



# SKILLBRIDGE



**Background:** SkillBridge is designed to provide apprenticeship, internship, and on-the-job training opportunities to help separating military members gain new skills to increase opportunities for post-separation civilian employment. The SkillBridge desired outcomes are to reduce veteran unemployment and under-employment while improving employment opportunities and the financial sustainment of veterans and their families.

## THINGS TO KNOW

### Airmen & Guardians

- ◆ SkillBridge programs are intended to obtain required skills to secure employment (vs nice to have skills)
- ◆ SkillBridge training, terminal leave, and PTDY for house/job hunting must occur within 180 days of separation/retirement
- ◆ Approval is not guaranteed; it is based on mission needs, training required, and time to complete
- ◆ Members should select programs that will lead to job opportunities  
Note: self-employment, franchise business, or working at a family business does not qualify)

### Commanders

- ◆ Approval/disapproval is commander's discretion based on mission needs
  - ◇ Both local and enterprise mission needs should be considered
  - ◇ AFPC will not provide backfills for members participating in SkillBridge
- ◆ Commanders may approve/disapprove a request or approve a modified program (e.g. fewer days, part-time vs full-time, or virtual vs in-person)
- ◆ Approval/disapproval authority is first O4 (or above) w/UCMJ authority over the member. Note: *Local leaders may institute added vetting requirements before commanders officially approve requests in AFVEC.*

### Changes Effective 1 Oct 21

- ◆ Air Force Virtual Education Center (AFVEC) application process will be automated
- ◆ Airmen & Guardians will be required to use DoD-approved SkillBridge providers
  - ◇ 1,100+ providers at 2,000+ locations are available now; more are added weekly
  - ◇ Joint-base "cohorts" are also authorized
- ◆ All companies/agencies that request to become a SkillBridge provider will be reviewed and approved via DoD's process

## Why are SkillBridge Changes Needed?

### Change 1: The automated SkillBridge Application Process in the AFVEC streamlines the process

- ◆ Allows members to filter/search/select DoD-approved providers within AFVEC
- ◆ Includes DoD mandatory ethics brief completion verification
- ◆ Integrates DoD Transition Assistance Program completion verification
- ◆ Enhances automated AFVEC-generated email messaging throughout the application process
- ◆ Improves understanding of Permissive TDY approval IAW AFI 36-3003, *Military Leave Program*, Table 3.6, Rule 23
- ◆ Eliminates paper checklist for provider reviews
- ◆ Improves data collection/analysis for all program dates (SkillBridge training, relocation PTDY, and terminal leave)

### Change 2: Using DoD-approved SkillBridge providers improves the program's overall effectiveness/efficiency and reduces work for all stakeholders

- ◆ Standardizes vetting criteria and process at the DoD level
- ◆ Requires only DoD approval to become a SkillBridge provider for all Services
- ◆ Creates a consolidated resource for members of all Services to research/participate with DoD-approved providers/programs
- ◆ Eliminates the work for members and education office staff to vet and approve providers
- ◆ Allows education offices more time to counsel/assist members with SkillBridge and higher education goals and objectives
- ◆ Allows members to access a database of 1,100+ organizations with training opportunities at 2,000+ locations to prepare them for their transition to civilian employment

# ADDITIONAL FAQs

## QUESTIONS ON CHANGES EFFECTIVE 1 OCT 21

**Q1: How do these changes benefit Dept of the AF (DAF) members?**

A1: The new changes (integrating DoD-approved providers in AFVEC, eliminating DAF provider reviews, eliminating paper checklists, adding DoD-required actions) eliminates work making the application process easier/faster for DAF members.

**Q2: How do these changes affect members applying for a SkillBridge program on 30 Sep 21 or earlier?**

A2: For applications submitted in AFVEC on 30 Sep 21 or earlier, Airmen & Guardians may continue to use DAF- or Sister Service-approved providers. Members who prefer to use the new streamlined process may cancel their existing SkillBridge application and re-submit one via the new process on 1 Oct 21.

**Q3: How do these changes affect members applying for a SkillBridge program on 1 Oct 21 or later?**

A3: For SkillBridge applications submitted in AFVEC on 1 Oct 21 or later, members will use DoD-approved providers or previously approved Joint Base cohort programs only.

**Q4: Are DAF or Sister Service-approved providers required to be DoD-approved by 1 Oct 21?**

A4: No. Applications submitted in AFVEC on 30 Sep 21 or earlier, may continue to be processed with DAF or Sister Service-approved providers. Starting 1 Oct 21, DAF members may request to participate with DoD-approved providers and Joint Base-approved cohort programs only. Previously approved DAF and Sister Service providers that want to continue hosting Airmen & Guardians, along with new companies/agencies that want to offer a program to an individual member, must obtain DoD approval and Memorandum of Understanding.

**Q5: How can a company/agency become a DoD provider?**

A5: They can submit a request at <https://dodskillbridge.usalearning.gov/industry-employers.htm>.

**Q6: How long does it take DoD to approve a new provider?**

A6: Typically, it takes 60 to 90 days for the DoD to review and approve a new provider. However, if approval is needed sooner to accommodate a member's SkillBridge program, the company/agency (or the member) can request an elevated priority to accommodate a quicker turnaround at the following link: <https://dodskillbridge.usalearning.gov/contacts.htm>

DAF SkillBridge Program Key Dates and Changes	
Applications submitted in AFVEC <u>30 Sep 21 or earlier</u>	Applications submitted in AFVEC <u>1 Oct 21 or later</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current process applies</li> <li>• DAF will continue to vet/approve providers</li> <li>• Members may continue using DoD, DAF- or Sister Service-approved providers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New process applies</li> <li>• DAF will no longer vet/approve new providers</li> <li>• Members may use <u>only</u> DoD-approved providers or Joint Base-approved cohort programs</li> </ul>

## GENERAL SKILLBRIDGE QUESTIONS

**Q7: Who should we contact for information about the DAF SkillBridge program?**

A7: Contact your local education office for information/questions about the DAF SkillBridge Program or these changes. More DAF information and FAQs are available in AFVEC, <https://afvec.us.af.mil/afvec/skillbridge/welcome> and DoD info/FAQs are available at: <https://dodskillbridge.usalearning.gov>

**Q8: What guidance governs SkillBridge?**

A8: US Code, Title 10, Section 1143(e) authorizes SkillBridge; DoDI 1322.29, *Job Training, Employment Skills Training, Apprenticeships, and Internships (JTEST-AI) for Eligible Service Members* provides DoD's policies; AFI 36-2670, *Total Force Development*, para 6.10, provides DAF SkillBridge policies. *Note: New DODI and AFI guidance will be published within next 6 months and changes will be appropriately communicated.*

**Q9: What should members look for when selecting a SkillBridge provider and program?**

A9: An effective SkillBridge program will:

- \* Offer a high probability of post-service employment
- \* Provide job training and career-development experience to acquire employment skills, knowledge, or abilities to assist with securing a civilian job

**Q10: Do commanders have to approve what is requested?**

A10: No. Commanders may disapprove or modify SkillBridge requests as needed (i.e., shorter length, part- vs full-time, virtual vs in person) to account for mission requirements and member's needs.

**Q11: Is there a recommended length of time for SkillBridge training programs?**

A11: The recommended length is less than 120 days. Concurrent PTDY for relocation is not authorized; however, terminal leave may be used consecutively with SkillBridge.

**Q12: Can I complete a SkillBridge program to start my own business/franchise, or work for my family's business?**

A12: No, these career options do not meet the DoD SkillBridge Program intent to provide a high probability of post-service employment. The Transition Assistance Program has a specific track (curriculum) for members who want to pursue this goal.

DAF SkillBridge Participation FY17-FY21

