



Prototyping integrated transition planning for service members

Simplifying and customizing tools to provide the right information at the right time.

The team initiated the project focusing on four areas: navigating the transition process; planning for life after the military; right-sizing and timing curriculum content; and selecting, organizing, and presenting personalized resource connections. The team coordinated with representatives from nine Federal agencies and five military service branches on three HCD improvement sprints.

Sprint 1A involved co-designing with customers to develop a digital solution that consolidates action steps from multiple agencies and delivers the right information and resources at the right time.

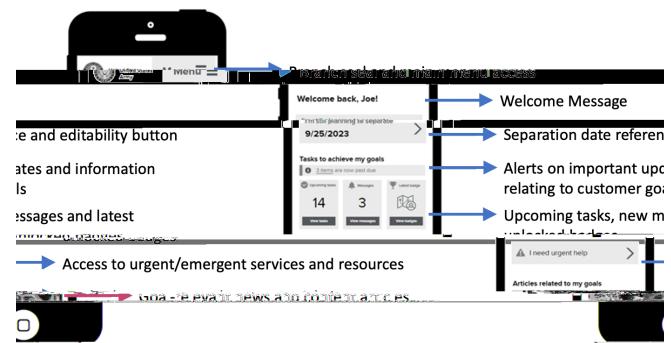
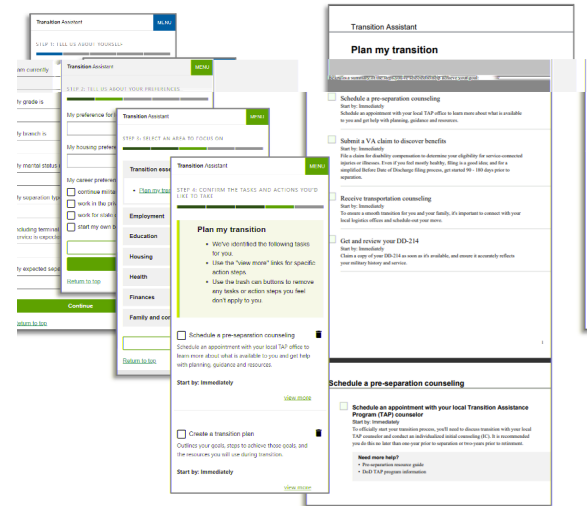
Sprint 1B investigated technical feasibility in response to customer-relayed usability and design considerations. The sprint included gathering requirements to provide recommendations to inform project resourcing, piloting, and communicating with customers.

The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) provides information, resources, and tools to Service members and their loved ones to help prepare for the transition to civilian life. The TAP Executive Committee, which provides cross-agency shared governance over the program, approved all of the HCD-rooted recommendations, green-lighting the proposed solution for MVP development.

Sprint 1C recently launched and seeks to develop solutions for customers to receive information and resources earlier in their military careers with clear calls to action. Recognizing that TAP is in part overseen by commanders, cross-agency partners rallied around a visual management solution to make TAP progress more transparent within chains of command and supporting organizations—to promote proactive engagement and external accountability. This sprint will deliver prototypes and recommendations in the first quarter of FY 2024.

Collaborating agencies:
VA, DOL, DHS (CG), DOD (HQ Policy + TAP, OC, 5 Services), HUD, OPM, ED








Foundation:
Discovery Research & Life Experience Charter



Prototype wireframe with feature descriptions

Prototyping integrated transition planning for service members

DESIGN PHASE MILESTONES

Milestone	Status	Notes
Facilitate co-design sessions with partner agencies to improve clarity around the transition process.		Completed. Nine Federal agencies and five military service branches explored potential solutions to the first key opportunity area identified in research: navigating the transition process. They prioritized a digital solution concept for co-design and development.
Define the Minimum Viable Product (MVP) digital solution and the requirements for scaling.		Completed. Technical experts from across agencies and military branches worked together to define user stories that inform early software development and identifying required resources.
Convene the Transition Assistance Program Executive Committee (TAP-EC) and agency stakeholders to review the MVP plan and facilitate decision-making about scaling.		Completed. Final recommendations for how to roadmap a digital solution were presented to shared-governance boards for necessary approvals to move forward with resourcing, development, and future piloting, receiving approval to move forward.
Build “paper tools” versions of curated checklists and customer journeys.		Completed. An initial solution prototype that delivers PDF/paper versions of the most customer-requested personalized transition pathways was tested with customers and provided to cross-agency partners for further evaluation, proof of value, and potential for broader customer testing.
Facilitate co-design sessions with partner agencies around preparation learning pathways.		Completed. Technical experts from across agencies and military branches worked together to define user stories that inform early software development and identifying required resources.
Define, co-design, test and iterate solutions for preparation learning pathways.		In progress. Based on ideation and prioritization, solutions will be co-designed, tested and packaged as programmatic recommendations for submission to shared-governance boards.
Convene the TAP-EC and agency stakeholders to review proposed preparation learning pathways solutions and facilitate decision-making about scaling.		Not started. The team will present final recommendations for curriculum and timing of content delivery solutions to shared-governance boards for necessary approvals to move forward with resourcing, development, and future piloting.

DESIGN PHASE PROJECT MEASURES

Design Phase Measure	Assessment Approach & Data	October 2023 Status
NEW: Users want to use a digital solution that consolidates action steps from multiple agencies and delivers the right information and resources at the right time.	Usability tests and a System Usability Scale (SUS).	More than 94 percent of participants would like to use a system like this frequently, thought the system would be easy to use, found the various functions were well-integrated, would imagine most people would learn to use the system very quickly, would feel confident using the system and were satisfied with the system’s ability to help navigate the military transition process.
Integrate the paper-based products into the transition preparation process at select Service installations.	To be determined.	Too early to assess.
Increase the number of Service members who are prepared for and confident in transition.	To be determined.	Too early to assess.
Increase in the number of preventative resources/ referrals provided through a customized filter.	To be determined.	Too early to assess.
Increase in the number of preventative resources/ referrals accessed.	To be determined.	Too early to assess.
Increase trust in VA (measured through VA Trust Survey) among Veterans under 40.	To be determined.	Too early to assess.



Prototyping Integrated Transition Planning Support for Service Members

Collaborating agencies:

VA, DOL, DHS (CG), DOD (HQ
Policy + TAP, OC, 5 Services),
HUD, OPM, ED

Foundation:

Discovery Research &
Life Experience Charter

Project Summary

The project aims to prototype a new digital solution that provides customized and integrated information for Service members on service transition elements (e.g., education/skills, employment/career, family/community, finance, health and well-being, and housing), which is individualized based on their potential career pathways, service tenure, and service separation date.

Customer pain point:

Accessing Federal services can be confusing and difficult for Service members and their family members. They are provided with “too much information” over a compressed timeframe while transitioning from service, which often prevents understanding and actionability. The current transition framework needs more individualized information about what is important to the customer to achieve personal and professional goals.

Project Objectives

The design phase work to develop the prototype will help surface relevant tools, resources, benefits, and information available across government based on alignment with individual Service member and family goals and their individualized separation timeline. The design phase includes building paper-based products to support Service member transition planning.

Target milestones in 2023 include:

- Facilitate co-design sessions with partner agencies
- Define the Minimum Viable Product (MVP) digital solution and the requirements for scaling
- Build paper versions of curated checklists and customer journeys

- Convene the Joint Executive Committee and agency stakeholders to review the MVP and facilitate decision-making about scaling

Primary deliverables in 2023 include:

- Paper versions of curated checklists and customer journeys for Service members
- Agency operating model (service blueprint) of an MVP digital solution
- Resourcing model to support decision-making about scaling the MVP

Measures of Success

Key outcomes:

In 2023, gain cross-agency concurrence to develop and build the MVP digital product. The long-term outcome of this solution aims for an increase in the number of Service members who feel prepared for their transition.

Design phase project measures:

- Integrate the paper-based products into the transition preparation process at select Service installations
- Increase the number of Service members who are prepared for and confident in transition
- Increase in the number of preventative resources/referrals provided through a customized filter
- Increase in the number of preventative resources/referrals accessed
- Increase trust in VA (measured through VA Trust Survey) among Veterans under 40