

Military Spouse Participant Focus Group Protocol

[MODERATOR: READ INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT. ALLOW EVERYONE TO RESPOND]

Thank you so much.

Recruitment

Thank you. Our first questions are about how you became aware of the Employment Navigator program.

1. So, how did you first become aware of the Employment Navigator program?
 - a. IF NEEDED: What are all the ways you heard about this program? For instance, did you see materials (flyers, posters), receive an email, attend a webinar? What about word-of-mouth?
 - b. IF NEEDED: What did your branch do to advertise/promote this program to TSMs/spouses? What about your base?
2. What do you think of these efforts?
 - a. What was most compelling to you? Or most helpful?
3. In your own words, how would you describe the program?
 - o PROBE: As a result of what you read, saw, or heard, how familiar are you with the program?
4. How familiar are military spouses in your community with the Employment Navigator program?
 - o PROBE: Have they discussed it with other spouses?
5. How long did it take you to get an appointment with an EN? Were you pleased or disappointed with the length of time between requesting an appointment and meeting with an EN?

Assist, Explore, Plan model

As we begin, we have some questions about how satisfied you were with different aspects of this program. Your candid responses will help DOL and VETS improve this program as it rolls out to other bases. And remember, we will not use your names in any of our reporting.

I'll first ask how satisfied you were, but we're *really* looking for as much detail as you can provide about your experiences—what worked well, what didn't work, what you wish would have been different.

Before we begin, I'd like to know what information and services you received from the Employment Navigator you worked with. We have a question about your enrolled spouse, but for now, please think only about services and information you have received.

6. Can each of you describe what information and services you received?

Ok, let's get started. [MODERATOR: PROBE AS NEEDED TO GET DETAILS]

7. How satisfied were you with the logistics of scheduling and meeting with the EN?
8. How satisfied were you with the self-assessment—how the EN helped you understand your career interests and strengths?
 - a. What about your satisfaction with the interest and aptitude testing?
9. How satisfied were you with the assistance you received to explore careers?

- a. IF NEEDED: This includes help identifying high-demand occupations, necessary credentials, and getting labor market information for where you'll go after you and your spouse separate?
- 10. Did you receive any other types of assistance from the EN? If so, what were they and how satisfied were you with them?
- 11. Overall, thinking about all the services you received, how satisfied were you?
- 12. How well did the services match what you were expecting to receive?
 - a. How individualized were the guidance and services you received? How, if at all, were they tailored to your needs and aspirations post-separation?
 - b. What, if anything is missing? How can this program be improved?
- 13. Based on your experiences so far, how confident are you that you have the resources, knowledge, and preparation to find employment?
 - o PROBE: Did you receive enough information?
- 14. Did you receive the right type of information?
- 15. What can you tell us about your spouse's experiences with an Employment Navigator?
 - o PROBE: What services did they receive? How did the process work? How helpful was it?

Warm Handovers/Connections

Now we have a few questions about the partner agency or agencies you may be working with—local agencies like American Job Centers as well as national partners like VeteransASCEND.

- 16. How has this process worked so far?
- 17. Who were you connected to?
 - o PROBE: Governmental partner? Non-governmental partner?
 - a. Did you receive everything you need, both information and support, to connect with [this agency/ these agencies]?
 - b. Did the partner reach out to you promptly after the connection was made?
- 18. Based on what you know so far, how well [does this partner/ do these partners] match what you feel you need?

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