

ESGR Frequently Asked Questions

What is ESGR?

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) is a Department of Defense organization charged with gaining and maintaining support from all public and private employers for the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve. ESGR provides free education, consultation, and if necessary, mediation for employers of Guard and Reserve members.

Why do we need employer support?

Our national security depends on the Total Force—our men and women in the Active and Reserve components. Our reserve components share their members with America's employers, which inextricably links employers to our national security.

How does ESGR work?

ESGR leverages the efforts of nearly 4,000 volunteers nationwide to reach out to employers, educate them on USERRA, and informally mediate issues between Reserve component members and their employers if they arise.

If employer support is important, why does DoD depend on volunteers to accomplish the mission?

By using volunteers, we are able to tap into a deep reserve of diverse experience. Our volunteers include attorneys, small businessmen, human resource professionals and current as well as former Reservists. Our volunteers provide ESGR with a much larger skill set than if we were dependent upon government employees.

What is ESGR doing to proactively gain employer support?

The Department of Defense requires all Guardsmen and Reservists to provide information on their civilian employers. As this database becomes populated, we are contacting those employers to ask them for their support. We continue to conduct local outreach activities to inform civilian employers and supervisors about the training and mission of local Guard and Reserve units.

What law protects the civilian employment of Guardsmen and Reservists?

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) is the federal law that establishes the rights and responsibilities of civilian employees who have a military service obligation. Many states also have laws that provide additional employment protection to members of the National Guard and Reserve.

Who is responsible for enforcing USERRA?

Congress provided the statutory authority for investigating alleged violations of USERRA to the U.S. Department of Labor. If the Department of Labor finds that an employer has likely violated USERRA, the Department of Labor may refer the case to the U.S. Department of Justice for legal action against the employer.