

Additional Resources:

U.S. Small Business Administration's Office
Veterans Business Development
www.sba.gov/aboutsba/sbaprograms/ovbd/index.html

Veterans' Business Outreach Center
www.vboc.org
www.coserve.org/vboc/

Department of Veteran Affairs
Center for Veterans Enterprise
www.vetbiz.gov

Veterans' Transition Franchise Initiative
www.vetfran.com

The Veterans Corp.
www.veteranscorp.org

The Annual National Veteran Small Business
Conference and Expo
www.nationalveteransconference.com

For direct legal services, contact:

Legal Assistance for Microenterprises Project (Lamp)
<http://lamp.texasbar.org>

Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas
(800) 955-3959
www.lanwt.org

Lone Star Legal Aid
(800) 354-1889
www.lonestarlegal.org

Texas RioGrande Legal Aid
(888) 988-9996
www.trla.org



Texas Community Building with Attorney Resources

FREE LEGAL SERVICES AVAILABLE
FOR ELIGIBLE LOW-INCOME VETERANS

Veterans' Rights: Opportunities for Small Business Owners

Information Needed When Applying for Services from Legal Aid:
Current Household Income Information
Social Security Number
Documents related to your case (to the extent possible)



Veterans' Rights: Opportunities for Small Business Owners

Are there any loans to help veterans finance their business?

Yes. There are two types of loans that are made available to veterans in order to help in financing their business; these loans are the Patriot Express Loans and the Military Reservists Loans.

What is a Patriot Express Loan?

The first type of loan, called the Patriot Express Loan, is a loan designed specifically for veterans and members of the military community wanting to establish or expand small businesses. The Patriot Express Loan can be used for most business purposes, including start-up, expansion, equipment purchases, working capital, inventory or business-occupied real-estate purchases. Patriot Express loans feature SBA's lowest interest rates for business loans, generally 2.25 percent to 4.75 percent over prime depending upon the size and maturity of the loan. The Patriot Express loan is offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) network of participating lenders nationwide and features our fastest turnaround time for loan approvals. Please see www.sba.gov/patriotexpress/index.html.

What is a Military Reservist Loan?

A Military Reservist Loan (also known as the Economic Injury Disaster Loan) provides funds to eligible small businesses to meet its ordinary and necessary operating expenses that it could have met, but is unable to meet, because an essential employee was "called-up" to active duty in their role as a military reservist. These loans are intended only to provide the amount of working capital needed by a small business to pay its necessary obligations as they mature until operations return to normal after the essential employee is released

from active military duty. The purpose of these loans is not to cover lost income or lost profits. These funds cannot be used to take the place of regular commercial debt, to refinance long-term debt, or to expand the business. Please see www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance/businessesofallsizes/militaryreservistsloans/index.html.

Are there any resources for veterans seeking to buy a franchise business?

Yes. For veterans considering buying a franchise, the International Franchise Association in Washington, D.C. has a program that offers discounts and other assistance to veterans. Hundreds of participating franchisors provide financial incentives to veteran franchise buyers that are not available to civilian franchise investors. Some franchisors waive training fees, other discount franchise fees, but all agree to offer a better deal to veterans than any other qualified investor. Please see the Veterans' Transition Franchise Initiative website (www.vetfran.com) under the heading "Resources".

Are there any preferences for veteran small business owners when obtaining government contracts?

Yes. The Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 established a procurement program for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Concerns (SDVOSBC). This procurement program provides that Federal contracting officers may restrict competition to SDVOSBCs and award a sole source or set-aside contract where certain criteria are met. The SBA has also established a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Concern Program. This program establishes the criteria to be used in Federal contracting to determine service-disabled veteran status; business ownership and control require-

ments; guidelines for establishing sole source and set-aside procurement opportunities; and protest and appeal procedures for SDVOSBC procurements.

The Department of Defense (DOD) Office of Small Business programs has published a guide on its website for veterans and service-disabled veterans interested in marketing their business to the DOD (www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/doing_business/DoD_Contracting_Guide.htm). The DOD website also provides links to the Military Services and the Defense Agency divisions (through which contracting is done and lists the DOD Small Business Offices involved with SDVOSBC related contracting (www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/links/dod_osbp.htm)).

What can a small business owner do if they are called to active duty?

If a small business has an SBA direct or guaranteed loan, a member of the Armed Forces may seek deferral for loan payment, reduction in interest and other financial assistance.

Are there training benefits for veterans who are entrepreneurs?

Yes. Veterans who want to start their own business can use the Montgomery GI Bill education benefits for training programs offered by SBDCs and Veterans Corporation. Education benefits can be used to training that will lead to a diploma in barber/beautician skills, HVAC certification, and truck driving. If a license is required, veterans may receive reimbursement for tests. Call (888) 442-4551 to find out if a specific test is approved.