

II.F AGENCY WORKFORCE PLAN

Overview

The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) contains a core of well-trained veteran assistance counselors, veteran employment representatives, veteran education program specialists, and grant specialists to aid veterans, their families, and survivors throughout Texas to meet the needs required to accomplish the agency mission and strategic goal. They are supported by clerical staff in their respective regions. TVC administrative staff is located in Austin, Texas.

With approximately 1.53 million veterans living in Texas, the state's veteran population has remained relatively stable over the past decade. This contrasts with the overall U.S. veteran population, which has declined during the same period.

This stability reflects continued in-migration of veterans to Texas, offsetting broader national declines. Texas continues to attract and retain veterans due to economic opportunity, cost of living, and access to services. As a result, demand for services remains strong, particularly among two key groups: younger veterans, who often need education and employment assistance, and older veterans, who more frequently require services related to aging.

Current Workforce Profile

The basic business issues of TVC are administration, Claims, Veterans Employment Services, Veterans Education, and the Grants for Veterans Services. The knowledge required to provide successful claims assistance, veterans employment services, and veterans education services are knowledge of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Labor (DOL) laws and operating policies and procedures. Employees must have the skills to apply the required knowledge within the VA and the DOL system to successfully provide veterans and their families with all services needed to obtain their benefits and entitlements. The critical knowledge and skills required in administration are financial, human resources, accounting, communications, purchasing and the basic administrative knowledge and managerial skills required to successfully operate a state agency.

The average turnover rate of TVC in the last three years from 2023 to 2025 was 19.4 percent. During this period, the turnover rate was as high as 19.8 percent in FY23 and reached a low of 15.9 percent in 2025.

In FY25 TVC turnover rate was slightly higher than the statewide turnover rate, which averaged 15.4 percent. It is anticipated that the turnover rate will fall below the statewide average in FY26.

TVC has responded to attrition by successfully recruiting quality employees. TVC will continue to utilize the Veterans Employment Program, Work in Texas, LinkedIn, TVC Social Media pages, the agency's career page, and employee referrals to fill positions as they become vacant. TVC has also implemented an internship program through Hiring our Heroes which places highly skilled and educated transitioning service members, veterans, and military spouses with employers committed to hiring the intern. TVC's recruiting efforts have proven successful in obtaining quality employees in a timely manner in response to attrition to meet agency business needs.

The agency continues to encourage a mentoring program to match experienced and skilled employees with employees seeking to learn from them. These mentoring relationships can also help less experienced and skilled employees identify their career goals and plan their career development. Because agency turnover is disproportionately high for TVC employees, with less than four years of service, mentoring needs to continue to be offered and emphasized.

TVC will maintain agency career ladders to help employees identify development paths to prepare for jobs with higher-level skill requirements, as well as develop a searchable database to inventory employee training and skill sets so that employees may be identified for development and possible promotional opportunities. Supervisors will be made aware of what skill sets are critical to meeting their objectives and can plan for employee attrition. Succession planning will also address staffing or skill imbalances due to turnover and retirements.

Gap Analysis

A significant percentage (18 percent) of the agency's employees are either eligible to retire now or will be eligible within the next five years. Succession planning and knowledge transfer offer the opportunity for the next generation of TVC employees to launch new ideas that appreciate historical progress while moving services to new levels. TVC programs have high impact staff that cannot be easily replaced because of the employees' expertise and talents. In some cases, there are no natural feeders within the agency from which to draw. In other cases, the person occupying the position has a unique set of skills that cannot be readily found in the marketplace. TVC has a large contingent of tenured staff with institutional knowledge that cannot be quickly gained through the completion of training courses.

The commission is currently operating at 93 percent staffing capacity. However, it is likely to face continued personnel shortage due to retirements, increased workload demands, and competition from other state and federal agencies.

Personnel shortages, combined with the time required to train replacements and to equip existing staff with the advanced skills needed to address evolving technologies, may negatively impact the agency's ability to meet future operational requirements. Concerns also exist regarding the allocation of funds for staff and support functions. While mandates to expand programs and services have led to a significant increase in personnel, funding for support staff has remained limited. Additionally, the agency will continue to face challenges in remaining competitive with private sector and federal employers.

Strategy Development

Goals to address TVC's projected workforce gap will include the following:

Development

Encourage employee development by continuing TVC's training program that requires employees to earn a minimum number of training credits each year.

Offer employee training to strengthen critical skills by continuing to provide a mix of internal and external classroom instruction, as well as online and DVD-based options to ensure accessibility for field staff and accommodate varying schedules. Continue to actively communicate available training opportunities, including those offered through the Employee Assistance Program and low-or no-cost programs available through other agencies (that TVC employees may attend at little to no cost).

Continue to inform and encourage employees to enhance skills through the expert led, online video tutorials offered through LinkedIn Learning, a paid service offered by TVC for all employees. Continue to provide thorough leadership training to all levels of agency managers, as well as potential managers.

Encourage managers to create programs that allow employees who are seeking new challenges to work on special projects, rotations, and developmental assignments (to help them increase their knowledge and experience, even if promotional opportunities are temporarily stagnant). Conduct regular training needs assessments to identify training of interest to employees and managers.

Recruitment

Every department has the need to attract and retain high performing people with valuable skills. Therefore, a variety of recruitment and retention strategies are available throughout the agency including:

- Hiring and selection methods for best fit
- Compensation
- Awarding bonuses
- Promoting state benefits
- Integrating staff development with career ladders
- Establishing formal and informal orientation programs
- Creating positive work culture and conditions
- Maintaining work/life balance and family friendly policies including flexible work hours
- Telework opportunities
- Ensuring sufficient salaries and merit increases; and
- Creating recognition programs.

Retention

TVC's executive team is committed to preparing for the future by continuously retaining and developing highly qualified personnel who will be prepared to transition into leadership and mission-critical positions in the future.

Career Development

All supervisors are responsible for planning for the development needs in their areas of responsibility. Through analysis of a position's job duties, management will work with individual employees to create individual development plans based on the required knowledge and skills. The development plans must address current and future needs.

Leadership Development and Replacement

The following elements are essential to the leadership development and replacement process:

- Key replacement needs and critical positions to include in the succession plan
- Key competencies of job performance in all critical positions
- Key high potential employees, and the individual development plans necessary to prepare them to be replacements in critical positions
- Methods for preparing and developing employees for advancement
- Processes for knowledge transfer
- Possible obstacles that make knowledge transfer difficult and possible solutions; and
- Priorities, desired outcomes, expected results, and timelines for implementation.

Leadership succession integrates competency-based learning tracks with career development. The long-range goal is to prepare staff to perform competencies within specific at-risk functions and to prepare them to be competitive for future career opportunities.

Workforce Plan Evaluation and Revision

The Workforce Plan will be implemented in connection with TVC's Strategic Plan. Strategic Plan changes due to leadership or legislative changes may result in adjustment to the Workforce Plan.

Human Resources (HR) will develop a stronger partnership with each of the programs and divisions to determine training needs and assist with workforce strategic and succession planning. HR will provide divisions with information regarding turnover, retirement eligibility, and tenure, in addition to assisting in developing and recruiting a diverse workforce.

Future Workforce Profile

As a market-driven system, the Texas workforce system will continue to evolve and improve to meet veteran needs and deliver outstanding customer service. Accordingly, the agency's critical functions will adjust to meet the new challenges. Overall fluctuations in the economy will have an impact on TVC in terms of the agency's workforce and the need for the services our staff oversees and provides to the public at large. Legislation on the federal and state levels also impacts the operations of TVC.

It is expected that TVC's mission, goals, and strategy will not change significantly over the next five years. Claims assistance counselors, veteran employment representatives, veteran education program specialists, and grant specialists, who are the core of the Commission's professional workforce, require strong knowledge of state and federal veteran benefit programs and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Labor (DOL) policies and procedures which

affect the administration of benefits to the Texas veteran population and their families.

Developing the skills required by claims assistance counselors, veteran employment representatives, veteran education program specialists, and grant specialists to competently serve Texas veterans will remain a priority in future agency workforce plans. To accomplish commission goals and meet statutory requirements, competent training must continue with Veterans County Service Officers who are critical in assisting the Commission to meet its established mission, goals, and strategy. The TVC staff will need support through training and equipment to keep abreast of ever-changing computer technology.

Expected Workforce Changes

The immediate future is easier to predict, but long-term planning is more difficult. Although more unknown variables exist, experience and short-term future trends are helpful when planning for the next few years. Flexibility is the key, but anticipated critical functions and workforce changes that will carry TVC into the future may include:

- Changes in leadership as retirements occur
- Increased demand for efficiencies to make best use of available budget and full-time employees
- Increase in less-tenured and less-experienced staff
- Improved communication and understanding employers' needs
- Marketing services to the business community and workers
- Providing enhanced statistical analysis of data collected
- Increasing advanced research and evaluation
- Increasing focus on program integrity and fraud prevention
- Increased use of technology throughout the agency
- Increased demand for more sophisticated and integrated information and analyses; and
- Increased demand for knowledgeable technical assistance staff.

Commission administrative personnel will require ongoing training to keep up with changes in federal budget procedures (OMB Circulars), accounting and human resource best practices and policies to efficiently use both fiscal and human resources made available to the Commission by the Legislature. Training of commission personnel and Veterans County Service Officers will remain a critical function as the Commission plans for future service to veterans and their families. Currently, commission personnel have the necessary skills to perform their jobs due to the training made available to them. With the expectation of continued migration of veterans to Texas over the next five years, the commission may require additional Veterans Services Representatives to meet the demand. Requests for additional personnel will be for areas of the state where the projected demand for services is growing.

Employment Service Satisfaction

Understanding employer expectations is critical to effectively connecting veterans with meaningful employment opportunities. TVC Veterans Employment Services uses a strategic, data-informed approach to monitor labor market trends within the labor market and align veteran skill sets with employer demand, using various tools provided by the Texas Workforce Commission.

The Veterans Employer Liaison (VEL) staff are fully integrated with the Workforce Business Units across the state. The VELs also work very closely with Veteran Career Advisors to identify the skill sets of veterans seeking employment to match those skill sets with employers' needs. To anticipate the changing employer needs and ensure those needs are met, TVC employs several methods to accurately assess the current level of satisfaction and to be able to better project the future needs of the employer. Those methods include but are not limited to:

- Employer panel discussions
- On-site outreach visits
- Active participation in employer organizations such as the local chamber of commerce and other professional business organizations.

To accurately evaluate and measure employer satisfaction, TVC conducts an employer/customer feedback survey that is administered throughout the year. The results are reviewed and evaluated for trends and for future improvement.

Data-Driven Program Improvement

TVC Veterans Employment Services continues to evaluate program data supplied by the Texas Workforce Commission. The Workforce Management Information System (MIS) provides federal and state reporting data through the Workforce Investment Performance Report (WISPR). TVC Veterans Employment Services is mandated to report on intensive services provided by Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) staff, Veteran Entered Employment, Retention on average earnings to the Department of Labor, and the Legislative Budget Board. In addition to the reporting requirements, TVC Veterans Employment Services analyzes the data supplied by MIS to identify trends, shortfalls, staffing needs and benchmarks for the future.

Continuous Improvement and Innovation

TVC Veterans Employment Services continues to evaluate services to veterans and employers through partnerships and data collection. In addition, TVC continues to share information on best practices with stakeholders, state, and federal agencies, as well as veteran employment service providers nationwide.