

## VETERANS SEEKING EMPLOYMENT IN SOUTH CAROLINA WILL RECEIVE HELP



South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley announced a plan to help the large influx of military veterans seeking employment in the state, according to SCNow.com.

The initiative announced by Haley will make the state the most military-friendly in the country. The initiative, Operation Palmetto Employment, will partner the South Carolina National Guard and the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce. The most recent statistics, from 2012, show that there are some 23,000 [unemployed veterans](#) in South Carolina.

“You’re about to have a major influx of veterans getting out of the service due to expected cutbacks,” Florence County Veterans Affairs Officer Randy Godbold said. “Many (service men and women) are already being offered early retirement and early discharges. These are some of the most technically skilled people in the world.”

The goal of the initiative is to [streamline the job search for veterans](#) while also educating employers about hiring veterans. In South Carolina, the unemployment rate for veterans is 6.9 percent, which is below the 7 percent national average. Post-9/11 veterans have an unemployment rate of 8 percent in South Carolina and 9.4 percent across the country.

“Our unemployment rate for veterans is already below the national average, but every time I see Governor Haley, she wants to know how we can get it down to zero,” Cheryl Stanton, Department of Employment and Workforce Director, said. “Operation Palmetto Employment is a huge step in continuing to improve our military men and women’s contribution the South Carolina’s strong workforce.”

Alan Gottula is a veteran employment service representative from the Department of Employment and Workforce. Gottula has been speaking with businesses in Florence, Marion and Dillon counties about hiring veterans.

“It can be difficult for veterans to articulate their skills to employers by putting it on a resume,” he said. “A lot of times their skills can transfer to a job. There’s two sides (the veteran and employer), and both don’t know what the others skills are.”

The South Carolina National Guard program manager for the employment service division team, Sgt. Kyle Caldwell, noted that the initiative was created to help identify unemployed veterans and family members of military personnel.

“No one really knows what our military community is,” Caldwell said. “There have been initiatives to [help veterans find employment](#), but now we’re giving employers one place to go to find them.”

Caldwell said that the National Guard is describing the skills and experiences of military members to potential employers.

“It shows them where we come from, learn about different skill sets and veterans get a better grasp of what employers are looking for,” he said. “At the very core of the military, you have integrity, loyalty, duty and respect. Those things are core traits employers are looking for.”