Race, Ethnicity, Disability, and Veteran Status Survey

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why are University employees asked to provide personal information such as disability and veteran data?

   **Answer:** The University of Connecticut is a federal contractor and receives funds from the federal government in the form of financial aid and research funding. Federal contractors are required to complete an annual Affirmative Action Plan, and have a new mandate to report summary disability and veteran employee data to the U.S. Department of Labor.

   **Note:** Section 503 prohibits federal contractors and subcontractors from discriminating in employment against individuals with disabilities (IWDs), and requires these employers to take affirmative action to recruit, hire, promote, and retain these individuals. The new rule strengthens the affirmative action provisions of the regulations to aid contractors in their efforts to recruit and hire IWDs, and improve job opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The new rule also makes changes to the nondiscrimination provisions of the regulations to bring them into compliance with the ADA Amendments Act of 2008.

2. Is the disability and veteran status information I provide kept confidential?

   **Answer:** The information you provide is considered sensitive and private data, and it will be safeguarded. It will be stored and used by ODE only. It is used for compliance and reporting purposes in aggregate form only. No individual information is released.

3. What veteran employment obligations apply to the University of Connecticut?

   **Answer:** The University is a federal contractor and is subject to the regulations of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP). One of the areas enforced by the OFCCP is affirmative action as it applies to veterans, including the Vietnam Era Veterans’ Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 (VEVRAA) and the Jobs for Veterans Act.

4. How does the University report on the employment of veterans?

   **Answer:** As a federal contractor, the University uses voluntarily self-reported data provided by new employees to prepare an annual report on the number and types of veterans in the workforce. Employees are not required to disclose this information, but the University encourages them to do so in order to make the affirmative action plan and governmental reporting as accurate and useful as possible.
5. **Why are current employees being re-surveyed regarding veteran status?**

   **Answer:** In the past veteran statuses were Special Disabled Veterans, Vietnam Era Veterans, Other Protected Veterans, and Newly Separated Veterans (2 years).

   The Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA) revised these categories, so the University is re-surveying all current employees. The new categories of veterans covered under the regulations are:

   - **Disabled Veteran** – (i) A veteran of the U.S. military, ground, naval or air service who is entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or (ii) A person who was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability.
   - **Other Protected Veteran** – A veteran who served on active duty in the U.S. military, ground, naval, or air service during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized under the laws administered by the Department of Defense. (The complete list of wars, campaigns, and expeditions can be found in the VetGuide Appendix A)
   - **Recently Separated Veteran** – A veteran during the three-year period beginning on the date of such veteran's discharge or release from active duty in the U.S. military, ground, naval or air service.
   - **Armed Forces Service Medal Veteran** – A veteran who, while serving on active duty in the U.S. military, ground, naval or air force, participated in a United States military operation for which an Armed Services medal was awarded pursuant to Executive Order 12985 (61 FR 1209, 3 CFR, 1996 Comp., p. 159).

13. **If I am a veteran, may I choose more than one category of veteran status?**

   **Answer:** Yes. You should check all categories that apply to you. It is very likely that if you are a veteran you may fall into more than one category.

14. **Can my answers to the survey affect my current position?**

   **Answer:** Absolutely not, your answers to the survey are confidential and only used for reporting. The information is stored separately from your personnel file and cannot be used in any way to affect your job.

15. **Who do I contact if I have questions or concerns about the survey?**

   **Answer:** If you have any questions about the survey or the data collected, you can contact the Office of Diversity and Equity at 860-486-2944 or e-mail.