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**Personnel Separations**  
**ARMY CAREER AND ALUMNI PROGRAM (ACAP)**

**Summary.** This document describes the ACAP transition assistance organization, statutory authorization, referral documents, transition process, and approximate individual time requirements. It presents eligibility criteria, and sets responsibilities for commanders, supervisors, and transitioners.

**Applicability.** The pamphlet applies to Army personnel stationed in Fort Lee.

**Suggested improvements.** The proponent of this pamphlet is Army Career and Alumni Program. Send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) through channels to ACAP, ATTN: ATZM-DPS-TA (Transition Services Manager), 1403 Mahone Ave. Bldg. 9028, Fort Lee, VA 23801-6000.

**Availability.** Available on the Ft Lee Homepage at <http://www.lee.army.mil> and on the USACASCOM Homepage at <http://www.cascom.army.mil/ACAP/ACAP.htm>.

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### CHAPTER 1

#### Introduction

**1-1. Purpose.** The Army established the Army Career & Alumni Program (ACAP) to ease the transition from military service into civilian life and employment. It is a comprehensive program that coordinates the spectrum of transition services available to soldiers, Department of Army civilian employees, and their family members. ACAP is intended to be an enduring service. This document describes the ACAP transition assistance organization, statutory authorization, referral documents, transition process, and approximate individual time requirements. It presents eligibility criteria, and sets responsibilities for commanders, supervisors, and transitioners. Paragraph 1-2, below, lists the authorization documents for the Transition Assistance Program for separating and retiring service members.

a. Eligible military personnel must receive mandatory Preseparation Counseling and complete the DD Form 2648, Preseparation Counseling Checklist. Based on individual needs, transitioners may receive a follow up appointment to develop an Individual Transition Plan (ITP). The ITP guides the transitioners to Service Providers (SPs) to obtain career guidance, benefits information, and/or job search assistance. Commanders and supervisors are to support soldier and employee access to these resources while balancing mission requirements.

b. Preseparation Counseling is the first step in a substantial benefit to both transitioners and the Army. *All* transitioning personnel must receive Preseparation Counseling regardless of the character of discharge. Our goal is for every transitioner, whether mid-career or retiree, to receive the full benefit of ACAP services and the associated SPs.

(1) When transitioners understand that the Army values their service by ensuring they can use ACAP, then they leave the military with a durable, favorable impression. When ACAP assists junior soldiers in making career planning decisions, it supports reenlistment and transfer to the Reserve Component. For soldiers who are determined to separate or retire, ACAP counselors assist them in identifying their skills and marketing their military experience to successfully obtain employment. The Army benefits when veterans appreciate the value of their military service and thus encourage enlistment by their future civilian associates.

(2) There is an immediate benefit to the Army in the conservation of scarce resources. Substantial expenditure of training dollars is avoided each time a mid-career soldier reenlists or transfers to the Reserve Component. In addition, most leaders are unaware that the Department of Army must reimburse the states for Unemployment Compensation (UCX) paid to separated soldiers. ACAP services assist veterans in obtaining employment quickly. The Army Research Institute (ARI) has determined that soldiers who use all ACAP services accelerate their time-to-employment and receive increased earnings. This reduces the amount of Operations and Maintenance Army (OMA) funds transferred each year to the states. Thus, commanders, unit leaders, directors, and supervisors are to ensure that soldiers receive the support necessary to use all ACAP and transition assistance services.

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c. Mission activities have precedence over transition activities. To perform mission requirements, unit leaders may tell soldiers *when* to schedule ACAP and transition services appointments. When it is necessary for unit leaders to require cancellation of a transitioner's appointments for operational requirements, they must clearly communicate to the transitioner that they fully support ACAP participation and *will provide time periods for soldiers to make transition assistance appointments as soon as possible*.

d. Fort Lee provides ACAP services for both transition assistance and job search assistance. On Fort Lee, the ACAP Center is part of the Directorate of Operations and Public Safety.(DOPS).

(1) **Transition Assistance (TA).** TA ensures all transitioning personnel understand their entitlements and benefits prior to their departure from military or civilian service. Counselors provide Preseparation Counseling and refer transitioners to a variety of service providers. ACAP counselors ensure transitioners are aware of transition benefits as well as a variety of community services including job assistance. The Transition Services Manager intercedes on behalf of transitioners if necessary.

(2) **Job Assistance (JA).** JA is one of many SPs. It assists eligible transitioners and their family members in seeking employment. JA provides separating personnel with access to various workshops, seminars, vocational counselors, employer databases, a reference library, and electronic media for résumé preparation and transmission. Working with JA resources, clients develop a professional résumé and a job search strategy that includes personal marketing, successful dressing, skillful interviewing, and salary negotiating.

**1-2. References and Authorizations.** The following United States Code, Department of Defense Instructions, Public Law, and MILPER message implement and guide the operation of ACAP. Publication of an ACAP Army Regulation is not anticipated.

- a. Section 1142, Title 10 U.S.C.
- b. Department of Defense Instructions (DODI) Number 1332.36, Subject: Preseparation Counseling for Military Personnel.
- c. Veterans Education and Benefits Expansion Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-103).
- d. MILPER Message Number: 02-156, TAPC-PDO, Preseparation Counseling Checklist (DD Form 2648).

## CHAPTER 2 Responsibilities

**2-1. General.** Commanders, supervisors, the Transition Services Manager, the Garrison Commander, the ACAP contractor's staff, and various service providers each have responsibilities to ensure the availability of comprehensive, high quality transition assistance. Individual transitioners have the responsibility to communicate their needs and progress to unit leaders.

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a. **Commanders/Supervisors.** Commanders support transitioners in the transition process and refer eligible personnel to ACAP at least by the 180th day prior to separation. At the first ACAP appointment, transitioners receive the DD Form 2648, Preseparation Counseling Checklist, a Service Provider List (SPL), and an appointment to return to develop an ITP.

(1) Commanders and/or supervisors must review transitioners' necessary transition assistance appointments and provide time for them to use necessary services. Mission activities have priority over transition assistance activities. Unit leaders tell soldiers when to make transition assistance appointments based on mission requirements.

(2) ACAP should be utilized by the eligible person and supported by the commander and/or supervisor. ACAP should never be used in a manner that will allow soldiers to exploit unnecessary or unauthorized time away from their unit and/or commitment to the Armed Forces, in direct violation of AR 630-5, Leaves and Passes. Commanders/supervisors are responsible for ensuring these regulations are not violated while continuing to actively support participation. ACAP is not, nor was it ever intended to be a 6-month (180 day) furlough or training period to prepare departing service members for transition to civilian life or second careers.

b. **Transition Services Manager (TSM)** will:

(1) Ensure completion of Preseparation Counseling, preparation of the DD 2648, and transmittal of a copy of the DD Form 2648 to the Adjutant General (AG) for disposition for all transitioners.

(2) Ensure coordination of transition services and referral of transitioners to necessary service providers. The TSM will intercede with unit leaders on behalf of transitioners who miss multiple ACAP appointments or who may have specialized requirements.

(3) Request classrooms to support ACAP activities, the 3 day Transition Assistance Program (TAP) seminars, and other ad hoc presentations.

(4) Request necessary logistical support for the ACAP contractor.

(5) Provide performance reports to commanders on Preseparation Counseling Timeliness or other program performance criteria specified by PERSCOM as required.

c. **Contractor Installation Manager (CIM) or ACAP Center Manager.** These are both titles for the same person who is an employee of the Army-wide ACAP contract administered by PERSCOM ACAP. The CIM supervises the contractor's counselors who provide Preseparation Counseling and job search assistance services. The CIM's primary function is to comply with the terms of the contract and operational guidance issued to the contractor by PERSCOM ACAP. The CIM ensures the delivery of Preseparation Counseling and establishes ACAP Center procedures that respond to the needs of transitioners and commanders.

d. **Commander, Fort Lee Garrison.** Commander, Fort Lee Garrison, provides logistical support for the ACAP contractor and TSM as well as classrooms and classroom support (e.g., tables, chairs, and audiovisual equipment) for transition assistance workshops and seminars.

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(1) In accordance with Public Law, the 3 day Transition Assistance Program (TAP) seminars are provided cooperatively by the Department of Labor (DOL) and the Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS). DOL presents the TAP seminars for DOD. Seminars and support requirements are scheduled on a fiscal year basis. Support commitments will be confirmed not later than 30 days before each scheduled seminar and will not be rescinded. For classroom support, TAP seminars have equal priority with military training. Seminars are generally scheduled on post once a month.

(2) *Ad Hoc* Presentations. During the year, there are several presentations for transitioners from various government, service, or professional associations. Classroom space will be requested as required, approximately 3 to 6 weeks in advance. Support commitments will be confirmed not later than 15 days before each event and will not be rescinded.

e. **Active Duty Transitioners.** Separating military personnel are required to attend Preseparation Counseling. At the counseling session, each soldier will receive a Preseparation Counseling Checklist (DD Form 2648) and an SPL. These documents show the need to participate in a variety of transition services, classes, and presentations. Upon receipt of these documents, soldiers are required to discuss necessary service provider visits with their supervisors to establish acceptable periods of time for making appointments. Should a transitioner wish assistance in selecting relevant SPs, a follow-up appointment is available to create an ITP.

(1) Once approved by the supervisor, attendance at transition assistance activities becomes the soldier's place of duty. Absences from any transition activity can be authorized only by the soldier's supervisor/chain of command. Unauthorized absences will be treated as absent without leave (AWOL).

(2) Transitioners will make activity appointments in accordance with supervisory guidance. Soldiers are required to keep their immediate supervisors apprised of their activities and location when away from their units or designated workplace. All offices on the SPL or indicated in the ITP provide their own appointment slips, either automatically or upon request, for the transitioner to present to his/her supervisor. Attendance at *ad hoc* presentations or unanticipated job search activities must be authorized in advance.

### 2-2. Organizational Requirements.

a. **Marketing.** Commanders, supervisors, service providers, and ACAP staff are encouraged to assist in keeping ACAP visible in the community.

(1) Commanders and supervisors of military personnel are encouraged to schedule annual professional development briefings on ACAP. These briefings focus on legal requirements and emphasize how supervisors can monitor or control soldier participation, progress, and absence from unit duties during the ACAP process.

(2) ACAP will continue to be a regularly scheduled presentation at the installation Precommand Course and similar courses that target military leaders.

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(3) ACAP will periodically submit transition articles for publication in post print media and/or display on the installation cable television channel. ACAP will advertise special interest presentations through distribution for posting on workplace/unit bulletin boards.

(4) ACAP will periodically e-mail major unit commanders, directors, and tenants on organization's compliance with established performance criteria.

b. **Classrooms.** The Commander, Fort Lee Garrison, will provide classrooms and classroom support (e.g., tables, chairs, and audiovisual equipment) for transition assistance workshops and seminars.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Concept**

#### **3-1. Preseparation Counseling Requirement.**

a. The following categories of personnel must receive Preseparation Counseling.

(1) All Active and Reserve Component soldiers leaving active duty with more than 180 days of continuous active service must receive Preseparation Counseling and are eligible for ACAP services.

(2) All Active and Reserve Component soldiers being medically retired or separated for disability regardless of duration of service, must receive Preseparation Counseling and are eligible for ACAP services.

b. ACAP is not necessary for the following personnel.

(1) Active and Reserve Component soldiers not being medically retired who have less than 180 days of continuous active duty are not eligible for ACAP services and will not receive Preseparation Counseling.

(2) Enlisted soldiers who are being discharged to continue on active duty as a commissioned or warrant officer are not eligible for ACAP services and will not receive Preseparation Counseling.

(3) Warrant officers terminating warrant officer status to continue on active duty as commissioned officers.

(4) Officers who revert to enlisted status.

(5) Active duty personnel approved for interservice transfer to another uniformed service.

c. Personnel contemplating retirement initiate their ACAP process 24 months prior to their anticipated retirement date. Junior and mid-career soldiers may begin their ACAP process 12 months prior to their anticipated separation from active military service. All personnel are to receive Preseparation Counseling not later than 90 days prior to their anticipated separation date regardless of the character of their discharge or time in service.

**3-2. ACAP Referral Documents.** Transitioners receive a DD Form 2648, Preseparation Counseling Checklist, and an SPL from ACAP during their first appointment. The DD Form 2648 documents counseling in accordance with Public Law. The SPL shows the SPs that

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deliver necessary information or services. SPs range from MEDDAC, for separation physicals and temporary health insurance, to Army Community Service (ACS), for budget counseling and relocation information. There are over 15 various SPs for Fort Lee.

a. Transitioners show their Preseparation Counseling Checklist (DD Form 2648) and the SPL to their supervisors. Supervisors evaluate mission requirements and tell transitioners when they may make appointments to visit the various SPs.

b. The SPL provides each SP's address, telephone number, point of contact, hours of operation, relevant services, website, and name of the staff point of contact. Transitioners call SPs for appointments in accordance with supervisory guidance.

**3-3. Process and Time Requirements.** Soldiers may begin ACAP by *self-referral* or *command referral*. Personnel who have not contacted ACAP 270 days before their scheduled separation date will receive a memorandum requesting that they promptly schedule Preseparation Counseling. Commanders must refer chapter discharges when the soldier is formally advised of the possibility.

a. **Process Initiation.** ACAP Transition Assistance begins when a soldier determines that he expects to separate or retire and contacts ACAP to schedule Preseparation Counseling. All personnel at Fort Lee call (804) 734-6612 to schedule Preseparation Counseling and subsequent ACAP appointments. It is not necessary for senior personnel to have approved retirement dates or for mid-career soldiers to have orders. Soldiers who have not contacted ACAP by the time their names show on the SIDPERS "ETS 270 Day Loss Roster" will receive a monthly notification letter instructing them to contact ACAP.

b. **Expected Time Away from Unit Duties.** The amount of time required varies by individual. Soldiers who begin ACAP as early as possible spend less time each week on transition activities than soldiers who begin shortly before separation.

(1) Generally, motivated transitioners spend approximately 80 to 120 hours in job search activities. This includes Preseparation Counseling, attendance at the 3 day TAP seminar, multiple JA appointments at ACAP, participation in job fairs, and, within the last 45 days of active duty, job interviews. Spread over the soldier's last 180 days of active duty, this amounts to an approximate average of 4 to 6 hours per week away from unit duties.

(2) Prior to receiving JA services, PERSCOM mandates that all transitioners complete either the ACAP XXI computer based instructional program or attend the 3.day Transition Assistance Program (TAP) seminar presented by the Department of Labor. Both ACAP XXI and TAP present an overview of the job search process. Once a transitioner completes the necessary overview, he should coordinate with his workplace supervisor to determine acceptable times for ACAP JA appointments and attendance at job fairs. The average transitioner makes approximately 8 to 10 JA appointments at the ACAP Center. Each ACAP JA appointment usually lasts 1 hour. Each job fair is scheduled for an entire day. Transitioners should attend at least 2 job fairs.

(3) Visits to other transition service providers are in addition to job search activities. Supervisors and unit leaders ask to see each transitioner's DD Form 2648 or ITP to determine the approximate number of necessary appointments. Supervisors and unit leaders then

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provide time for transitioners to obtain information and/or assistance from relevant SPs (e.g., the separation physical at MEDDAC or budget counseling at ACS).

c. **Transition Services Appointments.** Once the transitioner has received the SPL and/or ITP, it is his/her responsibility to coordinate all necessary appointments with the supervisor and the SPs. The amount of time necessary will vary based on the number of SPs and the level of assistance needed.

d. **Post Clearance.** ACAP participation is required for all separating service members on the Installation Clearance Record, DA Form 137-e. In order to clear post, the transitioner must have the DD Form 2648 on file in his DA Form 201. During post clearance, ACAP confirms the soldier has received the Preseparation Counseling and clears the soldier. Soldiers who are in the process of a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) are not required to clear through ACAP.

**3-4. Eligibility Criteria and Service Duration.** There are four primary groups eligible for ACAP services: Active Duty Military, Department of Defense civilian employees, Reserve Component soldiers, and adult family members. Non-retired veterans who separate (and their family members) may continue to use ACAP JA for 180 days after leaving active duty. Army retirees (and their family members) may use ACAP for life on a space available basis. Certain others may use ACAP JA services on a space-available basis as specified in subparagraph e, below.

a. **Active Duty Military Personnel.** Transitioners should be involved with ACAP 24 months prior to retirement or 12 months prior to scheduled separation. This includes Army National Guard (ARNG) and Reserve Component (RC) soldiers and personnel returning from overseas assignments for separation or retirement at Fort Lee. Personnel from other military branches who request job search services will be provided assistance; they may also receive Preseparation Counseling and a DD Form 2648 if acceptable to their service and unit.

b. **Department of Defense (DOD) Civilian Employees.** DOD civilians may use ACAP JA up to 180 days once they have been notified that their position is subject to Reduction in Force (RIF). Formal notice of separation is unnecessary; however, annual leave or compensatory time must be used until an individual receives official personal notification of impending separation. Once a DAC has received official notice of pending separation, the supervisor may authorize up to 40 hours for ACAP JA services as specified in the employee's RIF notice.

c. **Reserve Component (RC) Personnel.** RC soldiers with at least 180 days of continuous active duty, who are leaving active reserve participation due to the end of their service agreement, involuntary separation for reasons other than misconduct, or retirement may use ACAP JA services. RC soldiers who have been on active duty for at least 181 days must receive Preseparation Counseling.

d. **Family Members.** Adult family members with ID cards become eligible for ACAP services once their sponsors have registered in the program. Spouses and adult family members of non-transitioning permanent party personnel request job search assistance at Army Community Service Center.

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e. **Exceptions.** Personnel not described above who seek transition or job search assistance and personnel seeking extensions to the above time limitations must contact the Transition Assistance Manager (TSM). It is Army policy to refer all personnel who are beyond the eligibility windows to the Virginia Employment Commission or the Veterans Administration. The TSM or, in his absence, the ACAP Contractor Installation Manager (CIM), will determine if ACAP should provide additional services, if space is available, and has final authority to permit an individual's participation. Exceptions may be granted or withdrawn based on requirements to service higher priority categories of personnel. Services and/or extensions may be available only for the following categories of personnel:

- (1) Military separatees beyond 180 days after separation.
- (2) Department of Defense civilian employees beyond 180 days after separation.

**3-5. Contingency Plans.** Preseparation Counseling for all separating and retiring active duty personnel shown by a completed DD 2648 is required by US Code, Public Law, and military policy not later than 90 days before separation. In the event that mission essential requirements or unanticipated personnel actions preclude timely referral, commanders will refer transitioning personnel as soon as practical. Examples of such situations include but are not limited to:

a. **Deployments.** The statutory requirement for Preseparation Counseling not later than 90 days before separation is not altered for deployed personnel. Commanders must make every effort to have soldiers receive Preseparation Counseling prior to deployment if they are within 24 months of retirement or 12 months of mid-career separation. Personnel who are within 270 days of separation must be referred to ACAP prior to deployment. In the event that soldiers enter the 270 day time frame while deployed, commanders must refer them to ACAP promptly upon their return to Fort Lee.

b. **Retirements.** Personnel who are contemplating retirement should contact ACAP 24 months in advance of their anticipated retirement date. Commanders/supervisors must refer personnel who have not received Preseparation Counseling upon submission of the soldier's retirement request. Retirement Services Officers who discover retiring personnel who have not yet been to ACAP should refer them promptly for Preseparation Counseling.

c. **Involuntary, Unforeseen, or Chapter Discharges.** Commanders refer personnel who are under consideration for involuntary, early, or medical release from active duty as soon as the affected soldier is formally advised of the possibility. Do not wait for separation actions to be approved prior to referral. This provides at least minimal time for transition assistance activities. The Trial Defense Service (TDS) will not see soldiers pending punitive discharges until the soldiers have first received Preseparation Counseling at ACAP.

d. **Immediate Discharges.** Usually these are chapter discharges that have not received Preseparation Counseling and arrive at ACAP during the last few days of active duty. Infrequently, these may also be career soldiers who have chosen to retire at Fort Lee but missed Preseparation Counseling at their previous duty station. Other situations may also apply.

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(1) ACAP provides Preseparation Counseling sessions daily (Monday-Friday) at 0800 and 1300 hours. You must call to pre register and reserve a seat. In the event that more than two personnel need immediate Preseparation Counseling on a given day, ACAP will create a group counseling session.

(2) A unit leader should call ACAP the day before the necessary counseling (734-6612) to advise that an immediate discharge soldier needs service.

(3) Commanders must be aware that such last minute counseling precludes meaningful transition assistance prior to discharge. As long as the soldier is not barred from post, he may use ACAP job search assistance for 180 days after discharge. Otherwise, he will be referred to his state employment service.

## **Glossary**

### **ABBREVIATIONS/TERMS**

**ACAP** is the Army Career and Alumni Program.

**ACAP Center Manager or Contractor Installation Manager (CIM)** is the contractor's employee who supervises ACAP Center operations including the transition counselors who provide Preseparation Counseling and job search assistance services.

**ACAP XXI** is the Department of Army (PERSCOM ACAP) standard computer based training and client management software used in the ACAP center. This software presents job search training, simulated interview exercises, an interest inventory, and tracks client progress.

**Individual Transition Plan (ITP)** is a listing of activities, services, and SPs tailored to an individual transitioner's needs.

**Job Assistance (JA)** assists eligible transitioners and their family members in seeking employment. Transitioners learn to identify their skills, market themselves, research potential employers, interview, and negotiate for salary and benefits.

**Preseparation Counseling** is the mandatory counseling that covers nine areas of information and assistance prescribed by law and Army policies. This is the first counseling session at ACAP. The transition assistance areas covered in Preseparation Counseling are:

- a. Development of an Individual Transition Plan.
- b. Effects of a career change.
- c. Employment assistance.
- d. Relocation assistance.
- e. Education and training.
- f. Health and life insurance.
- g. Personal finances.
- h. Reserve affiliation.

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- i. Services for disabled veterans.

**Preseparation Counseling Timeliness (PCT)** is the measure of a unit's, a directorate's, and/or the installation's compliance with Public Law. The Army goal is for 75% of all transitioners to receive Preseparation Counseling prior to 180 days before separation. PCT performance is automatically tracked by ACAP XXI software and is reported to PERSCOM ACAP on a monthly basis. Units that are below the 75% goal receive feedback from the Transition Services Manager.

**Service Providers (SPs)** are the various services and programs that provide transition assistance. There are 15 service providers that range from Household Goods shipping to Preseparation Physicals to budget counseling to veteran's service organizations.

**Service Provider List (SPL)** is the list of SPs that provide transition information or services. Transitioners receive a copy of this list during Preseparation Counseling. The SPL provides the names, locations, hours of operation, services, and telephone numbers of all SPs.

**Transition Assistance (TA)** ensures all transitioning personnel understand their entitlements and benefits prior to their departure from military or civilian service.

**Transition Assistance Manager (TSM)** is the Government manager responsible for the overall coordination of transition assistance services, performance feedback to commanders, and is an ombudsman for transitioners.

**Transition Assistance Program (TAP)** is a formal 3 day seminar presented on post by the Department of Labor, the Veterans Administration, and the Small Business Administration.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

OFFICIAL:

JOHN R ANGEVINE  
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*//signed//*

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