



EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE (E2I) OPERATION WARFIGHTER (OWF)

INFORMATION BRIEF



Tristen Wendland
Senior Program Manager Operation Warfighter (OWF)

February 2026





Warrior Care, Recovery Coordination Program

Education and Employment Initiative

Operation Warfighter

Contact Information and Social Media



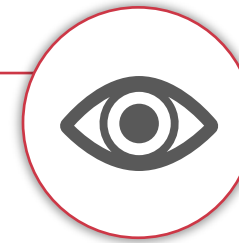


OUR MISSION



Proactively support Recovering Service Members (RSMs) in their recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration back to the service or transition into civilian life.

OUR VISION



Ensure the RSMs are well prepared for the next step in their lives through career development, support of caregivers and encouragement of lifelong adaptive activities for those with physical and emotional challenges.



POLICY

Develops policy that standardizes non-medical care provided to wounded, ill, and injured Service members, families, and caregivers across Military Department and SOCOM RCPs throughout the continuum of care.

OVERSIGHT

Monitors and reports on the accessibility, utilization, and performance of DoD and Military Department and SOCOM RCPs.

OPERATIONS

- ▶ Provides IT platform to track Comprehensive Recovery Plans for each RSM
- ▶ Maintains the National Resource Directory, an online resource repository for service members, veterans, military families and caregivers
- ▶ Executes the Employment and Education Initiative and Operation WARFIGHTER programs

COMMUNICATION

Performs strategic communication to ensure stakeholder awareness of policies, programs, and resources affecting wounded, ill, and injured Service members, families, and caregivers.



RSM Comprehensive Recovery Plan



Education and Employment Initiative (E2I)



OBJECTIVE

To assist Recovering Service members (RSMs) in identifying and matching their skills and experience with education and career opportunities.

Governed by: DoDI 1300.25 "Guidance for the Education and Employment Initiative (E2I) and Operation Warfighter (OWF)" – March 2013

Overview

- ▶ Regional Coordinators (RC's) work with the RSMs to determine education requirements for desired career path. These educational requirements may include formal degree programs or training, certification and licensing programs.
- ▶ RC's build relationships by developing partnerships with federal and private organizations across different industries. These partnerships are essential for identifying career matching opportunities for transitioning RSMs.

Eligibility

- ▶ Service members going through the Disability Evaluation System
- ▶ Service members in a warrior care program (Army Recovery Care Program, USMC Wounded Warrior Regiment, Navy Wounded Warrior, Air Force Wounded Warrior, SOCOM Warrior Care)



BENEFITS

- ▶ Assists with developing a transition goal plan for education and/or employment
- ▶ Aids RSMs with seeking new career opportunities beyond military
- ▶ Works with Veterans Readiness and Employment (VR&E) counselors who assess and identify new skills of the RSMs
- ▶ Reinforces skills by matching certifications and training for no cost; aids in use of available resources for furthering education and employment needs

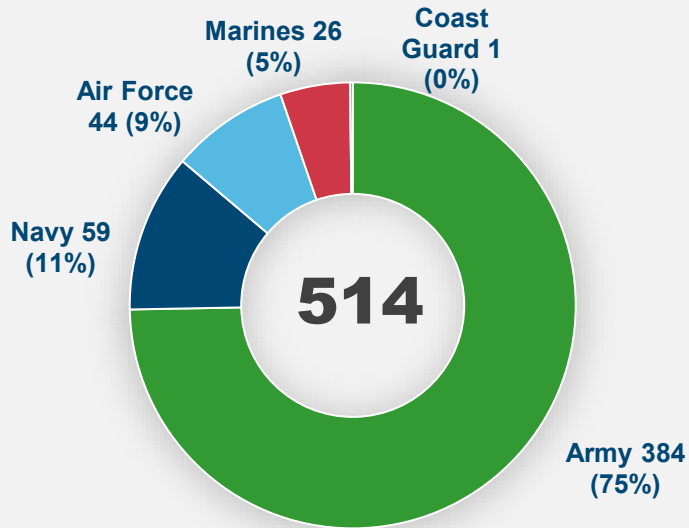


Education & Employment Initiative (E2I)



Mission: To assist Recovering Service members (RSMs) in identifying and matching their skills and experience with education and career opportunities.

RSMs Supported



Education and Outreach



851
Education and Outreach Events

9.6K
Attendees



Feedback

13%
Response Rate

97%
My education/
employment goals
are addressed

95%
Resources provided
meet my needs

90%
E2I met my needs

91%
Would
recommend E2I

All data is for CY2025



Operation Warfighter (OWF)



OBJECTIVE

Regional Coordinators (RCs) connect Recovering Service members (RSMs) with Federal Agency internships during their rehabilitation process to transition military skills into civilian occupational success.

Governed by: DoDI 1300.25 "Guidance for the Education and Employment Initiative (E2I) and Operation Warfighter (OWF)" – March 2013

Overview

- ▶ Department of Defense internship program for Recovering Service members
- ▶ Internships are with federal agencies only
- ▶ Internships cannot interfere with the Service member's medical or rehabilitation requirements.

Eligibility

- ▶ Service members going through the Disability Evaluation System
- ▶ Service members in a warrior care program (Army Recovery Care Program, USMC Wounded Warrior Regiment, Navy Wounded Warrior, Air Force Wounded Warrior, SOCOM Warrior Care)

BENEFITS



Recovering Service member

- ▶ Maximizes recovery time, provides valuable work experience in a non-military environment
- ▶ Assists with developing new skills
- ▶ Provides benefit of career preparedness upon transition to civilian life

Federal Agency Partner

- ▶ Fresh perspectives and unique insights
- ▶ Increased productivity for the organization
- ▶ Cost-free solution



OWF and DoD Skillbridge Comparison



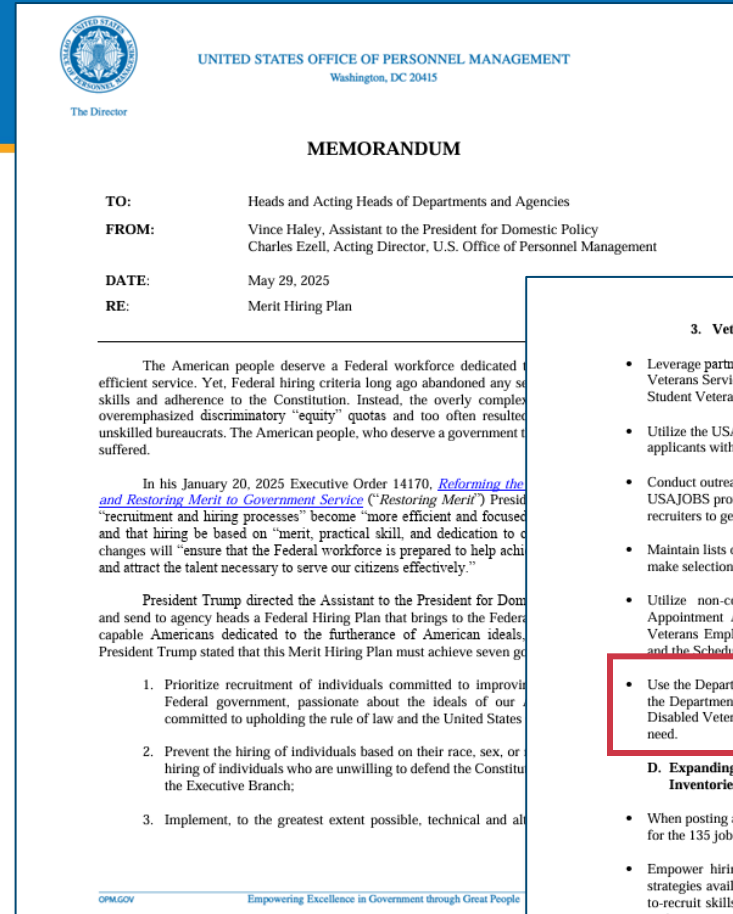
	Operation Warfighter	DoD Skillbridge
Eligible Participants	Wounded, ill, or injured Service members still on active-duty; does not require official separation/retirement date.	Active-duty Service members transitioning out of the military during the last 180 days of service
Purpose and Focus	Offers structured federal internships to support rehabilitation, resume building, skill development, and career readiness.	Provides civilian sector and federal work experience through internships, training, or apprenticeships to improve career readiness.
Duration	Typically 3-5 months	Up to 180 days
Pre-Requisites	None	Complete Transition Assistance Program
Locations	Federal agencies only; in-person, remote, and hybrid opportunities available	Public and private sector partners; in-person, remote, and hybrid opportunities available
Approval	Commander and medical provider must approve	Commander must approve
Outcomes	Aims to aid rehabilitation and reintegration – may position individuals for federal employment, but no job guarantee	Partners required to ensure high probability of a job being available to the participating Service member





HR Best Practices That Agencies Must Adopt

Veterans' Recruitment: Use the Department of Defense – Operation Warfighter (OWF) and SkillBridge Program, the Department of Veterans Affairs – Non-paid Work Experience Program (NPWE) and Disabled Veterans in a Training Program (OJT) to help meet mission-critical occupations needs.



- 3. Veterans' Recruitment
 - Leverage partnerships with relevant state and local veterans' workforce programs and Veterans Service Organizations, including Hiring Our Heroes, the American Legion, Student Veterans of America, and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America.
 - Utilize the USAJOBS Resume Mining feature to identify and connect available veteran applicants with roles for which they may be qualified.
 - Conduct outreach to veterans and military spouses and encourage them to create USAJOBS profiles with searchable resumes that can be easily leveraged by agency recruiters to generate leads for open roles.
 - Maintain lists of qualified veterans and military spouses from which they can quickly make selections.
 - Utilize non-competitive special hiring authorities such as Veterans Recruitment Appointment Authority, the hiring authority for 30% or more disabled veterans, the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA), the military spouse hiring authority, and the Schedule A authority for individuals with certain disabilities.
 - Use the Department of Defense – Operation Warfighter (OWF) and SkillBridge Program, the Department of Veterans Affairs – Non-paid Work Experience Program (NPWE) and Disabled Veterans in a Training Program (OJT) to help meet mission critical occupations need.
- D. Expanding the Use of Standardized Position Descriptions, Candidate Inventories, Talent Pools, and Shared Certificates
 - When posting a new position, use standardized position descriptions developed by OPM for the 135 job series and grades currently covered by USA Hire assessment batteries
 - Empower hiring managers to use the full range of hiring authorities and assessment strategies available to them, particularly those that relate to critical, specialized, or hard-to-recruit skills, and that they are aware of allowable recruitment activity in accordance with merit system principles and lawful personnel practices.
 - Identify positions, through the workforce planning process, including those that require critical and specialized skills, needed across multiple agencies for which recruitment actions, certificates, or lists of eligible candidates could be shared within the agency or with other agencies as part of a governmentwide pooled hiring strategy.
 - Collaborate with OPM to identify hiring actions that will use shared certificates or lists of eligible candidates external to the agency as both the originating and receiving agency, and use the Talent Pools feature in the USAJOBS Agency Talent Portal to share the candidates across agencies.

Reference OPM's Merit Hiring Plan, May 29, 2025


<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/merit-hiring-plan-resources/#url=Overview>




OWF Internship Process




APPLICATION

- ▶ Medical approval 
- ▶ Command approval
- ▶ Interests and capabilities assessment

PLACEMENT


- ▶ RC identifies opportunities with federal agencies 
- ▶ Interview(s)
- ▶ Placed

INTERNSHIP

- ▶ Onboarding
- ▶ Workplace accommodations
- ▶ Development Plan 
- ▶ RC check-ins

90 – 180 Days

CLOSEOUT

- ▶ Development Plan Reviewed
- ▶ RSM Feedback
- ▶ Federal Agency feedback 

Last 30 Days



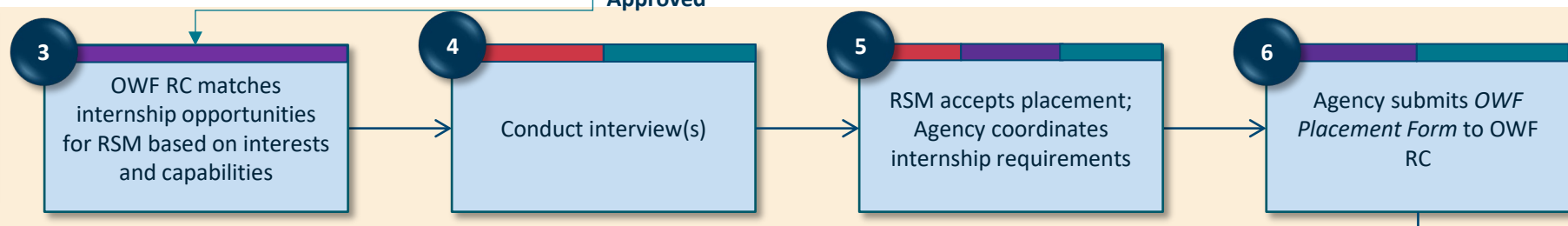
OWF Detailed Process



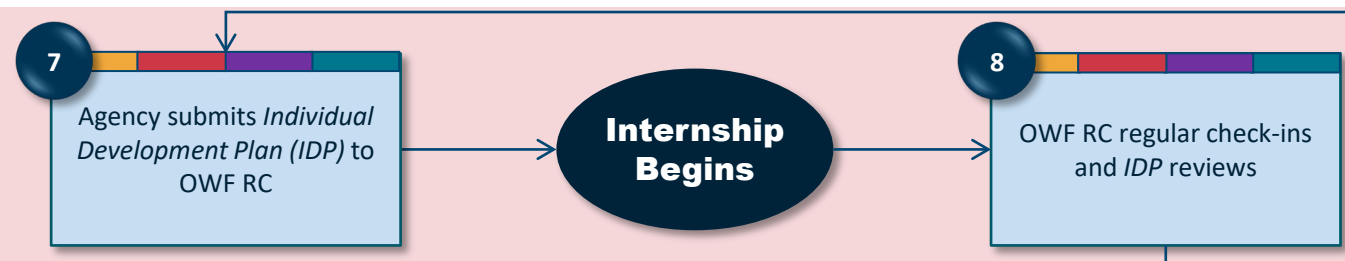
APPLICATION



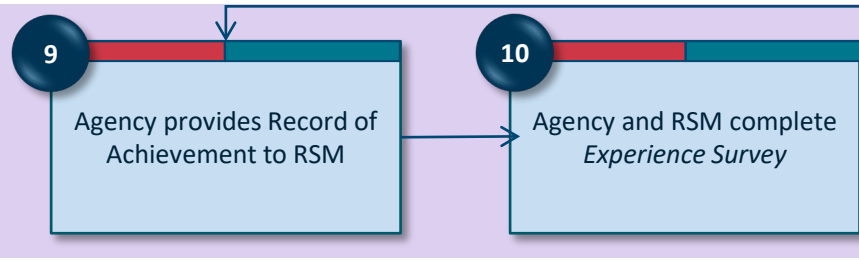
PLACEMENT



INTERNSHIP



CLOSEOUT



Responsibility Key	
■	Commander
■	Medical
■	RSM
■	OWF Regional Coordinator
■	Agency



Partnership Form

Agreement between DoD and federal partner establishing parameters for both parties; expires after 5 years.



Intern Placement Form

Identifies the intern's information, responsibilities, duties, and schedule.



Intern Development Plan

Documents specific tasks associated with the internship as well as goals for the Service member.



Experience Feedback

Online questionnaire to obtain federal partner's and service member's experience feedback.



OWF Type of Talent



Administrative



Human Resources



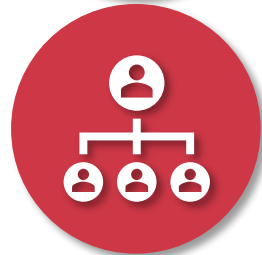
Finance



Healthcare



Logistics



Management



Operations



Information Technology

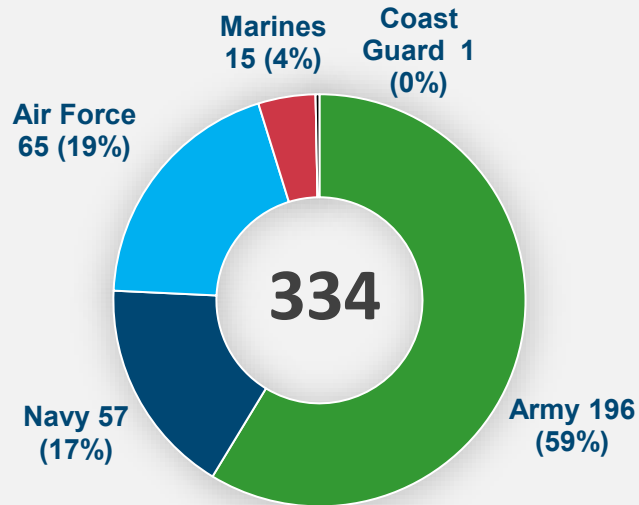


Operation Warfighter (OWF)

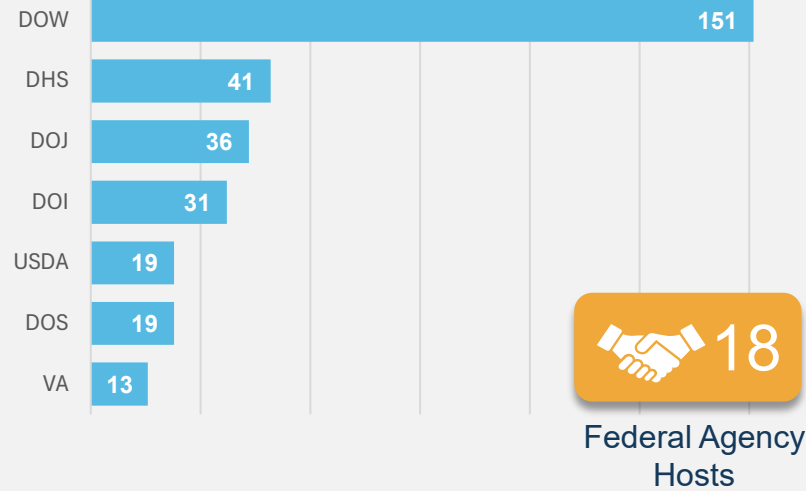


Mission: Regional Coordinators (RCs) connect Recovering Service members (RSMs) with Federal Agency internships during their rehabilitation process to transition military skills into civilian occupational success.

Internships

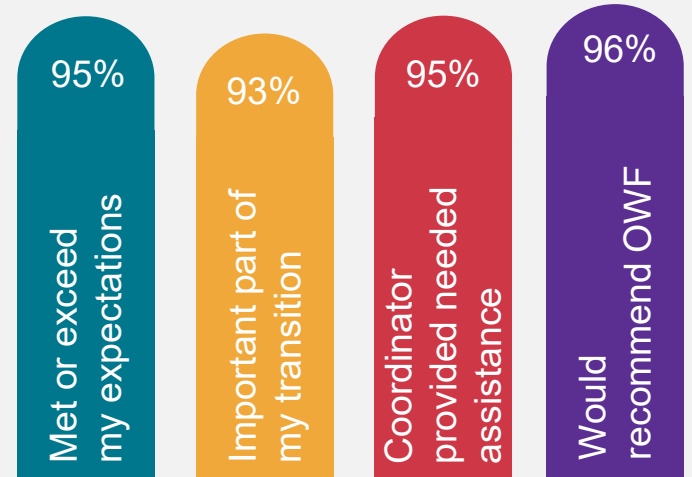


Top Federal Agency Hosts

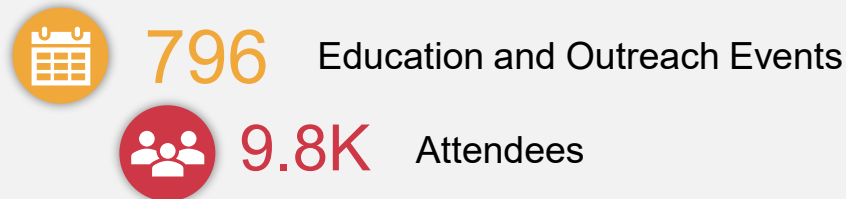


RSM Feedback

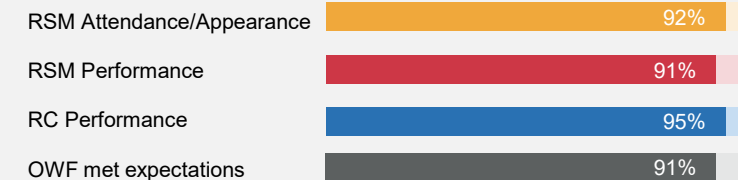
20%
Response Rate



Education and Outreach



Agency Feedback



All data is for CY2025



E2I/OWF Regional Coordinators



REGION 10 (Southwest)

Christopher Graham, E2I
christopher.b.graham.ctr@mail.mil
 619-964-6510

Sandra Ambotaite, OWF
sandra.ambotaite.ctr@mail.mil
 951-904-1475

REGION 9 (Northwest)

Ronald Metternich, E2I
ronald.j.metternich.ctr@mail.mil
 253-330-0643

Ramon Ubaldo, OWF
ramon.e.ubaldo.ctr@mail.mil
 253-324-5351

REGION 8 (Great Plains/Rocky Mt.)

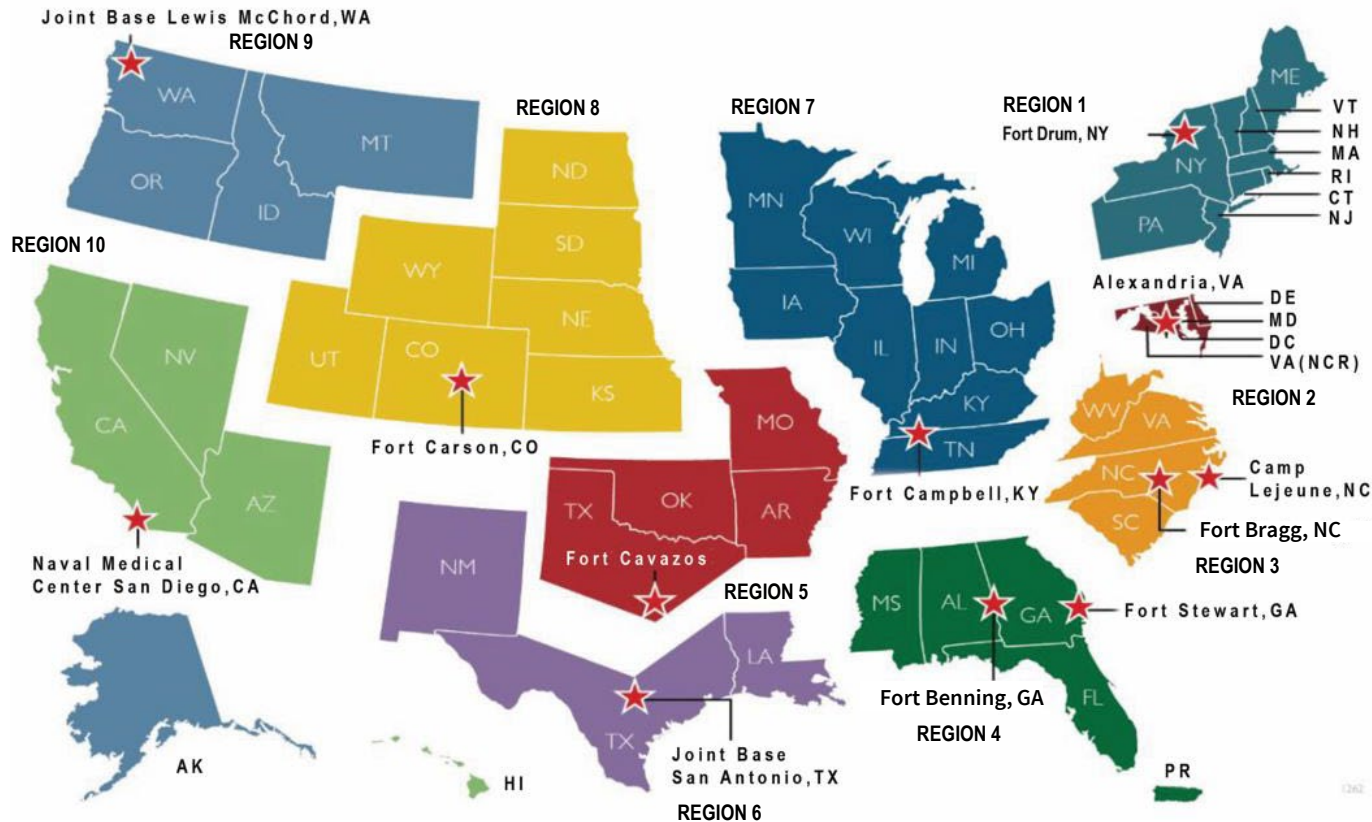
Naomi Dowsett, E2I
naomi.j.dowsett.ctr@mail.mil
 719-460-1028

Daniel Stellabotte, OWF
daniel.stellabotte.ctr@mail.mil
 719-491-1468

REGION 7 (Midwest)

William R. Hale II, OWF
william.r.hale.ctr@health.mil
 570-705-6854

James Gibson, E2I
james.w.gibson24.ctr@health.mil
 931-800-8714



REGION 6 (South)

Lance Dowd, E2I
lance.a.dowd.ctr@mail.mil
 703-397-6640

Erasmus Valles, OWF
erasmo.valles.ctr@mail.mil
 703-397-6499

REGION 5 (South Central)

William May, E2I
william.e.may3.ctr@mail.mil
 682-216-5896

Eric Gehring, OWF
eric.b.gehring.ctr@mail.mil
 254-226-4405

REGION 1 (Northeast)

James West, E2I/OWF
james.w.west.ctr@mail.mil
 680-291-0462

REGION 2 (NCR)

Martin Del Rio, E2I
martin.delrio.ctr@mail.mil
 571-481-8648

Raymundo Esteves, OWF
raymundo.n.esteves.ctr@mail.mil
 240-644-2715

REGION 3 (Mid-Atlantic)

Antoinette Watson, E2I/OWF
 Camp Lejeune
antoinette.d.watson2.ctr@mail.mil
 252-624-1341

Marquadealsandro "Marq" McLeod, E2I/OWF
 Fort Bragg
marquadealsandro.mcleod.ctr@mail.mil
 803-260-1467

REGION 4 (Southeast)

Lisa Goenen, E2I/OWF
 Fort Stewart
lisa.g.goenen.ctr@mail.mil
 912-200-0470

Ebony McMillian, E2I/OWF
 Fort Benning
ebony.m.mcmillian2.ctr@mail.mil
 706-773-1428

Recovery Coordination Program Leadership Contacts



Ms. Randi Ramcharan, Director, Warrior Care Recovery Coordination Program

Email: randi.r.ramcharan.civ@mail.mil

Mr. Jonathan Morris, Deputy Director, Warrior Care Recovery Coordination Program

Email: jonathan.a.morris12.civ@mail.mil

Mr. Jose Umpierre, Sr. Program Manager (Contractor)

Email: jose.j.umpierre.ctr@mail.mil



Social Media Platforms



Warrior Care
Recovery Coordination Program
Defense Health Agency



<https://www.warriorcare.dodlive.mil>



<https://www.facebook.com/WarriorCare>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/department-of-defense-recovery-coordination-program-operation-warfighter>



<https://www.instagram.com/warriorcarephotos>



NATIONAL RESOURCE DIRECTORY



<https://www.nrd.gov>



<https://www.facebook.com/NationalResourceDirectory>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/national-resource-directory/>





Thank You

Phone Number: (719) 728-5538

Email: tristen.v.wendland.ctr@mail.mil



