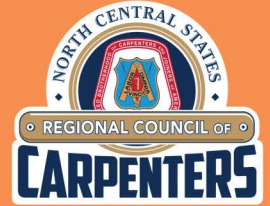


# TOOLBOX TALK #6

## Veterans



*Today, we are going to talk about a group among us who have served our country - our veterans. As we stand side-by-side on the job site, it is essential to recognize the unique challenges our veteran colleagues might face. In the dynamic world of construction, where toughness is a virtue, understanding and supporting our veterans' mental health is crucial. Let's explore the experiences of veterans in construction, the challenges they encounter and how we, as a team, can provide the support they need.*

### Veterans in Construction

Our construction family includes individuals who have served in the military, bringing a unique set of skills, discipline, and dedication to the job site. However, their journey does not end with their military service; they face distinct challenges on and off the job.

**VETERANS ARE AT 57% HIGHER RISK OF SUICIDE THAN THOSE WHO HAVE NOT SERVED.**

According to [cohenveteransbioscience.org](http://cohenveteransbioscience.org).

### Common Challenges

- 1. Transition Stress:** The shift from military to civilian life can be challenging, leading to stress as veterans adapt to a new environment.
- 2. Physical Strain:** Construction work can be physically demanding, posing additional challenges for veterans, especially those with service-related injuries.
- 3. Isolation:** Veterans may experience a sense of isolation, feeling disconnected from their military community and adjusting to civilian camaraderie.

### GROUP DISCUSSION:

- 1. In what ways do you think the experiences of military service might impact a veterans mental health while working in the construction industry?**
- 2. How can we, as a team, provide better support and enhance our job site environment to be more inclusive and supportive to our veteran colleagues' mental health and well-being?**

# TOOLBOX TALK #6

## Veterans



### Supporting Our Veterans on the Job

1. **Open Dialogue:** Foster open communication to understand the experiences of our veteran colleagues. Encourage them to share their stories and feelings.
2. **Recognize Accomplishments:** Acknowledge and celebrate the skills veterans bring to the job site. Recognize their leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities.
3. **Provide Peer Support:** Establish peer support networks where veterans can connect, share experiences, and offer support to one another.
4. **Accommodate Transition:** Be mindful of the transition period for veterans joining the construction industry. Offer guidance and support as they adapt to a new work environment.

### Resources for Veterans

1. **988 Lifeline:** Veterans can reach out to the 988 Lifeline for immediate mental health support. This service is available 24/7, offering a lifeline to professional assistance.
2. **Veteran-Specific Services:** Explore veteran-specific mental health services, including those provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and veteran support.
3. **Employee Assistance Programs:** Veterans may benefit from Employment Assistance Programs (EAPs) that offer counseling, financial assistance, and other support services.

### A Collective Commitment

1. **Raise Awareness:** Share information about veterans' mental health within the crew. Educate everyone about the challenges veterans may face and how we can collectively support them.
2. **Create a Welcoming Environment:** Foster a work culture that welcomes and appreciates the diversity of our construction family, including our veterans. Ensure everyone feels valued and included.
3. **Check-In Regularly:** Take the time to check in on your veteran colleagues. Ask about their well-being and offer support if needed.

**988 Lifeline**

**TEAM 1-800-634-7710**

*Additional resources can be found at [www.northcountrycarpenter.org/mental-health](http://www.northcountrycarpenter.org/mental-health)*