



Who we are: Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is a Department of Defense program designed to be a FREE resource to Guard and Reserve service members and their employers regarding the employment rights of citizen-soldiers, airmen, and sailors, and assist in connecting service members with suitable, meaningful jobs. Each state has an ESGR committee that fulfills the national mission. We recognize the value of the service member to his/her employer, but we also recognize the value of an understanding employer to the service member's success in their military mission. They are one leg of the three-legged stool, comprised of the citizen-warrior, their family, and their employer.

Our mission is to gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service.

We accomplish this by:

- a. Informing and educating both employers and service members about their rights and responsibilities under the law (USERRA.) We urge mutual respect, understanding, and frequent communication.
- b. Recognizing outstanding support provided to our Guard members and Reservists by our employers. A service member can thank their supervisor by nominating them for awards.
- c. Resolving any disputes that arise regarding the relationship between a service member/employee and their employer. We encourage building relationships over a long term with a service member's employer/supervisor.
- d. Facilitating meaningful and suitable employment opportunities for unemployed or underemployed veterans *and their spouses*

Our message to the service member:

- We have a simple message for our Guard and Reserve men and women – that they have protections under the law, they have resources in-state, and we are here for them before, during and following deployment or other service. The law does not tolerate discrimination or retaliation against a military service member at any point, regardless of their employment status with an organization. ***Please call us BEFORE an attorney, as once you've spoken with an attorney (other than JAG), we are prevented from helping you!***
- We encourage service members to notify their employers as soon as is reasonable and in writing concerning their military duty schedule, especially for deployments. ***This ensures that their absence is protected by law.***
- We remind service members of the annual requirement to update their civilian employment information – they can do it online with your CAC from home but usually during an SRC/SRP at: (<http://www.dmdc.osd.mil>)
- We invite service members to nominate their employer for a Patriot Award to thank their supervisor or company for the support they have given them. Even an employer who provides a “hassle-free” environment is worthy of the award. Either the service member or their spouse can nominate their supervisor for the award. Go to <http://www.esgr.mil> to complete an online nomination. In some cases, employers go above and beyond what is required of them by law – please contact us first to discuss the award to be presented as they may be eligible for a higher award.
- Upon a service member's return, we urge them to contact their employer within the time required by law (1-30 days – report next scheduled work day; 31-180 days – 14 days, over 180 day deployment - 90 days) in writing and let them know of their intent to return to work. ***(This also ensures protection under the law.)*** Unless your

position has been removed due to down-sizing, you are entitled to a job comparable to one that you would have held, had you been continuously at work.

- **If you return from military service and are out of work**, we can connect you with resources that can assist you in your job search. Call one of us below for initial help. Another one of the best resources available is your VT Department of Labor Career Resource Center (<http://labor.vermont.gov/workforce-development/career-resource-centers/>.) Be sure to identify yourself as a veteran when you arrive at one of the regional centers. See [labor.vermont.gov](http://labor.vermont.gov) for more job search information and resources.) You can also register as a job seeker for free at <http://www.veterans.gov>.

ESGR is one of the most powerful retention tools that a unit leader can draw from. We lose nearly 30% of our service members due to conflicts with their civilian employers. When someone is having problems getting away from work to perform military duty, he or she often decides that they must leave the Guard or Reserves. With command's interest and concern, and working with our office and employers, we can save many of those potential losses! We have trained ombudsmen who can mediate conflicts between a service member and their employer, and usually resolve issues by simply pointing out that there are job protections under the law and inviting them to review those rights and responsibilities online.

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The Vermont ESGR Committee is supported by the National ESGR office and a small but dedicated local team of key volunteers and full-time staff. We continue to reach out to key members of the Vermont civilian employer community, as well as senior National Guard and Reserve leaders. Vermont ESGR enjoys a moderate but meaningful events calendar, while undertaking critical employer and military outreach activities. The national message is translated into one that is uniquely Vermont, appropriate and best-suited to Vermont's demographics and our many close strategic relationships.

**ESGR operates** through a network of thousands of volunteers nationwide and in all state committees. ESGR conducts volunteer activities, like employer outreach and awards presentations, military education briefs, and mediation. ESGR's dedicated volunteers come from all walks of life. They are business executives, military spouses, civic leaders, military personnel, and patriotic citizens. ESGR volunteers seek to improve the employer relations of our brave men and women that place themselves in harm's way, leave their families, and put their careers on hold as they preserve our way of life.

We maintain close strategic alliances with: US Department of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training Services, Vermont Director; US Small Business Administration, Vermont Office; Vermont Department of Labor, Workforce Development Division; and area Human Resources Professional Associations.

We are always seeking interested volunteers from around the state, who are willing and available to help us in the ESGR mission. Please contact us at the number below if you would like to serve as an ESGR volunteer.

Locations: VT ESGR Offices at the **Enosburg Falls Armory**, the **Berlin Armory**, and the **White River Reserve Center**

Best number to contact for general assistance: Linda Fowler at 802-338-4187

David J. Wheel, Executive Director/Program Support Specialist at the White River Junction Reserve Center

Linda Fowler, Program Support Technician at the Enosburg Falls Armory

E-mail 1: [linda.a.fowler.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:linda.a.fowler.ctr@mail.mil) and Phone: (802) 338-4187

E-mail 2: [david.j.wheel.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:david.j.wheel.ctr@mail.mil) and Phone: (802) 338-4190

We are also intermittently at the Berlin Armory office.

ESGR Web site: [www.esgr.mil](http://www.esgr.mil); Vermont ESGR state page is located at: [www.esgr.mil/vermont](http://www.esgr.mil/vermont)

US DOL-VETS program jobs site at: [www.veterans.gov](http://www.veterans.gov).