



Action Plan:

COMPARE YOUR CIVILIAN PAY TO YOUR TOTAL MILITARY COMPENSATION

Service members earn valuable benefits along with their paychecks. Housing, subsistence and clothing allowances, health and dental care, and low-cost life insurance are just a few of the benefits military personnel receive—and sometimes take for granted.

You may be surprised to learn that a civilian job with a higher salary than your military pay won't necessarily mean that you'll have more spending money each month. The pay differential can evaporate quickly once you factor in the cost of comparable benefits in a civilian position. Some military benefits you now enjoy may not be offered by your new employer, or you may have to pay for them out of your own pocket.

THIS ACTION PLAN REQUIRES FOUR STEPS:

- 1** **Decide whether to relocate.** If you're considering relocation, follow the service links on the [Transition GPS](#) website to learn more.
- 2** **List your current compensation and benefits.** Using the [Compare Total Compensation Worksheet](#), list your current military pay, allowances, bonuses and benefits.
- 3** **List potential new benefits.** Using the [Compare Total Compensation Worksheet](#), list the salary and benefits you're likely to receive in your new job. Be sure to subtract costs if you will pay for some portion of your benefits.
- 4** **Compare the lists and see which benefits you'll need to replace when you leave the military and their costs to you.** This is the only way to make an apples-to-apples comparison between different compensation systems. If you haven't already done so, be sure to put together a spending plan detailing the expected expenses for your post-military budget. Our [Start a Spending Plan Action Plan](#) can help.

If you're still in the military, take advantage of the Personal Financial Managers (PFMs) at your installation. They not only can help with this analysis, but are an additional source for financial guidance. PFMs may also have insight into other local resources that may be useful during your transition.

DIFFICULTY:

EASY

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Calculator
- Your financial statements and records

RELATED RESOURCES:

- Printable Plan (PDF 410 KB)
- Worksheet
- PDF (101 KB)
- Excel (72 KB)

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