VETERANETWORK
Veteran Evaluation & Research Applications Network

Veteran Studies

December 2024

Data to Drive Program, Service, & Policy Decision-Making

This information sheet is intended to serve as a quick reference explaining the survey efforts of The Veterans Metrics Initiative: Linking Program Components to Post-Military Well-Being Study (TVMI) and the Veterans Engaging in Transition Studies (VETS).

Illuminating Veterans' Needs & Moving Science to Practice

The Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine, Inc. coordinated TVMI. When the study concluded in 2019, researchers at the Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at Penn State resolved to advance the longitudinal survey effort. The VETS survey was developed, and the VETERANetwork was established to further engage public and private partners in using data to promote effective programs and services for veterans and their families.

The goal is to assess military veterans' status, functioning, and satisfaction with key aspects of their lives across the multi-year military-to-civilian transition, understand the role of programs and services in assisting this transition, and use the collected data to drive positive practice and policy changes through data-driven decision-making.

Source of the Data

▶ TVMI data collection began in November 2016.

📅 Data was collected at 6-month intervals in 6 waves, or check-in points, until May 2019.

🔀 VETS is an independent extension of TVMI by Penn State researchers. A seventh wave was conducted in November 2020, and an eighth wave was conducted in March 2023.

Survey Participants

👥 A national sample of 9,566 post-9/11 veterans who separated from the military in the summer and fall of 2016 initially participated in the TVMI survey process (from 48,965 eligible veterans).

🧍 3,180 veterans completed Wave 7 of the VETS survey, while 2,970 veterans completed Wave 8.
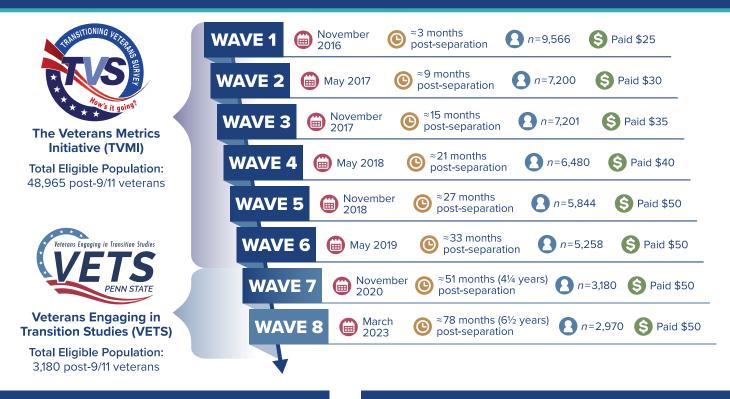
Purpose of the Studies

♡ Veteran well-being was assessed in four domains: health (mental and physical), vocation (education and employment), financial and legal, and social relationships.

⚙ A common component analysis identified elements linked to positive well-being outcomes of the programs/services reported being used by veterans.

TVMI and VETS Data Collection Timeline

Transitioning Veterans Survey — TVS — How's it going?

The Veterans Metrics Initiative (TVMI)

Total Eligible Population:
48,965 post-9/11 veterans

Veterans Engaging in Transition Studies — VETS — PENN STATE

Veterans Engaging in Transition Studies (VETS)

Total Eligible Population:
3,180 post-9/11 veterans

Wave	Date	Time	n	Payment
WAVE 1	November 2016	≈3 months post-separation	$n=9,566$	Paid $25
WAVE 2	May 2017	≈9 months post-separation	$n=7,200$	Paid $30
WAVE 3	November 2017	≈15 months post-separation	$n=7,201$	Paid $35
WAVE 4	May 2018	≈21 months post-separation	$n=6,480$	Paid $40
WAVE 5	November 2018	≈27 months post-separation	$n=5,844$	Paid $50
WAVE 6	May 2019	≈33 months post-separation	$n=5,258$	Paid $50
WAVE 7	November 2020	≈51 months (4¼ years) post-separation	$n=3,180$	Paid $50
WAVE 8	March 2023	≈78 months (6½ years) post-separation	$n=2,970$	Paid $50

Data Collection Process

- Using the Veterans Affairs/Department of Defense Identity Repository (VADIR), ICF International, Inc., recruited TVMI participants by mail in 2016 for online and paper survey participation.

- In 2020, ICF International, Inc. contacted TVMI participants and 7,404 gave consent to be contacted for future studies; 3,516 agreed to participate in VETS.

- VETS participants were recruited by the Survey Research Center at Penn State via email and text message. 3,180 completed the Wave 7 survey, and 2,970 completed the Wave 8 survey, reflecting ≈90% and ≈85% completion rates, respectively.

- A common components analysis approach was adapted to identify and assess the effectiveness of program components across well-being domains, focusing on four component types (i.e., content, process, barrier reduction, and sustainability).

- A multi-dimensional assessment tool, the Well-being Inventory, was developed to assess well-being in four life domains. Insights from this tool informed the creation of the Veteran Transition Screener (VTS), which helps service providers identify client risk factors and make evidence-informed decisions.

To learn more about the VTS use the link below or scan the QR code.

https://veteranetwork.psu.edu/
projects/veteran-transition-screener/

Survey Participants

- TVMI participants were reflective of both enlisted service members and officers of various ranks and paygrades who had separated from active duty military service or were deactivated from activated status with the reserve component within the last 90 days. Eligibility criteria for National Guard/Reservist personnel included activation of at least 180 days.

- Wave 1 TVMI participants previously served in the following United States service branches: Army (33%), Navy (19%), Air Force (19%), Marines (16%), and National Guard/Reserve (13%).

- Most TVMI and VETS participants were male (82%; 81%) and White non-Hispanic (65%; 70%). The average age of VETS participants at Wave 7 was 37.91 years, ranging from 23 to 68 years.