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## **NEW JERSEY: DIFFICULT JOB SEARCH FOR COMBAT VETS**

### *PTSD seen as factor in hiring decisions*

Most New Jerseyans say that military service imparts a variety of marketable skills, but that veterans face a difficult time translating that experience into a job offer. The ***Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll*** also finds that many state residents feel that PTSD – post-traumatic stress disorder – plays a role when employers consider whether to hire recent combat veterans.

Fully 8-in-10 (81%) New Jerseyans say that veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan have a difficult time landing a job when they return home. Only 6% believe they have an easy time finding employment. This comes despite the fact that 73% believe the skills and leadership learned in military service can be applied in a variety of work settings. Only 16% say that those skills apply mostly to military situations.

Only 1-in-3 (33%) Garden State residents believe that private employers are eager to hire veterans from Middle East combat zones. A plurality of 47% say that employers are generally reluctant to hire these vets. Another 20% are unsure. More than 3-in-4 (77%) Garden State residents say that the country is not doing enough to help these recent veterans return to the workforce.

“New Jerseyans see the value in the skills obtained through military service but also say that employers feel this experience comes with other issues that could negatively affect workplace performance,” said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

One of the major issues facing returning vets is PTSD or post-traumatic stress disorder. About 7-in-10 New Jersey residents believe that at least one-quarter of those who served in Iraq and Afghanistan probably suffer from PTSD. This includes 47% of state residents who say at least half of returning vets are affected and 22% who say between a quarter and a half are affected.

Most (58%) New Jerseyans believe that PTSD can be successfully managed, while 30% say it is difficult to treat successfully. This may factor into employers’ thought process. Just over 4-in-10 (42%)

residents believe that concerns about PTSD are a major factor when employers consider whether to hire a recent veteran. Another 38% say these concerns are a minor factor. Just 11% say they are not a factor at all.

The survey also found that a bare majority of New Jerseyans say that private employers should be able to factor current manifestations of PTSD into the hiring decision, but should not be able to consider the possibility that a vet could later develop PTSD symptoms. Specifically, 52% of Garden State residents say that private employers should be able to consider the fact that a returning vet has PTSD when deciding whether to hire him or her. Another 36% say that employers should not be able to consider this. On the other hand, 51% of New Jerseyans say that employers should not be able to use the possibility of developing PTSD symptoms down the road when considering whether to employ a recent combat vet. Another 40% say that private employers should be able to weigh the possibility of a delayed onset of PTSD symptoms before deciding whether to hire a recent vet.

Interestingly, there are no significant differences in any of these survey results based on whether the person has a close friend or family member who served in the military in Iraq or Afghanistan, has an acquaintance who served, or does not know anyone personally who recently served in a combat zone.

The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* was conducted by telephone with 803 New Jersey adults from February 19 to 23, 2014. This sample has a margin of error of  $\pm 3.5$  percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute and originally published by the Asbury Park Press and its sister publications (Courier-Post, Courier News, Daily Journal, Daily Record, and Home News Tribune).

### DATA TABLES

*The questions referred to in this release are as follows:*

(\* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

I'd like to ask you a few questions about military veterans.

1. Do you think the skills and leadership learned by veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan apply mostly to military situations or can they be applied in a variety of work settings?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			KNOW MIDEAST SERVICE VET		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes, closely	Yes, not closely	No
Mostly to military situations	<b>16%</b>	15%	17%	18%	15%	16%	20%	13%	14%
Variety of work settings	<b>73%</b>	75%	70%	74%	75%	68%	71%	81%	71%
(VOL) Depends	<b>4%</b>	5%	4%	3%	4%	5%	6%	2%	4%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>7%</b>	5%	8%	4%	6%	10%	3%	5%	11%

2. From what you know, are veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan having an easy time or a difficult time getting jobs when they return?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			KNOW MIDEAST SERVICE VET		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes, closely	Yes, not closely	No
Easy time	<b>6%</b>	6%	5%	6%	7%	3%	8%	7%	3%
Difficult time	<b>81%</b>	78%	83%	78%	79%	84%	82%	76%	82%
(VOL) Depends	<b>3%</b>	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	6%	1%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>10%</b>	12%	9%	13%	10%	9%	6%	12%	13%

3. Is the country doing too much, not enough, or the right amount to help Iraq and Afghanistan veterans return to the work force?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			KNOW MIDEAST SERVICE VET		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes, closely	Yes, not closely	No
Too much	<b>3%</b>	3%	3%	2%	5%	2%	3%	3%	3%
Not enough	<b>77%</b>	72%	83%	76%	76%	81%	82%	73%	76%
Right amount	<b>14%</b>	18%	10%	16%	16%	9%	12%	19%	13%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>6%</b>	7%	5%	5%	4%	8%	3%	5%	8%

4. Do you think private employers are generally eager or generally reluctant to hire veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			KNOW MIDEAST SERVICE VET		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes, closely	Yes, not closely	No
Generally eager	<b>33%</b>	39%	27%	28%	36%	33%	37%	33%	29%
Generally reluctant	<b>47%</b>	42%	51%	55%	45%	41%	47%	51%	45%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>20%</b>	19%	22%	16%	19%	25%	16%	16%	26%

5. There has been a lot of talk about post-traumatic stress disorder or P.T.S.D. From what you know, about how many veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan probably suffer from P.T.S.D. – at least half of them, between a quarter and one half, between 10 % and one quarter, or less than 10%?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			KNOW MIDEAST SERVICE VET		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes, closely	Yes, not closely	No
At least half	<b>47%</b>	37%	56%	50%	49%	41%	52%	46%	43%
Quarter to one half	<b>22%</b>	23%	21%	25%	21%	21%	22%	19%	23%
10% to one quarter	<b>14%</b>	19%	10%	16%	11%	18%	13%	18%	14%
Less than 10%	<b>9%</b>	12%	6%	5%	11%	9%	8%	11%	8%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>8%</b>	9%	7%	4%	8%	12%	4%	6%	12%

6. Do you believe that P.T.S.D. is something that can successfully be managed with the right treatment or is it something that is very difficult to treat successfully?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			KNOW MIDEAST SERVICE VET		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes, closely	Yes, not closely	No
Can be successfully treated	<b>58%</b>	57%	60%	56%	65%	53%	65%	57%	53%
Difficult to treat successfully	<b>30%</b>	32%	27%	38%	25%	28%	27%	32%	30%
(VOL) Depends	<b>4%</b>	4%	5%	3%	2%	9%	4%	5%	5%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>8%</b>	7%	8%	3%	8%	11%	5%	5%	11%

7. How much of a factor do you think concerns about P.T.S.D. are for most employers when considering whether to hire a recent veteran – a major factor, a minor factor, or not a factor?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			KNOW MIDEAST SERVICE VET		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes, closely	Yes, not closely	No
Major factor	<b>42%</b>	41%	43%	50%	39%	39%	42%	38%	44%
Minor factor	<b>38%</b>	42%	35%	37%	42%	35%	41%	40%	36%
Not a factor	<b>11%</b>	10%	11%	9%	11%	13%	13%	14%	8%
(VOL) Depends	<b>2%</b>	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	4%	1%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>6%</b>	5%	8%	2%	6%	10%	2%	5%	11%

[QUESTIONS 8 AND 9 WERE ROTATED]

8. Do you think private employers should or should not be able to consider the fact that a returning veteran has P.T.S.D. when deciding whether to hire him or her?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			KNOW MIDEAST SERVICE VET		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes, closely	Yes, not closely	No
Should be able to consider	<b>52%</b>	56%	48%	55%	53%	50%	51%	51%	53%
Should not be able to consider	<b>36%</b>	34%	39%	38%	37%	34%	41%	37%	32%
(VOL) Depends	<b>6%</b>	6%	7%	4%	6%	8%	6%	9%	5%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>5%</b>	5%	6%	3%	3%	8%	2%	3%	9%

9. Do you think private employers should or should not be able to consider the possibility that a returning veteran could later develop symptoms of P.T.S.D. when deciding whether to hire him or her?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			KNOW MIDEAST SERVICE VET		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes, closely	Yes, not closely	No
Should be able to consider	<b>40%</b>	45%	36%	43%	40%	38%	39%	40%	42%
Should not be able to consider	<b>51%</b>	48%	54%	49%	55%	48%	54%	53%	47%
(VOL) Depends	<b>3%</b>	3%	4%	3%	2%	6%	5%	3%	3%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>5%</b>	5%	6%	4%	4%	8%	3%	4%	8%

10. Do you know anyone who served in the military in Iraq or Afghanistan? [If YES: Is this you, an immediate family member or a very close friend?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Yes, self	<b>1%</b>	1%	1%	2%	2%	0%
Yes, immediate family/close friend	<b>35%</b>	36%	34%	36%	44%	24%
Yes, not immediate family/close friend	<b>22%</b>	25%	19%	26%	20%	21%
No, no one	<b>42%</b>	38%	46%	36%	35%	55%

The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from February 19 to 23, 2014 with a statewide random sample of 803 adult residents, including 603 contacted via live interview on a landline telephone and 200 via live interview on a cell phone. Monmouth is responsible for all aspects of the survey questionnaire design, data weighting and analysis. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported by gender or party identification, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

POLL DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted)			
38% Dem	49% Male	27% 18-34	63% White
42% Ind	51% Female	40% 35-54	13% Black
20% Rep		33% 55+	15% Hispanic
			9% Asian/Other

	TOTAL	MARGIN OF ERROR			KNOW MIDEAST SERVICE VET		
		GENDER		AGE	Yes, closely	Yes, not closely	No
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	
Unweighted N	803	406	397	177	266	349	275
moe	3.5%	4.9%	5.0%	7.4%	6.0%	5.3%	5.9%
							186
							342
							5.3%

It is the Monmouth University Polling Institute's policy to conduct surveys of all adult New Jersey residents, including voters and non-voters, on issues that affect the state. Specific voter surveys are conducted when appropriate during election cycles.

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