



Operation Warfighter (OWF) FAQs For Federal Agencies

About the Program

What is Operation Warfighter (OWF)?

- Operation Warfighter (OWF) is a DoD internship program for Recovering Service Members (RSMs). It provides non-paid internships with federal agencies during the rehabilitation process, allowing RSMs to practice skills in a civilian workplace. Since 2008, over 6,000 RSMs have participated in internships at more than 200 partners nationwide.

Regional Coordinator

Information:

Name

Region

Email

Phone

Agency Eligibility & Costs

• Who is eligible to participate?

Service members (all branches, all components) who are:

- Assigned to a Service Warrior Care Program, and/or
- Enrolled in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES).

• What agencies are allowed to participate?

All government federal agencies are eligible to host OWF interns. Participation provides access to motivated and talented Service members.

• Is there any cost for the agency?

No. There is no cost to the federal agency to host an OWF intern. This is an unpaid internship program designed to help RSMs gain knowledge, skills, and abilities aligned with their career and transition goals.

Eligibility & Time Commitment

• How long can RSMs participate in an OWF internship?

A RSM may participate in OWF as long as they remain on active duty and meet the basic eligibility requirements of being enrolled in the IDES or assigned to a military service Warrior Care program. On average, the medical evaluation board (MEB) process takes approximately 180 days. Due to this limited timeline, it is important for agencies to act with urgency when considering the placement of RSM. Internships must be completed while the RSM is on active duty; the MEB process ultimately determines the window of availability.

• What is the time commitment for OWF interns?

OWF interns are required to commit a minimum of 20 hours per week for at least three months. In some cases, interns may be available to serve full-time and can continue their internship until their last day on active duty or until they are found fit and return to duty.





- **What schedule flexibility is required?**

Agencies are asked to allow OWF interns the flexibility to build a schedule that accommodates their medical appointments and unit requirements. If an intern has an unexpected appointment, the agency point of contact (POC) may request a copy of the appointment slip to verify that the absence.

Clearances & Employment

- **Do OWF interns have security clearances?**

Yes. Most candidates hold at least secret clearance, and many possess Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI) clearances.

- **Does the agency guarantee employment at the end of an internship?**

No. However, if a position becomes available, the agency may offer full-time employment after the internship is complete. Many OWF candidates receive a VA disability rating of 30% or higher, which may qualify them for direct hire.

- **May RSM intern after they separate or retire?**

No. An OWF internship must conclude before a RSM's active-duty service ends or once the RSM is found fit for duty and returns to service.

- **What if issues arise during an internship?**

Both agencies and Service members should contact the RC. The priority is ensuring internships align with professional goals and remain meaningful.

- **What policy governs OWF?**

Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1300.25.

- **Who is accountable for RSMs during the internship?**

The command remains accountable for the RSM. RSMs still belong to their unit while interning, and commands may require check-ins for accountability purposes.

- **How many forms must an agency complete?**

To keep the process simple for participating agencies, only four forms are required:

1. Partnership Agreement: A one-time form kept on record.
2. OWF Placement Form: Signed by the supervisor and RSM before the internship begins.
3. Intern Development Plan: Completed at the beginning of the internship.
4. Exit Form: Completed at the end of each RSM's internship.

