**Veteran Industries/ Compensated Work Therapy**

Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) is a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) vocational rehabilitation program that endeavors to match and support work ready veterans in competitive jobs, and to consult with business and industry regarding their specific employment needs. In some locations CWT is also known as Veterans Industries; these designations are synonymous.

**Our professional CWT staff provides:**

* State of the art vocational rehabilitation services
* Job matching and employment supports
* Vocational Case Management
* Work site and job analysis
* Consultation regarding assistive technology
* Reasonable accommodation
* Guidance in addressing ADA regulations compliance

CWT programs strive to maintain highly responsive long term quality relationships with business and industry promoting employment opportunities for veterans with physical and mental disabilities. Many of our individual programs are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and are members of the U.S. Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (USPRA). Typically CWT programs are located within VA medical centers in most large metropolitan areas and many smaller communities.

**Services:**

CWT provides a wide range of services for industry including; work site and job assessment, staff training and consultation services, employee assessment and screening, and job matching and follow-up services. CWT supports veterans through vocational case management and workplace supports to facilitate continued employment success. In conjunction with the CWT program industry is able to expand its work ready applicant pool and develop a pre-screening opportunity for future employees.

Our mission is to provide a realistic and meaningful vocational opportunity to veterans; encouraging successful reintegration into the community at the veterans' highest functional level. To achieve this mission we develop partnerships with companies who want high quality work completed on a timely basis at a competitive price. The expectation of quality, as demanded by industry, helps create and maintain our programs atmosphere of success.

**CWT can help your company by providing:**

* Labor services for semi-skilled and unskilled positions in, but not limited to, information technology, office management, clerical, retail, manufacturing and production, warehousing, manual labor, food services, etc.
* Professional rehabilitation support including staff education, task analysis and job modification, Vocational Case Management, and follow-along services. CWT staffs are knowledgeable about ADA, reasonable accommodation and assistive technology.
* On and off site assembly and sub-assembly
* On and off site custom packaging
* Reclaiming and recycling services
* Inspection, grading and sorting products for industry

The Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) Supported Employment program identifies veteran strengths and matches those skills and abilities to industries job requirements. One important feature in CWT Supported Employment services is it's level of staff support; operating much like a free employee assistance program for your company. The CWT "temp to hire" Transitional Work program allows a company to pre-screen veterans, observing them in action before making a decision regarding competitive employment. Depending on your company's specific needs, CWT may be an efficient and effective source for temporary and permanent workers or a means for completing work on a piece rate or job rate basis.

**Information for Veterans:**

CWT veterans have been successfully employed over the years in various competitive positions including, but not limited to, health care, information technology, manufacturing, warehousing, construction trades, clerical and office support, retail and the services delivery. CWT programs develop an individual rehabilitation plan for each veteran. We provide a wide range of support services to the veteran at the [CWT locations](http://www.cwt.va.gov/locations.asp). VA benefits including service-connected compensation, and non-service connected pensions cannot be reduced, denied, or discontinued based on participation in CWT.

The CWT program mission is to provide realistic and meaningful vocational opportunities to veterans; encouraging successful reintegration into the community at the veterans' highest functional level. To achieve this mission CWT staff endeavor to match an individual veteran's vocational strength and area of interest to work and employment opportunities with local businesses and industry. Veterans interested in learning more about the Compensated Work Therapy program should [contact](http://www.cwt.va.gov/contact.asp) Charles McGeough or Donna Tasker.

**CWT Programs for Veterans:**

* Incentive Therapy (not available at all CWT locations)
* Sheltered Workshop (not available at all CWT locations)
* Transitional Work and Vocational Assistance
* Supported Employment and Post-Employment Supports
* Transitional Residence (not available at all CWT locations)

**Incentive Therapy Program:**  
Incentive Therapy (IT) is a pre-employment program that provides a diversified work experience in the VA medical center for veterans who exhibit severe mental illness and/or physical impairments. IT services extend for an indefinite period of time, as is clinically appropriate, and may consist of full or part-time work at nominal remuneration. Each participant in the IT program has an individual treatment or service plan, case manager and treatment team to monitor services.

**Sheltered Workshop Program:**  
CWT operates the Sheltered Workshop (SW) program in approximately 20% of the total number of CWT locations. SW provides an opportunity for work hardening and assessment in a simulated work environment. The activity in SW is paid for on a piece rate basis and the average length of stay generally is four to six months based on the veteran's Individual Treatment Team and Service Plan.

**Transitional Work Program:**  
The Transitional Work (TW) is a pre-employment vocational assessment program that operates in the VA medical center and local community businesses. TW participants are screened by vocational rehabilitation staff, assessed and matched to a work assignment for a limited time as deemed clinically appropriate. TW work assignments are supervised by work site staff, and impose the same job expectations as are experienced by non-CWT workers in the organization or company.

Every TW participant has an Individual Treatment or Service Plan and is vocationally case managed by a VA Vocational Specialist. Each participating veteran must be referred by order from someone privileged in the VA medical center for vocational services, and may have a mental or physical impairment, including veterans who are homeless, and/or diagnosed with substance abuse or PTSD. Veterans participating in TW are not considered employees of the VA or participating company, and receive no traditional employee benefits. Payments received by participating TW veterans are tax exempt. There are no direct government entitlements that subsidize the veteran's earnings in TW programs.

**Supported Employment Program:**  
The Supported Employment (SE) program consists of competitive employment with therapeutic supports integrated into treatment. The focus of SE is to assist veterans with psychosis and other serious mental illness gain access to meaningful competitive employment. When there is a co-occurring mental health diagnosis, limited SE services may be available on a case by case basis to veterans with spinal cord injury or traumatic brain injury. Veterans perceived to have significant barriers to competitive work are able to engage in full and part-time employment with appropriate supports and workplace accommodation. SE follow-up may continue indefinitely, but generally participation and supports are phased out after the veteran is able to maintain employment independently.

**Transitional Residence Program:**  
The Transitional Residence (TR) program is a work-based Psychosocial Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program offering a therapeutic residential setting for veterans involved in CWT. The TR program provides a rehabilitation-focused residential setting for veterans recovering from chronic mental illness, chemical dependency and homelessness. TR provides a bridge between hospitalization or intensive outpatient treatment and successful community reintegration. It utilizes a residential therapeutic community of peer and professional support, with a strong emphasis on increasing personal responsibility and achievement of individualized rehabilitation goals.

This program differs from other VA-operated residential bed programs in that participants contribute (using their CWT earnings) to the cost of operating and maintaining their residences and are responsible for planning, purchasing and preparing their own meals. Veterans interested in learning more about the Transitional Residence program should [contact](http://www.cwt.va.gov/contact.asp) Jamie Ploppert.

**Information for Employers:**

The CWT program provides a cost effective means of achieving your company's production goals of managing costs and improving service delivery, while maintaining high quality standards. CWT is a national vocational rehabilitation program that assists veterans return to competitive employment; making a living wage and building their self esteem while contribution to the community.

Using a business model, CWT program staff specialize in working with facility management, human resource, and/or production personnel to address labor force deficits. If your company is searching for prescreened workers to address staffing shortfalls, please [contact](http://www.cwt.va.gov/contact.asp) Charles McGeough, National Director of Marketing.

**Cost Management**  
1. *Additional Workforce:*

* Readily available competitive, semi-skilled and skilled labor for short term and permanent assignments.
* Veteran workers are pre-screened and matched to the specific job requirement.
* There is little risk for the company working with the CWT transitional work program. The employer/employee relationship is non-existent, and there is no mandated obligation to hire the veteran. However, veterans typically demonstrate their value to the participating company which often results in permanent hires.

2. *Reduce Overhead Costs:*

* With the CWT transitional work program there are none of the normal employee costs like health care, workers compensation insurance, vacation and sick time, FICA, and job vacancy advertising.
* Training and employee assistance are provided at no cost to the company.
* Comprehensive medical costs are covered by the VA.
* Work can also be completed in one of our CWT facilities, if workshop services are provided, reducing demands on your space, utilities, inventory and time.

3. *Delivery Services:*

* CWT programs with sheltered workshops and available trucking typically provide local delivery at a nominal cost.

4. *Storage Solutions:*

* Many CWT programs with sheltered workshops are able to provide temporary storage solutions.
* Where available, permanent storage can be arranged at a nominal cost.

**Service Availability**  
The CWT veteran labor force is available to help you meet peak or unexpected workload demands.

**Quality Standards**  
CWT staff promotes Quality Right behavior for all associated stakeholders; demanding only the highest in quality workmanship and performance. CWT welcomes an opportunity to work with you to develop and meet your company's specific quality goals. Many of our programs are CARF accredited and work with ISO9000 certified companies.

United States Department of Veteran Affairs (2011). Compensated Work Therapy. Retrieved on November 8, 2011 from http://www.cwt.va.gov/