duty service; service members with documented civilian employment or acceptance to an accredited career technical training, undergraduate or graduate degree program; members with specialized skills which require deployment within 60 days; and Air Force wounded warriors enrolled in an approved Education and Employment Initiative. The transition redesign includes a fully integrated, outcome-based training program referred to as Transition Assistance Program GPS. TAP GPS provides each transitioning service member a broad range of information such as skills building and counseling services to strengthen their transition from military to civilian life, and preparation for succeeding in the next phase of their life.

The VA benefits briefing is mandated for all personnel -- most GPS workshops include this curriculum. Those people exempt from attending the workshop may attend stand-alone VA briefings, if available.

Finally, the Capstone -- the culminating activity to verify career readiness -- is mandated for all personnel and should be accomplished no later than 90 days before separation or as soon as possible for those people impacted by Force Management. In conjunction with the Airman and Family Readiness Center transition counselor, each commander or approved designee is required to sign the DD Form 2958 to document service member career readiness standards. These standards include having a 12-month post-separation budget plan, resume, etc., as determined by the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

In addition to the mandatory elements of TAP, there are three, two-day tracks, that transitioning personnel can participate in:

- **Accessing Higher Education** is geared toward individuals interested in pursuing education at an accredited academic institution;
- **Career Technical** track is for personnel interested in pursuing further technical training in careers requiring a licensure or certification; and
- **Entrepreneurship** track is for those interested in pursuing self-employment in the private or nonprofit sector.

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**Q: When should I begin participating in TAP?**

**A:** You should participate as soon as possible. By law, you may begin participation as early as 12 months before separation and retirees can participate up to 24 months before retirement.

Those people impacted by Force Management programs should start the process as soon as possible. Participating in TAP does not in any way obligate you to separate. In fact, early participation can help you decide whether it is more advantageous for you to voluntarily separate or await the outcome of the board. If you elect to await the outcome of the board and are not identified for separation, you will have lost nothing and, at the very least, gained an understanding of the transition process.

**Q: Will I have to take leave to participate in the TAP?**

**A:** No. Participation in the transition programs is official duty.

**Q: How do I sign up for Transition Assistance?**

**A:** Contact your installation A&FRC and request an appointment for Pre-separation Counseling using the DD Form 2648. This comprehensive counseling will provide a foundation for other TAP-related activities, so try to receive it first.

**Q: Does the TAP offer employment placement services?**

**A:** The focus of the program is preparation, not placement. However, participants receive information on a wide array of employment opportunities and resources, as well as training designed to make them competitive in their job search.

**Q: If stationed overseas and I'm not retained (involuntarily separated), what options will I have to return to CONUS to job hunt?**

**A:** You will have the option of using any terminal leave and will be entitled to up to 30 days of permissive TDY.

**Q: Will I receive any TAP benefits?**

**A:** Retirees are authorized permissive TDY – up to 20 days CONUS / 30 days OCONUS for job searching, house hunting, and other relocation-related activities. Involuntary separatees receive an ID card that provides 2-years of commissary / exchange benefits and 180 days of extended medical care for self and family. Possible transitional use of Military Family Housing, unemployment compensation, a NAF hiring preference and permissive TDY for job search and house hunting are also possible.

**Q: What kind of transition services and benefits will I receive?**

**A:** Check the AF Benefits & Services Matrix for your program-specific transition benefits.