

**Directives on the Provision of Services to Employees of the
City of Columbus Who Are Veterans of the U. S. Armed Forces**



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**Michael B. Coleman
Mayor, City of Columbus**

Prepared by the Office of the Mayor:
Michael Schwarzwald, Chief of Staff

As City Employees are being called into active military duty through the United States National Guard and Reserves, the Office of the Mayor is seeking to improve internal tracking, monitoring and service provision to those employees and their families. It is the goal of the City of Columbus to ensure the positive re-entry to the workforce of all veterans, as well as the continuity of services to employees' families during deployment, in line with both the letter and the spirit of Federal Law.

Mayor Michael B. Coleman, on March 25, 2004, brought together an advisory committee to study the City's policies on Veterans' issues and make recommendations. The committee was comprised of: Chief of Staff Michael Schwarzwald and senior staff; Chester Christie, Director of Human Resources; Henry Guzman, Director of Public Service; Tom Horan, Assistant Health Commissioner; Councilwoman Charleta Tavares; Chief of Staff for Council President Habash, Melinda Swan; the Mayor's Veterans Liaison Steve Miller, and representatives of local Veterans Organizations, including: Dave Bradley, Merle Pratt, Bill Chavanne, Dick Long, Carl Swisher, Jake Brewer, John Dreska, David Hartley and Anthony Angello.

Directives on Identifying, Tracking, Monitoring and Assisting Military Personnel Employed by the City of Columbus

1. With the full cooperation of all City Departments, all military personnel serving in the Armed Services who are employed by the City of Columbus shall be identified by the Department of Human Resources (HR) and the following information shall be entered into a database designed by the Department of Technology (DOT): (HR will take all necessary steps to ensure the confidentiality of employee information)
 - a. Name, Department and position with City
 - b. DOB and personal contact information: local address, telephone (work, home and mobile), names and contact information for immediate family members or designated friends.
 - c. Military Service Data, date of entering service, current status, call up date, departure date, return date, financial issues if departing.
2. HR shall be responsible for maintaining the central database, tracking the departure and return of employees, and maintaining a list of Internal Veterans Contacts, who can assist returning veterans with employment, health or personal issues that may arise upon the person's return to the City from active duty.
3. Each Department of the City of Columbus shall immediately notify HR in writing upon the call up, assignment to active duty, and return of any employee. Each department shall obtain and retain a copy of the employee's orders for assignment to active duty. During the period of time that an employee serves on active duty, his/her employing Department shall maintain regular contact, at least bi-monthly, with a person or persons (up to 2) designated by the employee.

4. Upon the notification of the return of an employee to Columbus from active duty, a representative from HR and the employing Department shall meet with that employee within seven (7) working days of his/her return and counsel the employee on resources available to the employee, including but not limited to:
 - a. The Internal Veteran's Contact personnel cited in Section 2;
 - b. A reference list of services provided to HR by veterans' groups;
 - c. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP);
 - d. Trauma assistance and other mental health programs within the City;
 - e. Financial assistance, counseling, legal assistance, advice on employment rights and any other resources that are identified.

The Departmental representative and HR will notify the Office of the Mayor of the veteran's return.

5. There is hereby established a Veterans Committee of the City of Columbus which shall consist of one representative from each City Department. The Committee will work in partnership with the Columbus Veterans Advisory Board; public employee labor representatives; representatives of existing veterans groups in the greater Columbus area and with the City's Veterans Liaison to accomplish its mission. The Committee Chair will be a City Department Director, appointed by the Mayor.
 - a. The Committee will meet regularly to consider and recommend policies, procedures, programs and trainings that will enhance and facilitate the re-entry process for employees returning from active duty.
 - b. The Committee, in conjunction with the Mayor's Office, will be responsible for establishing and producing "Welcome Home" events, programs and materials for returning veterans as well as an annual reunion for veterans and families of veterans.
 - c. The Committee will also coordinate and promote family support groups for veterans serving on active duty, including support for children whose mothers are on active duty.
6. HR shall coordinate a training program for supervisors in all City Departments that will include:
 - a. Basic provisions of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA);
 - b. Training to identify behaviors that may be related to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder;
 - c. Briefings on assistance available through Columbus EAP;
 - d. Listing of referral contacts for internal and external services compiled by HR;
 - e. A single point of contact within HR with whom supervisors can communicate regarding any issues with returning employees.