



**SOLDIER FOR LIFE –
TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Handbook



TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Start Strong • Serve Strong • Reintegrate Strong • Remain Strong

“Once a Service Member, Always a Service Member...a Service Member for Life!”

Preface

Leaders at every level must ensure that Service Members (SMs) transitioning out of the Armed Services are prepared for an effective transition from active duty into the civilian workforce. The Soldier For Life-Transition Assistance Program (SFL-TAP) initiative is designed to support the successful transition of SMs.

Leaders at all levels must synchronize unit efforts with SFL-TAP and ensure SMs complete the Department of Defense mandated transition tasks In Accordance With (IAW) established transition timelines. The SFL-TAP center will track each individual's completion of the Career Readiness Standards (CRS) in the online TAP XXI program. Commanders also have the ability to track progress at the unit level. Engaged and active leadership builds resilience in their formations while also providing SMs the appropriate resources during transition. These resources help to create a positive transition and effectively develop future ambassadors of military service in our transitioning population.

All transitioning military members are mandated to complete certain requirements mandated by Public Law and DoD Policy. Commanders are responsible for ensuring that their Soldiers fully participate and meet transition requirements.

The **Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW)** to Hire Heroes Act of 2011(Public Law) requires that all Soldiers receive transition assistance services and attend mandatory Transition GPS (Goals, Plans, and Success) events prior to their final transition date.

The *Department of Defense (DoD) – Department of the Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Employment Initiative and Army Directive 2014-18* requires Soldiers to meet DoD policy of completing a common set of career preparation activities called "**Career Readiness Standards**" (**CRS**) and for Commander to verify that the Soldier has met the following CRS prior to their final transition date.

VICENZA SOLDIER FOR LIFE-TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



CASERMA EDERLE BUILDING 126

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SFL-TAP Foreword / Problem Statement

According to current U.S. Department of Labor data, there are 3.4 million job openings in the United States. Yet, many employers are finding that workers do not have the skills or training necessary for many positions.

Third Quarter 2015 statistics from the Department of Labor show that the US Army paid over \$ 56 million dollars in unemployment compensation (UCX). Unemployment is a challenging issue that causes high levels of stress and leads to depression and homelessness. Veterans in all Military Occupational Specialties are affected. Veterans between the ages of 35 and 64, the group with the highest financial obligations and the fewest available VA education and training options, make up nearly two-thirds of all unemployed Veterans.

During FY15, approximately 500 SMs left military service in the Vicenza military community. Current data indicates that a significant percentage of those SM are not fully utilizing the employment preparation, employment referral, and continuing education and healthcare services. The data suggests that SMs may be less prepared for their next challenge as they reintegrate into civilian society.

The SFL-TAP Program connects Army, governmental and community efforts to build relationships that facilitate successful reintegration of our Active and retired SMs, Veterans and their families.

This handbook outlines the key tasks and resources that are available during the transition process. It is important to understand that this handbook provides a quick “one-stop” resource for leaders to assist SMs in the transition from military service. The purpose of this handbook is twofold:

- 1) To provide command teams and supervisors information and resources to support the transition process and;
- 2) To provide transitioning SMs an outline of the required steps in support of a successful transition.

The information contained in this handbook does not supersede or replace any Army or Department of Defense (DoD) guidance, policies, or regulations. As of the publication date, information contained therein is current. However, regulations are subject to change.

Chapter 1 – SFL-TAP Introduction

The SFL-TAP Program, formally the Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP), is the Army's Transition Program responsible for providing SMs with the counseling, employment and education workshops, and seminars required to achieve the Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) and Career Readiness Standards (CRS) mandated compliance. This is a key initiative based on the Service Member Lifecycle (SLC), which carries SMs from initial enlistment through separation or retirement.

The SLC promotes lifelong learning, individual development and transition-related requirements throughout a SM's military career. The Transition SLC further demonstrates the Army's commitment to supporting SMs in all stages of their military career and beyond.

The mission of SFL-TAP is to prepare and connect SMs to ensure the greatest opportunities for successful personal and career achievement upon transition from active duty and to create lifelong ambassadors of military service.

Eligibility

All SMs completing 180 days of continuous Active Duty service are required to meet VOW/CRS compliance. Eligible SMs will begin receiving transition counseling and employment assistance 18 months prior to transitioning from Active Duty or 24 months prior to retirement. Eligible family members may participate in SFL-TAP services as soon as the SM is registered with SFL-TAP.

SMs going through MEB/IDES proceedings for medical separation or retirement and those SMs being administratively separated from military service must begin the transition process at the earliest available opportunity.

Active duty SMs and their eligible family members may participate in SFL-TAP services up to 180 days following their release from active duty. If retiring, SFL-TAP services are available on a space available basis for life.

Department of the Army Civilians (DAC) impacted by reduction in Europe may be eligible for limited transition services. Those names need to be forward to the Transition Services manager (TSM) by CPAC.

The SFL-TAP program has counselors and staff world-wide located on most Army installations. Visit the Soldier For Life homepage at <https://soldierforlife.army.mil/> for additional information. The SFL-TAP Virtual Center is available by visiting <https://www.SFL-TAP.army.mil/>, or by calling 1-800-325-4715.

Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) Act of 2011

The “VOW to Hire Heroes Act” is a series of comprehensive legislation, laws, and Veterans’ tax credits that aim to address the high rate of Veterans’ unemployment by:

- Expanding Education & Training: The VOW ACT provides nearly 100,000 unemployed Veterans with up to 1-year of additional Montgomery GI Bill benefits to qualify for jobs in high-demand sectors, from trucking to technology. It also provides disabled Veterans who have exhausted their unemployment benefits up to 1-year of additional VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefits.
- Improving the Transition Assistance Program (TAP): The VOW to Hire Heroes Act makes TAP mandatory for SMs transitioning to civilian status, upgrades career counseling options and job hunting skills. It also ensures the program is tailored to individuals for the current job market.
- Facilitating Seamless Transition: The law requires SMs to begin the Federal employment process by acquiring Veterans preference status prior to separation for civil service jobs. This facilitates a seamless transition to employment at the VA or other Federal agencies that would benefit from hiring our Veterans.
- Translating Military Skills and Training: The bill requires the Department of Labor to take a hard look at how to translate military skills and training to civilian sector jobs, and works to make it easier to get the licenses and certifications our Veterans need.
- Veterans Tax Credits: The VOW Act provides tax credits for hiring Veterans and disabled Veterans who are out of work.

Career Readiness Standards

The Department of Defense established the Career Readiness Standards (CRS) are a series of gateways and deliverables that will help to ensure that SMs leave military service ready to immediately transition into a new career. When executed properly, the SM stands a higher likelihood for success and a lower likelihood for needing to file a claim for unemployment compensation (UCX) benefits. This in turn reduces the impact on the DOD and US Army on funding the amount of UCX that must be paid.

SMs must meet VOW/CRS compliance prior to the transition date on the DD 214. The final quality control for meeting CRS is the "Capstone," which is a final DD 2958 with the statement of meeting standards. This must be completed NLT 90 days prior to separation. Requirements are as follows:

1. Pre-separation and Initial Counseling (DD Form 2648 or 2648/-1)
2. Individual Transition Plan (ITP)
3. VA eBenefits registration
4. MOS Crosswalk Gap Analysis
5. Individual Assessment Tool

6. Department of Labor Employment Workshop (DOLEW) - Receive DOL Gold Card
7. VA Benefits Briefings I & II
8. Financial Counseling - 12-month post-separation budget
9. Job Application Package
 - Resume of Choice
 - References
 - Two submitted job applications
 - Job offer letter
10. Continuum of Military Service Opportunity via USAR/ARNG
11. Capstone with DD Form 2958 at final ITP review
12. Career Technical Training Track
13. IAW Education and Technical Training Tracks
 - Assessment Tool
 - Comparison of academic or training institution choice
 - Confirmation of one-on-one counseling with a college, university, or technical institution advisor or counselor
 - Track course completion (applicable for education, technical, or entrepreneur tracks)
14. Final ITP review

Career Readiness Standards (CRS)

TO MEET CRS, SERVICE MEMBERS MUST:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >> Complete pre-separation counseling (<i>DD Form 2648</i>) >> Prepare a DoD standardized 12-month budget >> Complete a standardized DoD Individual Transition Plan (ITP) >> Register on eBenefits (<i>www.ebenefits.va.gov</i>) >> Complete Continuum of Military Service counseling >> Evaluate transferability of military skills to the civilian workforce (<i>complete Military Occupational Code Crosswalk and DoD standardized gap analysis</i>) >> Document requirements and eligibility for licensure, certification, and apprenticeship (<i>as applicable</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >> Complete an assessment tool to identify personal interests and leanings regarding career selection >> Complete a job application package or present a job offer letter >> Receive a Department of Labor (DOL) Gold Card and demonstrate understanding of post 9/11 Veteran priority American Job Centers >> Attend VA Benefits I and II Briefings >> Attend the DOL Employment Workshop >> Complete Transition GPS Training Tracks (<i>as applicable</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accessing Higher Education - Career Technical Training - Entrepreneurship
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www.DoDTAP.mil

Chapter 2 – Voluntary Retirement

This chapter provides a brief synopsis on the procedures, roles and responsibilities of those SMs who will retire from military service. Retirement takes planning that should include both the SM and their family. Each SM and their family should look ahead toward the day when retirement is possible – and consider all the options. If you plan to retire in the next two years, it's a good idea to review the following steps and subjects. While the thought of retiring is daunting to some, proper planning will help to reduce much of the anxiety associated with the transition.

Preparing to Retire

SMs should start gathering information and planning their military retirement 12-24 months before submitting the retirement application. In a survey of recently retired SMs, 88% indicated their pre-retirement briefing was "extremely" or "critically" important to their retirement planning. Changing from a military to civilian lifestyle is not always an easy task and often includes changing locations, careers and lifestyles. However, effective planning when started early, can be a big help.

SMs can begin the SFL-TAP process 24 months prior to retirement and an approved retirement is not needed to start the process. This allows SMs to begin the process well in advance of the actual retirement packet being submitted. The SFL-TAP program provides specialized retirement (all ranks) and senior level (E-8 and above, CW3 and above and O-4 and above) coursework to assist in the retirement planning process.

At least 12 months before the planned retirement, SMs must attend a pre-retirement briefing. SMs are encouraged to attend a pre-retirement briefing before a retirement application is submitted and another shortly before an actual retirement date. Spouses are strongly encouraged to attend the briefing.

SMs cannot physically file their request for retirement until they are within the 9-12 month window from their requested retirement date. The only exception to this is SMs who meet the Time in Service (TIS) requirement (19 years, 6 months of Active Federal Service) and request retirement in lieu of a DA-directed PCS Move. If this applies, SMs can submit a retirement request with a retirement date effective the first day of the sixth month after the request.

Your Vicenza point of contact for retirements is the Department of Human Resources – Military Personnel Division – Transition Center. The Transition Center team may be reached at DSN 637-7491 or 044-461-7491. Alternatively, their group email address is: usarmy.usag-italy.imcom-europe.mbx.usag-italy-transition-center@mail.mil.

Retirement Planning Documents

As you plan for retirement, it is important to understand the timelines, military pay audits, retirement benefits and entitlements, concurrent retirement and disability payments (CRDP), retired pay; the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), health benefits, whether you opted in for the Career Status Bonus and more.

Retirement packets are submitted through S1 channels and Unit S1s transfer completed packets to the Transition Center for further processing. The list below contains some helpful resources with direct links to online briefings for retiring SMs.

- *DA Pre-Retirement Briefing Slides or PDF version* - This briefing is mandatory; all SMs should receive NET 12 months before retiring and NLT 4 months prior to the start of transition leave and/or Transition Permissive Temporary Duty (TPTDY).
<http://soldierforlife.army.mil/sites/default/files/content/docs/static/Pre/New%20DA%20Pre-Retirement%20Slides%202014.pptx>
- *Pre-Retirement Counseling Guide* - A guide with detailed retirement planning information.
<http://soldierforlife.army.mil/sites/default/files/content/docs/2014/2014%20US%20Army%20Retirement%20Counseling%20Guide.pdf>
- *Get Ready For Retirement* - A brochure that outlines subject areas SMs should know about when planning for their retirement.
http://soldierforlife.army.mil/sites/default/files/content/docs/static/Pre/Get_Ready_For_Retirement.pdf
- *Which Pay Plan Are You Under?* – This brochure details the three military retirement pay plans.
http://soldierforlife.army.mil/sites/default/files/content/docs/static/csb_redux/Which%20Ret%20Pay%20Plan.pdf
- *Reserve Component Retirement System* - Link to Human Resources Command's Reserve Retirements Branch.
<https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/Reserve/soldierservices/retirement/index.htm>
- *SFL-Transition Assistance Program (TAP)* - Link to the SFL-TAP web site.
http://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Home/Benefit_Library/Federal_Benefits_Page/Transition_Assistance_Program_%28TAP%29.html
- *Historical Highlights of Retired Pay* – A brief history of Non-Disability Retired Pay.
<http://soldierforlife.army.mil/sites/default/files/content/docs/2014/Retired%20Pay%20History.pdf>
- *Retiring on the Same Day as a Basic Pay Change* – From the Army G-1 RSO: How Federal law applies to SMs who retire on the same day as a basic pay change (usually January 1st).
<http://soldierforlife.army.mil/sites/default/files/content/docs/2014/RetiringSameDay.pdf>

Retirement Documents

- DA Form 4187 indicating request for voluntary retirement
- DA Form 31 for Transition Leave
- DA Form 31 for TPTDY
- DD Form 2648
- DD Form 2958
- DD Form 93 (not older than 1 year)
- SGLI (not older than 1 year)
- DA Form 1506 (in case of breaks in service or service in multiple components)
- Original Enlistment Contract (pages 4/1 and 4/3 only)
- Re-enlistment Contract (page 4/1 only)
- Updated Enlisted Records Brief
- Any previous DD Form 214's DARP Form 249's or NGB Form 23c and NGB 31
- Waiver Requests

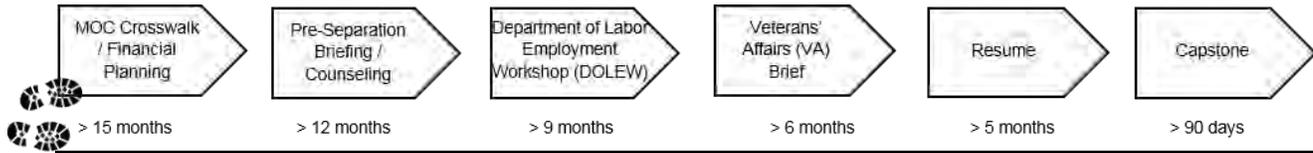
Additional Documents for Warrant and Commissioned Officer

- Retirement MFR
- Pre-Retirement Information MFR
- DA Form 71 (Oath of Office)
- Updated Officer Records Brief
- Orders that ordered you to active duty

For further questions regarding your retirement, or to verify that you have sufficient time in service (TIS) to retire, contact your unit-level S-1. Remember to check to see if you have an Active Duty Service Obligation (ADSO) as the result of a military school or a Post 9-11 GI Bill transfer.

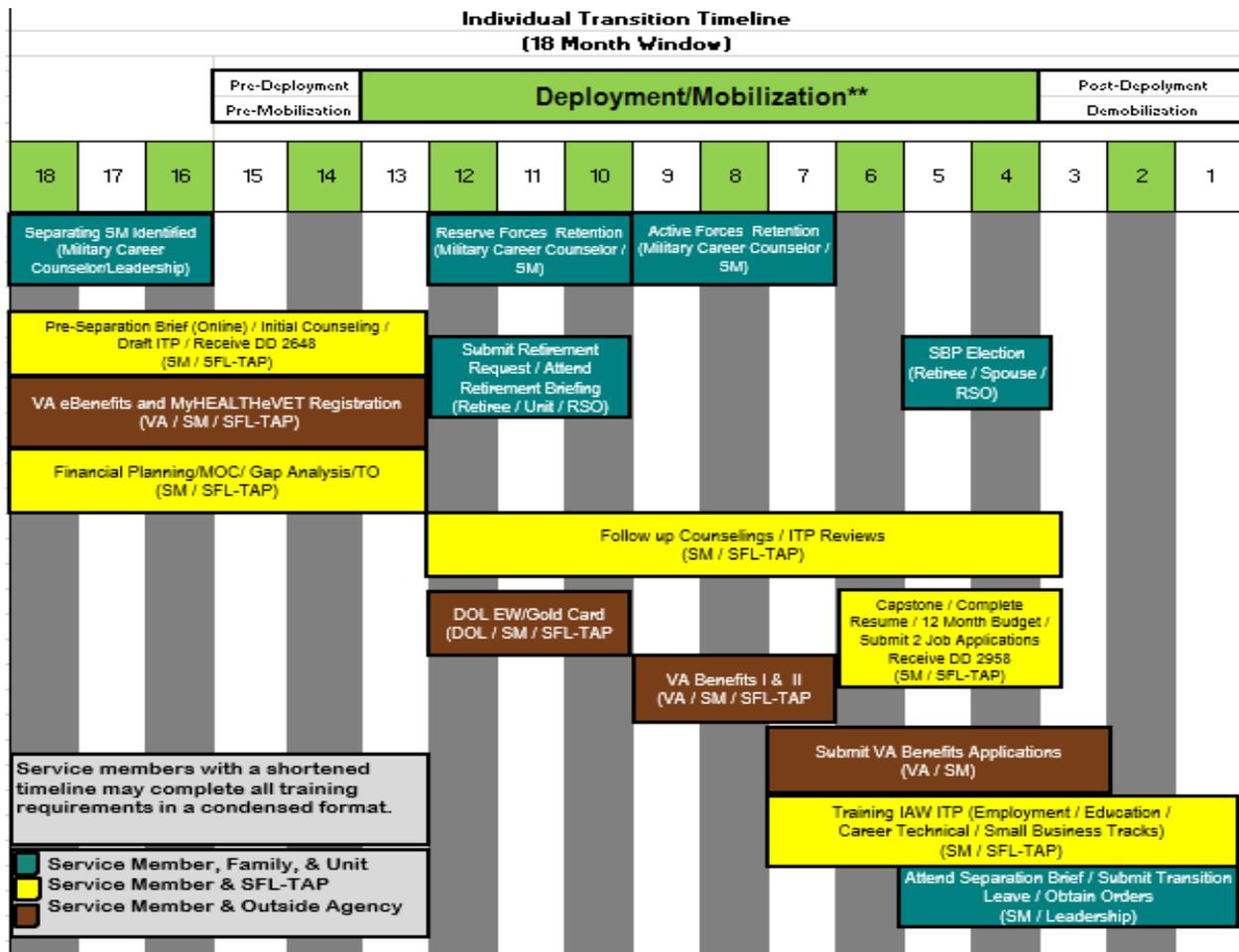
Lastly, the Vicenza Retirement Services Office (RSO) is your direct link to retirement services after your retirement. There are many volunteer opportunities available after retirement through the RSO to serve on various retirement committees and councils. The RSO can be reached at DSN 637-7491 or 0444-61-7491.

Chapter 3: 18 to 12 months prior to Separation



This chapter provides a brief overview of the procedures and responsibilities of a transitioning SM in the 18-15 month window prior to separation. The transition process begins with registration in the SFL-TAP program and mandatory pre-separation counseling. As you work your way through the transition process, you will work closely with SFL-TAP counselors who will help guide you along your schedule of events to ensure the most effective transition possible. Generally speaking, these events are completed in order. A monthly schedule of classes is available on the SFL-TAP website at http://www.italy.army.mil/sfl_start.asp.

The below table visually depicts a Service Member's Transition timeline.



Pre-Separation Counseling

The Pre-Separation (Pre-Sep) Counseling process starts with receiving information about the programs and services available during the transition process. The information is received through an online presentation found at <https://www.SFL-TAP.army.mil>. The online presentation usually requires 2 hours to complete and the SFL-TAP computer lab has computers available for this purpose. During the Pre-Separation Counseling, you will receive in-depth counseling from trained and qualified TAP counselors which will allow you to prepare effectively for all aspects of transition. You will be introduced to the Individual Transition Plan (ITP) requirement which will help determine the actions necessary to achieve your post-service career goals. The counseling services cover a range of topics including education and training, employment and career goals, financial management, health, wellbeing and relocation and housing. The pre-separation counseling requirement may be completed in person at the Vicenza SFL-TAP Center or online at <https://www.SFL-TAP.army.mil>. Completion of the counseling generates the DD Form 2648, a transition requirement.

Pre-separation Counseling takes place at building 126 on Caserma Ederle by appointment only. Our office hours are from 0830 to 1630 Monday through Friday. The office is closed on Federal holidays. ITP reviews are conducted Monday – Wednesday – Friday from 1330 to 1430.

Resilient Transitions Overview

The Resilient Transitions Overview highlights some of the challenges inherent with any life changing event and the opportunities to receive information and engage with professional and supportive staffs throughout the Transition Assistance Program (TAP).

Resilient transitions will introduce you to resources on transition-related issues, including considerations for families, support systems, the value of a mentor and special issues that eligible SMs and their families may encounter as they prepare for post-military life. The focus of the curriculum is to connect you with professional agencies based on the need for support and guidance before you separate.

The Transition Overview workshop takes place at the SFL-TAP Center, building 126 on Caserma Ederle. A monthly schedule of classes is available on the SFL-TAP website at http://www.italy.army.mil/sfl_start.asp.

Financial Planning Seminar

Prior to military separation it is required that you receive financial counseling as part of the VOW Act requirements. Financial counseling ensures that you have a clear understanding of your direct and indirect military compensation benefits so you can create an effective post-military 12-month budget. An electronic or hard copy 12-month budget must be submitted and reviewed by the financial counselor prior to military separation. The 12-month budget ensures that financial obligations are fulfilled as you transition from military service. Your post-separation budget should be completed NLT 10 months prior to separation. This gives adequate time to establish a spending plan to reach post-military financial goals. Each month there are financial planning workshops offered for separating SMS.

The financial counselor is located in the SFL-TAP building 126 and is available by appointment for individual financial counseling and budgeting assistance. A 12-month post military budget is a requirement of the transition process. A monthly schedule of classes is available on the SFL-TAP website at http://www.italy.army.mil/sfl_start.asp.

MOC Crosswalk

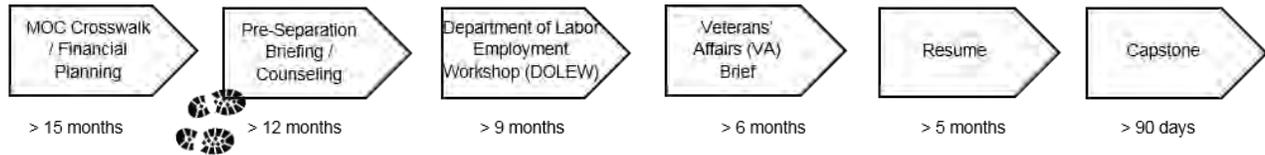
The Military Occupational Code (MOC) Crosswalk demonstrates how to translate your military skills, training and experience into credentialing appropriate for civilian jobs. You will be able to document your military career experience and skills, translate your military occupation experience to civilian sector occupations and skills as well as identify gaps in training or experience to meet your personal career goals.

The MOC Crosswalk takes place at the Vicenza Transition Center, building 126 on Caserma Ederle. A monthly schedule of classes is available on the SFL-TAP website at http://www.italy.army.mil/sfl_start.asp.

Getting Started

OPTION 1 CALL IN 0444-71-8153/ 8154	OPTION 2 WALK IN BLDG 126 CASERMA EDERLE	OPTION 3 ANY COMPUTER GO TO https://www.acap.army.mil/pages/virtual/virtual-center-sign.aspx
Schedule Appointment	Use Computer Lab	Log-in with AKO & Take Pre-Separation Brief

Chapter 4: 12 to 9 month window prior to Separation



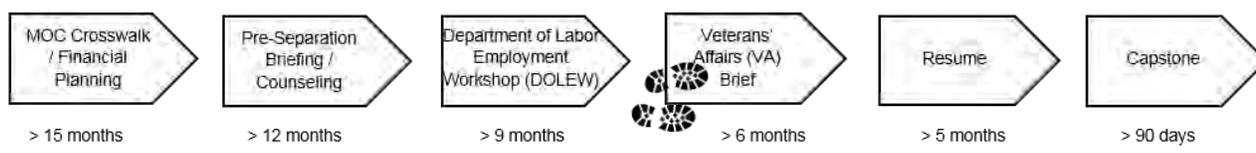
This chapter provides an overview of the procedures and responsibilities of transitioning SMs within 12 - 9 month window prior to separation.

Department of Labor Employment Workshop

The Department of Labor Employment Workshop (DOLEW) is a mandatory and comprehensive three-day curriculum that covers best practices in career development. The workshop is engaging, relevant and addresses the unique challenges facing transitioning SMs. SMs receive vital skills in this workshop, including learning interview skills, building effective resumes and using emerging technology to network and search for employment. Each month there are DOLEW workshops for separating SMs.

The DOLEW workshop takes place at the SFL-TAP Center, building 126 on Caserma Ederle. A monthly schedule of classes is available on the SFL-TAP website at http://www.italy.army.mil/sfl_start.asp.

Chapter 5: 6 to 5 month window prior to Separation



This chapter provides a synopsis on the procedures, roles and responsibilities of a transitioning SM in the 6-5 month window prior to separation.

VA Benefits Briefings I and II

These VA-led mandatory workshops will provide you with information on available Veteran benefits and services. Upon completion, you should know how to apply for Veteran's health, education, home loan guaranty, insurance, and disability benefits. Please note that these benefits are subject to certain availability restrictions based on the type of discharge that you are receiving.

After these briefings, you will also know how to connect with VA staff for further assistance. A SM who was injured or who has developed a disease/illness while on active duty, or feels their health conditions were made worse (aggravated) by active duty military service, should file a VA disability claim between 60 and 180 days prior to retirement or separation.

SMs in this phase of transition should confirm their enrollments in eBenefits, My HealthVet and the Department of Labor (DoL) Career One Stop. These websites provide valuable information for the transition process and the online enrollment is part of the transitioning process.

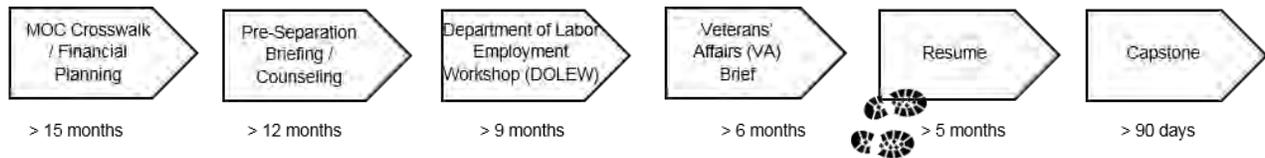
The VA Benefits workshops take place at the SFL-TAP Center, building 126 on Caserma Ederle. A monthly schedule of classes is available on the SFL-TAP website at http://www.italy.army.mil/sfl_start.asp.

Resume

A key document in the transition process is the SM's resume. A resume is a key way to advertise your skills and abilities to a potential employer. The Department of Labor Employment Workshop will provide you information required to complete your draft resume. You must completed final draft resume to the Transition counselor which is a transition requirement and is due NLT five months from separation.

The SFL-TAP counselors are available for resume writing assistance and review on an appointment basis. Personal assistance and workshops are also available for clients desiring to draft a Federal resume.

Chapter 6: 5 to 3 months prior to Separation



This chapter provides a brief overview of the procedures and responsibilities of a transitioning SM in the 6-3 month window prior to separation.

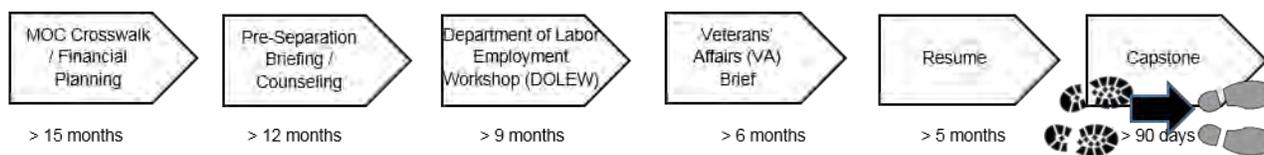
Department of Labor statistics show that it takes, on average, 6 months for a transitioning SM to secure employment. As a result, the final six months of the program are dedicated to introducing the SM to the appropriate resources that will introduce and connect them to their next opportunity.

In order for a SM to execute a successful transition, the final six months must be focused on the implementation of the Individual Transition Plan (ITP). The plan is based on the post military track they are focused on be it the Employment Track, Higher Education (HE) Track, Entrepreneur Track or Career Technical Track (CTT). Track-specific coursework and events are scheduled and facilitated by the SFL-TAP program staff on a monthly and bi-monthly basis. All tracks, with the exception of the Employment track, require attendance at a 2-day workshop that immerses transitioning personnel in track-specific activities.

There exists a suite of enhanced services that have been made available at Vicenza SFL-TAP. Some of these opportunities include:

- Workshops offered are:
 - Higher Education Track (HET)
 - Career Technical Training Track (CTTT)
 - Entrepreneurship Track (Boots 2 Business)
- Transition Enabler Partnerships: There exist a great number of opportunities that are available to you as part of the cooperation between Vicenza SFL-TAP and various external agencies. See your assigned SFL-TAP counselor for the most current list of opportunities and resources offered by our partnerships.
- For a current listing of all events check out the SFL-TAP webpage:
http://www.italy.army.mil/sfl_start.asp.

Chapter 7: 90 Days Prior to Transition



This chapter provides a brief synopsis on the procedures, roles and responsibilities of transitioning personnel in the final 90 day window prior to separation. It is important to ensure that all transition gateways have been met and there is a plan for post-military life.

In this phase, personnel will execute the transition capstone. However, it is important that the unit-level administrative functions are also completed during this time frame as well. This includes your ETS or Retirement Award, final evaluation (if applicable), and the approval of Transition Permissive Temporary Duty (TPTDY) and transition leave.

Homework for SFL-TAP to successfully meet CRS

*****Please ensure that you provide a valid contact phone number AND email to receive notices and updates! *****

- Complete Individual Transition Plan in VOW Handbook
- Register for eBenefits (<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov>); **print confirmation**
- Register for MyHealthEVet (<https://www.myhealth.va.gov>); **print confirmation**
- Submit for GOLD Card at One Stop/ jobcenter USA (www.jobcenter.usa.gov); **print confirmation**
- Print VMET at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/tgps> and Joint Service Transcript (JST) at <https://jst.doded.mil/smart/welcome.do> for use during the MOC Crosswalk seminar
- Complete GAP analysis in the VOW book
- Complete the Financial Readiness Worksheet in VOW book **AND** have 12 month budget reviewed by Financial Counselor
- Bring a copy of your resume, your references and two (2) **SUBMITTED** job applications **OR** a job offer letter
- Complete assessment tool at <http://www.mynextmove.org/vets/> (bottom right "O*NET Interest Profiler) or Kuder-Journey (www.dantes.kuder.com) **print confirmation**
- See the Career Counselor to complete the Continuum of Military Service
- Bring copy of application letter/ acceptance letter for college/tech/trade school (*when applicable*)
- Complete mandatory SFL-TAP curriculum: TO, MOC, VA I&II, Financial Readiness, DOL workshop
- Complete Track relevant workshop (Employment, Higher Ed, Career/Technical, Entrepreneur)

Transition Capstone

In first step of the Transition Capstone SMs will conduct a final SFL-TAP counseling session (Capstone) with an SFL-TAP counselor to validate completion of their SFL-TAP Track and ITP in order to complete the DD Form 2958 and identify whether or not the SM has met CRS. If the SM has not met CRS, he or she will be provided documentation to annotate shortcomings. This will serve as a final transition preparedness check. SFL-TAP staff will not sign installation clearing papers for SMs who have not completed all required transition activities associated with their SFL-TAP Transition Track.

The second step of the Transition GPS is where Commanders, or Commanders' designees, verify that transitioning SMs have met [Career Readiness Standards \(CRS\)](#) and have a viable Individual Transition Plan (ITP) or sign with the statement of "Not Meeting Standard". The purpose of the Capstone event is to evaluate a SM's preparedness to successfully transition from a military to a civilian career. If a SM requires or desires follow-on assistance, the Commander will facilitate a "warm handover" to appropriate helping partners such as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or the Department of Labor (DOL).

Once all capstone activities are completed the SM will be issued a DD Form 2958 which must then be signed by the SM's Commander. Prior to exiting the military facility, the SM will provide a copy of the completed and signed DD Form 2958 to the SFL-TAP staff as well as the installation clearing papers. In addition an exit survey must be completed which can be found at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/?sm=MSnacEWR9MYiBhivlBdA9gVoQuHNr14rPpkNPdOGVso%3d>

Further, a copy of the DD Form 2958 will also be turned into the Transition Center at Caserma Ederle building 126 Annex for the creation of the DD Form 214. The DD Form 2958 will become a part of the SM's permanent file and will be loaded to the Army Military Human Resource Record (AMHRR).

All capstone activities are located at Caserma Ederle building 126. These activities are scheduled through the SFL-TAP staff.

Chapter 8: Commander's Guide to Separation

This chapter provides a guide to assist Commanders and leaders at all levels in ensuring that critical tasks and gateways are easily identifiable and are completed in a timely fashion. A leader's involvement in the transition activities will help to improve the process for SMs in their organization.

It is imperative that Leaders at every level understand that all transitioning SMs must be afforded adequate, uninterrupted duty time to meet all transition requirements and appointments IAW with the VOW act (public law). Chain of command teams are highly discouraged from pulling service members from SFL-TAP workshops.

Allowing SMs to attend the SFL-TAP workshops and training and encouraging their participation demonstrates the Army Leadership commitment to them and their families. Assisting them in securing post-military employment not only enables them to avoid financial hardship but highlights the value of service to the nation.

The table below visually depicts the mandatory gateways that all SMs must complete in order to successfully complete the CRS and SFL-TAP transition requirements. For those Soldiers who are not able to complete an entire VOW week at once can contact a transition counselor for workshop options.

WHAT	WHO	WHEN	WHERE	DURATION
Attend Pre-Separation Briefing, Initial Counseling and sign up for eBenefits, My HealthVet and DOL Career One Stop	All	NLT 15 Months prior to separation	Building 126	4 Hours
Transition Overview and MOC Crosswalk	All	NLT 12 months prior to separation	Building 126	2 Hours
Financial Planning Seminar	All	NLT 12 months prior to separation	Building 126	6 Hours
Attend DOL Employment Workshop	All	NLT 9 Months prior to separation	Building 126	3 Days
Attend VA Benefits I and II Briefings	All	NLT 6 Months prior to separation	Building 126	6 Hours
Produce resume of choice	All	NLT 5 Months prior to separation	Building 126	N/A
Attend 3 intermediate individual counseling sessions	All	3 - 12 months prior to separation	Building 126	1 Hour each
Additional Mandatory Requirements are based on the SMs track	All	Deadlines vary based on track requirements and individual transition plan.	Building 126	Based on ITP
Attend final counseling session (Capstone) to review ITP success and sign clearing papers	All	NLT 90 days prior to separation date	Building 126	2 hours

Chapter 9: Un-programmed Losses

This chapter provides guidance for leaders of SMs who are considered “un-programmed losses,” or those being separated administratively from the service within a 90 day timeframe.

SMs that are undergoing an involuntary administrative discharge (Chapter Proceeding) will still have the opportunity to complete a portion of the SFL-TAP program. At a minimum, SMs who are being administratively separated through chapter actions will complete Pre-Separation counseling with an SFL-TAP counselor and complete DD Form 2648, which will be included in the final approved separation packet.

SMs that are expeditiously removed from service and are unable to complete SFL-TAP requirements due to incarceration or absence without leave (AWOL) will conduct transition activities at the discretion of the Commander.

Commanders must closely coordinate the process of all un-programmed losses with administrative and legal channels that serve their organizations. This will ensure that there are no delays as an un-programmed loss moves towards separation.

Appendix A: References

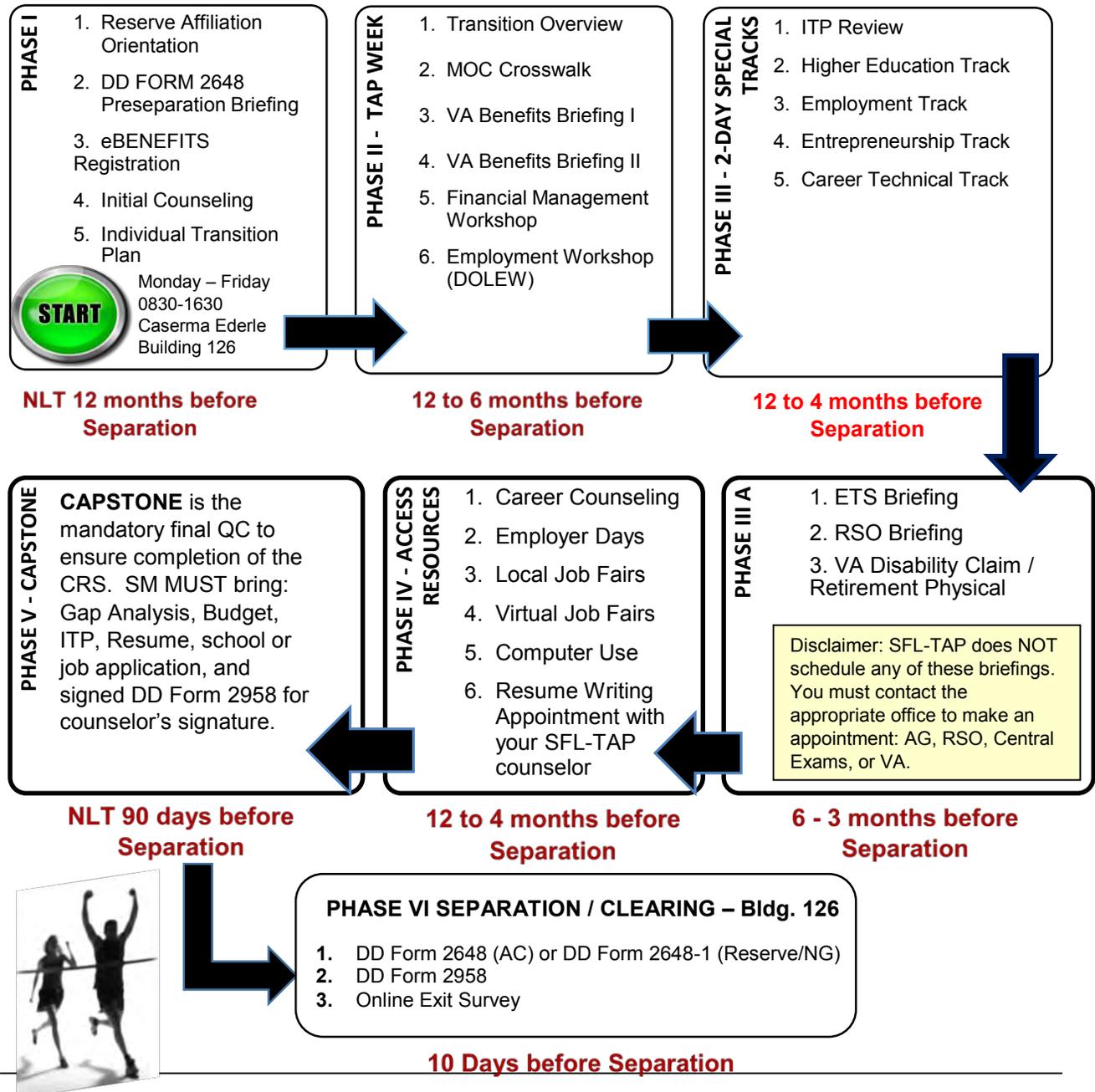
- Army Regulation 600-20. Army Command Policy, 6 November 2014
- Army Regulation 600-8-7, Retirement Services Program, 6 June 2010
- Army Regulation 600-8-24, Officer Separations and Discharges, 13 September 2011 (RAR of 12 April 2006 version)
- Field Manual 1-0, Human Resources Support, April 2014
- The Electronic Military Personnel Office Field User's Guide, July 2014
- Title 10, United States Code, sections 1142-44.
- VOW to Hire Heroes Act, Pub. L. No. 112-56, sections 201-256, 125 Stat 711-733 (2011).
- Department of Defense/Department of Veterans Affairs Wounded, Ill, and Injured Senior Oversight Committee Memorandum, December 10, 2008, subject: Implementation of Wounded, Ill, and Injured-Related Standard Definitions.
- Department of Defense-Veterans Affairs Veterans Employment Initiative Task Force Implementation Plan, Appendix A: Army, 31 December 2012.
- Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) Directive-type Memorandum (DTM) 12-007 (Implementation of Mandatory Transition Assistance Program Participation for Eligible SM), November 21, 2012, incorporating Change 2, effective 10 April 2014.
- Memorandum, Secretary of the Army, 29 August 2011, subject: Army Transition Policy.
- Execution Order 051-12, HODA G3 DAMO AOC (MC), 29 December 2011, Subject: "ISO Army Transition"

Appendix B – Points of Contact

Location:	SFL-TAP Center Caserma Ederle, Building 126
Office Hours:	0830-1630 Monday – Friday. Closed on Federal Holidays
SFL-TAP Counselor:	Commercial: 0444-71-8154 DSN: 637-8154
SFL-TAP Contractor Site Manager (CIM):	Commercial: 0444-71-8153 DSN: 637-8153
SFL-TAP Financial Counselor:	Commercial: 0444-71-8152 DSN: 637-8152
SFL-TAP Education Counselor:	Commercial: 0444-71-8144 DSN: 637-8144
VA Benefits Advisor:	Commercial: 0444-71-8155/ 8156 DSN: 637-8155/ 8156
General Information: Transition Services Specialist:	Commercial: 0444-71-8150 DSN: 637-8150
Transition Services Manager (TSM):	Commercial: 0444-71-8151 DSN: 637-8151
Website	http://www.italy.army.mil/sfl_start.asp
Like Us Facebook 	https://www.facebook.com/#!/VicenzaSFLTAP
Email Us:	usarmy.italy.imcom-europe.mbx.sfl-tap@mail.mil

Appendix C - SFL-TAP Transition Map /Checklist

SMs can contact SFL-TAP at 0444-71-8154 or 0444-71-8153 to make appointments to start the process. SMs who are deployed or are remotely located from an SFL-TAP center can use the SFL-TAP website can register on the SFL-TAP Online Homepage at <https://www.sfl-tap.army.mil>, or visiting the Vicenza SFL-TAP Center, Building 126 on Caserma Ederle. In addition the SM can coordinate to receive support from their State ARNG, USAR Regional Support Commands, or their unit S1/G1/J1.



The events mandated for completion of the Career Readiness Standards are scheduled on a recurring basis. Changes can occur on short notice. Always check with the SFL-TAP Center prior to the scheduled appointment to verify the appointment time, date, and location; or possible cancellations. SFL-TAP is open weekly Monday - Friday from 0830-1630. SFL-TAP is located on Caserma Ederle at BLDG 126.

EVENT	DAY	FREQUENCY	TIME	LOCATION
PHASE I – PRESEPARATION BRIEFING				
Reserve Affiliation Orientation	Monday – Friday	By Appointment	Operating Hours	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126
DD FORM 2648 Pre-Separation Briefing	Tuesday – Thursday	By Appointment	0930-1300	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126
eBENEFITS	Included as part of Pre-separation Briefing			
Initial Counseling				
Individual Transition Plan				
PHASE II – TAP WEEK (Can be taken as a 5 day course or as individual blocks)				
Welcome & Transition Overview	Monday Day 1	Monthly	0830-1000	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126
VA Briefing I & II	Monday Day 1	Monthly	1000-1700	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126
Military Family Life Consultant and Financial Planning Seminar	Tuesday Day 2	Monthly	1000-1700	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126
MOS Crosswalk	Tuesday Day 2	Monthly	0830-1000	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126
Reserve Component Career Counselor and	Tuesday Day 2	Monthly	1300-1310	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126
Department of Labor Workshop (DOLEW)	Wednesday – Friday Day 3-5	Monthly	0830-1630	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126
PHASE III - TRACKS				
ITP Review	By Appointment	Mon-Wed-Fri	1330-1430	SFL-TAP Locations
Entrepreneurship Track	By Appointment	Quarterly	0830-1630	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126
Education Track	By Appointment	Monthly	0830-1630	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126
Career Technical Track	By Appointment	Bi-Monthly	0830-1630	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126
PHASE IV – SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR OTHER AGENCIES				
ETS Briefing	As scheduled	Monthly	1300-1500	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126
RSO Briefing	As scheduled	Quarterly	0830-1630	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126
PHASE V– CAPSTONE				
CAPSTONE	By Appointment	Daily	0830-1630	Caserma Ederle bldg. 126

Appendix D – SM / Leader’s Guide to CRS and the SFL-TAP Process

EVENT	DAY/TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	DATE	
START HERE PHASE I - NLT 12 months prior to Separation					
1.	Reserve Affiliation Orientation	Daily Operating Hours	Career Counselor Office	Provide individual counseling to transitioning SMs on Reserve Component benefits and opportunities	
2.	DD FORM 2648 Pre-Separation Briefing	Daily Operating Hours	SFL-TAP Center	SMs will complete the statutory pre-separation briefing <u>DD FORM 2648 (*)</u> either by appointment at the SFL-TAP Center or online at the following link: https://www.sfl-tap.army.mil .	
3.	eBENEFITS	On-line	SFL-TAP Center	SMs must register on (WWW.EBENEFITS.VA.GOV) and (WWW.MYHEALTH.VA.GOV) (*). Conducted as part of Pre-Separation	
4.	Initial Counseling	Daily Operating Hours	SFL-TAP Center	Immediately following the briefing complete an Initial Counseling (IC); Schedule all SFL-TAP briefings and events.	
5.	Individual Transition Plan	Daily Operating Hours	SFL-TAP Center	SFL-TAP Counselor will assist SMs in filling out sections 1 & 6 of the ITP. SMs MUST bring to MOC, Financial Planning and DOLEW.	
PHASE II - Scheduled months 12 to 6 either as a 5 day course or as individual blocks; but NLT 6 months prior to Separation					
1.	Transition Overview	Monday (Monthly)	SFL-TAP Center	Will receive the Participants Guide – must bring to MOC, Financial Planning, and DOLEW seminars	
2.	VA Benefits Briefing Phase I	Monday (Monthly)	SFL-TAP Center	A prerequisite to attending is registration on eBENEFITS and myHEALTHeVET.	
3.	VA Benefits Briefing Phase II	Monday (Monthly)	SFL-TAP Center	A prerequisite to attending is registration on eBENEFITS and myHEALTHeVET	
4.	MOC Crosswalk	Tuesday (Monthly)	SFL-TAP Center	Military Occupational Crosswalk. Must have the completed <u>GAP ANALYSIS (*)</u> at the conclusion of seminar.	
5.	Financial Management Workshop	Tuesday (Monthly)	SFL-TAP Center	Must create the <u>12-MONTH TRANSITION BUDGET (*)</u> ; confirmed by SFL-TAP Financial Counselor.	
6.	Employment Workshop (DOLEW)	Wed - Fri, 0830-1630	SFL-TAP Center	Prerequisites & bring to class: (1) MOS Crosswalk, (2) DD 2648, (3) ITP Modules 1 & 6 completed, (4) Education Record, (5) DD Form 2586, (6) AARTS, (7) NCOER / OER. SMs register online for DOL Career OneStop at: www.careeronestop.org	

	EVENT	DAY/TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	DATE
PHASE III - Can be scheduled between 6 and 12 months; but <u>NLT 6 months prior to Separation</u>					
1.	ITP Review	Individually by appointment	SFL-TAP Center	Voluntary mid-process review of the ITP process to assist in ensuring SM is on track to complete Career Readiness Standards	
2.	Higher Education Track	Monthly 0830-1630 (2 days)	SFL-TAP Center	Higher Education Track includes: Preparation, College Credits, Researching schools, Applications, Campus Life and Using Campus Resources – off-site visits 3 rd Day	
3.	Career Technical Track (CTT)	Bi-Monthly 0800-1630 (2 days)	SFL-TAP Center	CTT will assist transitioning SM in identifying civilian technical occupations, establishing career goals, highlight VA education benefits and beginning applications for credentialing and vocation training – off-site visits 3 rd Day	
4.	Entrepreneurship Track:	Quarterly 0830-1600 (2 days)	SFL-TAP Center	Provide transitioning SMs the knowledge, tools and resources they need to evaluate opportunities as entrepreneurs – off-site visits 3 rd Day	
5.	Resume Writing	By appointment	SFL-TAP Center	Resume produced in the workshop must be reviewed by an SFL-TAP Counselor; you cannot get credit on the CRS until it is reviewed.	
PHASE IIIA - Can be scheduled between at 6 month; but <u>NLT 3 months prior to Separation</u>					
6.	ETS Briefing	Monthly 1500 -1630	SFL-TAP Center	The Transition Center will publish ETS orders upon SMs attending the separation briefing	
7.	RSO Briefing	Quarterly	SFL-TAP Center	NOTE: Survivor Benefit Plan is mandatory for married SMs No appointment necessary.	
8.	Retirement Physical	By Appointment	Health Clinic	NOTE: Physical is mandatory for retiring SM appointments.	
PHASE IV - Can be scheduled at any time during process; but <u>NLT 3 months prior to Separation</u> completed.					
1.	Career Counseling	Varies IAW Supporting Agency	Various Locations	SFL-TAP, ACES, VA, SBA, ACS, ESD	
2.	Employer Days	Vary Each Month – See List of Upcoming Events	Vary	There are new companies appearing on a weekly basis. Flyers are posted on the SFL-TAP Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/VicenzaSFLTAP	

	EVENT	DAY/TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	DATE
3.	Local Job Fairs	Quarterly / as announced	Surrounding Community	POC: SFL-TAP Transition Manager, Family Employment Services Manager, Employment Liaison	
4.	Virtual Job Fairs	As announced	Online	Clients can utilize the computer labs at BLDG 126 to participate during normal operating hours (on space available basis).	
PHASE V - CAPSTONE – 120 to 90 days prior to Separation					
1.	CAPSTONE	By Appointment During Normal Operating Hours	SFL-TAP Center	CAPSTONE is the mandatory final QC to ensure completion of the CRS. SM MUST bring: Gap Analysis, Budget, ITP, Resume, school or job application, and signed DD Form 2958 for counselors signature.	
PHASE VI - SEPARATION					
<p>PRIOR TO going to the CPF to get clearing papers and the Transition Center for their DD214:</p> <p>All SMs must confirm that they have in their possession:</p>				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> DD Form 2648 (AC) or DD Form 2648-1 DD Form 2958 Complete survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/?sm=MSnacEWR9MYiBhivlBdA9gVoQuHNR14rPpkNPdOGVso%3d Online IMCOM Survey: Go to the following web address to complete the survey and print off the verification: http://www.myarmyonesource.com/ArmyTransitionProgramExitSurvey 	

- SMs may schedule focused transition-related training, counseling, and computer lab appointments throughout their transition. Counselor and computer lab appointments provide time for assisted resume writing, job search, and career research.
- Disclaimer: This handout is only meant as a quick guide and checklist for transitioning SMs and their commanders. For complete information about procedures and exemptions to policy refer to references cited above and SFL-TAP site.
- Mandatory SFL-TAP transition assistance training will begin for all SMs no sooner than 18 months and no later than 12 months prior to their separation date (those retiring may begin 2 years prior and continue for life).
- SMs being considered for release earlier than their contractual separation date (e.g., administrative or medical separation) will be referred to SFL-TAP immediately upon identification as a candidate for early release.

Appendix E – Dress Code Policy for Workshops



Dress Code Policy

SFL-TAP is designed to prepare Soldiers for transition to the civilian workforce.

SFL-TAP Staff members are well equipped to train transitioning Soldiers on appropriate dress for the interview and civilian workforce.

Soldiers may wear appropriate **business casual civilian** attire or the Army Combat Uniform (ACU).

Soldiers **will not** wear t-shirts, jeans, shorts, workout attire, sneakers/tennis shoes or flip flops.

** * Exceptions to be approved by the TSM alone * **

*Please refer any questions or concerns about this policy to the
Transition Services Manager, 637-8151.*

Appendix F – Classroom Rules for Workshops

VICENZA SOLDIER FOR LIFE- TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SFL-TAP)

The POC for the SFL-TAP classroom is the Transition Services Manager at DSN: 637-8151

CLASSROOM RULES

- No food or open container beverages permitted.
- No Tobacco use of any kind in the classroom.
- Do not move desks or furniture.
- Do not remove any items from the classroom.
- Ensure computers are plugged in and “open” at all times.
- Ensure the classroom is returned to its original condition after you are finished (throw away trash, push in chairs, wipe dry-erase surfaces, etc.)
- Smoking is only permitted in our designated smoking area, located near the bike rack.



TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Start Strong • Serve Strong • Reintegrate Strong • Remain Strong