

Understanding Veteran Mental Health

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**Department of
Veterans Services**



About Me



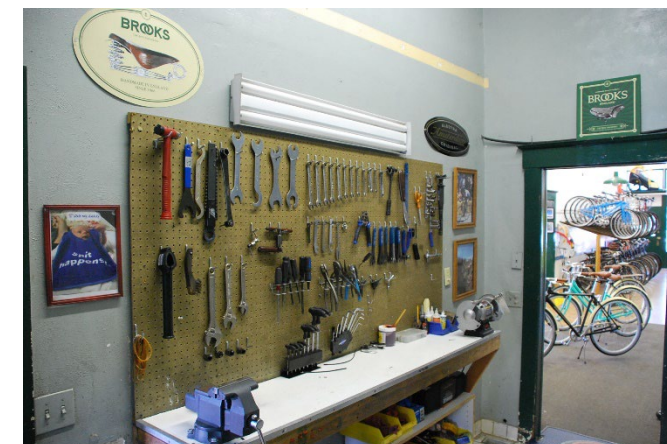
- Born and raised in a military family
- Army Veteran – Medical Logistics Officer
 - Ohio Troops to Teachers Manager
- M. Ed. OSU – 2003
 - Special Education
- M.P.A. Troy State Univ. – 1987
- O.D.V.S - 2010



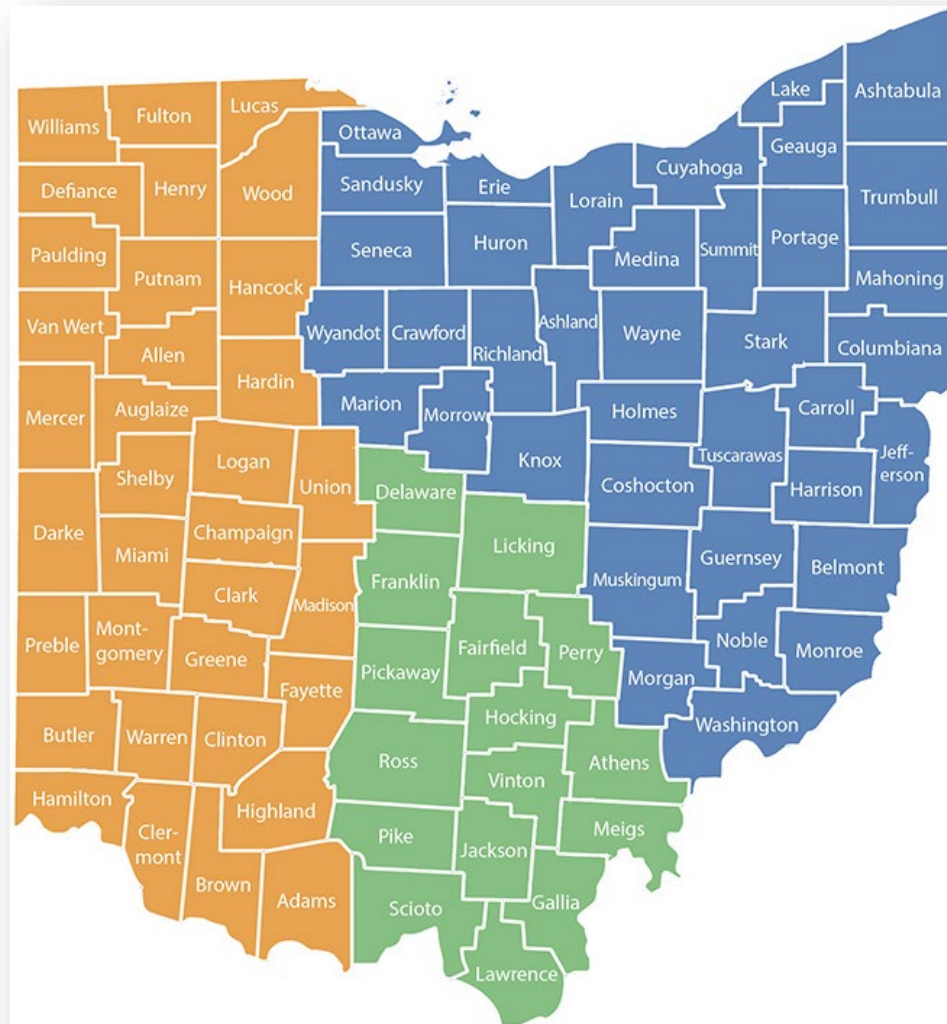


What We Provide

- One-on-one or group training for employer human resources staff and senior management
- **Support to veteran employee resource groups (VERGs)**
- Connections to veteran applicants via OhioMeansJobs, National Guard Employment Enhancement Program, etc.
- Information for apprenticeship/OJT approval



ODVS Workforce Consultants



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Training Presentations



- Veteran Hiring Overview
- Military Culture
- Veteran Benefits and Resources
- Stereotypes and Myths
- Interviewing Veterans
- Mental Health
- **Veteran** Employee Resource Groups
- Managing Veterans
- Military Spouses



ODVS Workforce Website



Ohio Department of Veterans Services


JOB & EDUCATION VETERAN BENEFITS RESOURCES FOR VETERANS VETERANS HOMES VETERANS BONUS WHAT WE DO Help Search

DVS / Jobs & Education / Veterans Workforce Team / Training Resources

Training Resources

Jobs & Education

- Veterans Workforce Team
- State Approving Agency
- Jobs & Education Resources



SHRM
SHRM-CP | SHRM-SCP
RECERTIFICATION PROVIDER
2020

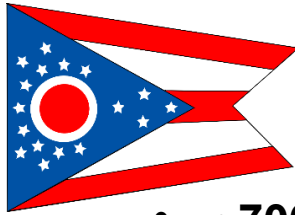
The ODVS Veterans Workforce Team is recognized by the Society for Human Resource Management to offer Professional Development Credits.

[Contact us](#) to learn more about how these trainings can help strengthen your workforce.

Presentations

- Creating a Veteran Employment Process
- Interviewing a Veteran
- Managing Veterans
- Military Culture
- Military Spouses
- Understanding Veteran Mental Health
- Veteran Benefits and Resources
- Veteran Hiring Overview
- Veteran Stereotypes and Myths

Ohio Veterans: By the Numbers...



Ohio

- ~700,000 Veterans
- In the Top 10 States for Veteran Population

National Veteran Unemployment Rate
2.9%
April 2023

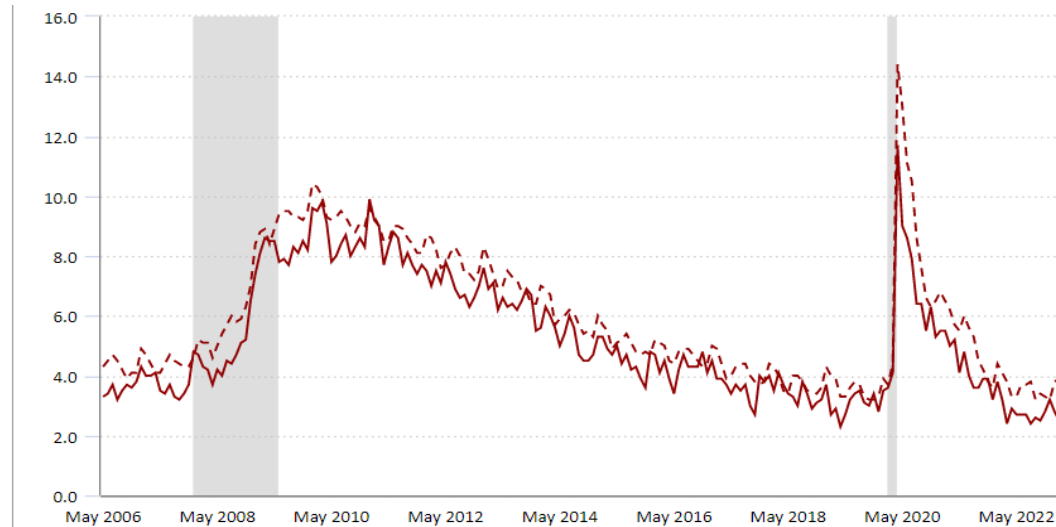
National Veteran Underemployment Rate
31.8%

Top 5 Counties

- Cuyahoga
- Franklin
- Hamilton
- Montgomery
- Summit



Historic National Veteran Unemployment Rate



Hover over chart to view data.
 Note: Shaded area represents recession, as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
 Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.





Overview

- Many employers have expressed an interest in better understanding Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) and Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) in the workplace
- Our goal is to address common mental health misconceptions related to the Veteran community

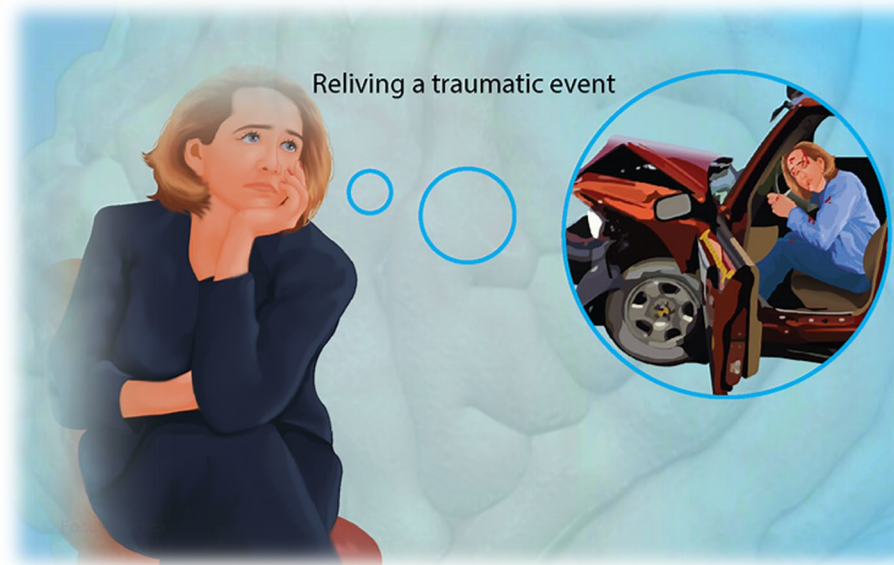
This presentation is for informational purposes only and all concerns related to Accommodations or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should be referred to your internal legal counsel

Mental Health Concerns

- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

Definition:

A mental health condition that develops following a traumatic event characterized by intrusive thoughts about the Incident, recurrent distress/anxiety, flashback and avoidance of similar situations.



Mental Health Concerns



- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder:**
 - 10-20% of people who have experienced a traumatic event might have persistent symptoms (1+month). These might include heightened emotions and/or disassociation, sleep issues, hypervigilance, and anxiety.
 - Certain external factors might “provoke” a reaction causing them to reexperience the trauma after the initial event.
 - (E.g., Hearing a loud sound, stepping on soft dirt, listening to others talk about combat, etc.)
 - Proactive measures: Encourage mindfulness from employees to prevent accidentally provoking a trauma response.

Mental Health Concerns

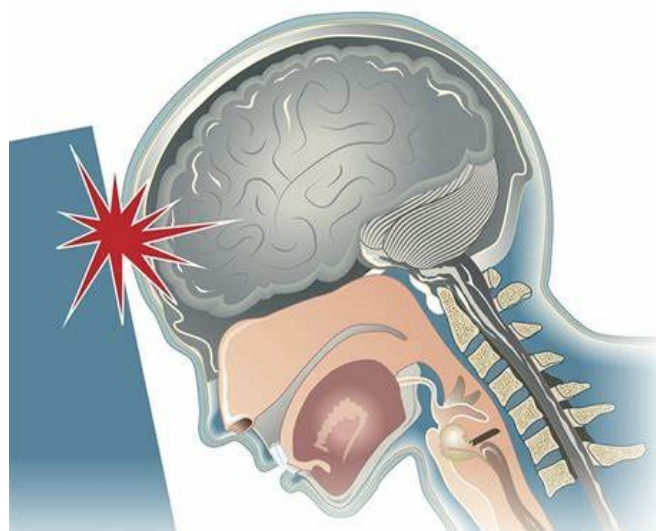


- **Depression:**
 - Increasing rates nationwide and within the military/veteran communities.
 - PTSD and Depression are often seen together but can manifest separately in veterans due to individual experiences.
 - Combat deployments seem to increase incident rates. (Appx. 15% of Combat Veterans)
 - Major Depression: Symptoms include lowered mood, loss of interest, insomnia, feelings of worthlessness, suicidal thoughts, etc.
 - Proactive Measures: Encourage immersion into civilian life through veteran employee groups (VERGs), social support systems.

Mental Health Concerns

- **Traumatic Brain Injury:**

Usually caused by a blow or other traumatic injury to the head or body. The degree of damage can depend on several factors, including the nature of the injury and the force of impact.



Mental Health Concerns

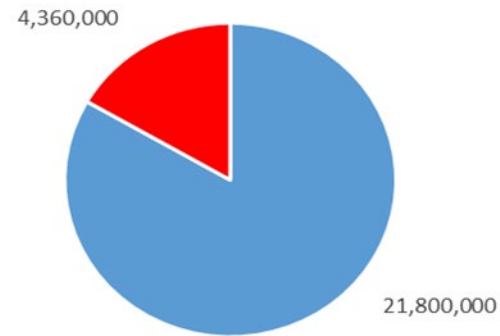


- **Traumatic Brain Injury:**
 - One of the more common service-related injuries.
 - For the first 10 years of the Global War on Terror, there were a recorded 59,218 unique instances. A Congressional Task Force was established in 2012 to organize the treatment of this injury.
 - Now, TBI's are treated regularly, with symptoms decreasing for most victims.
 - Of which, these symptoms include dizziness, insomnia, mood changes, trouble concentrating, etc.
 - Proactive Measures: Often an "invisible" injury, so encourage veterans to talk about if they are experiencing symptoms as treatments can mitigate worsening effects.

Addressing the Misconception of PTS "D"

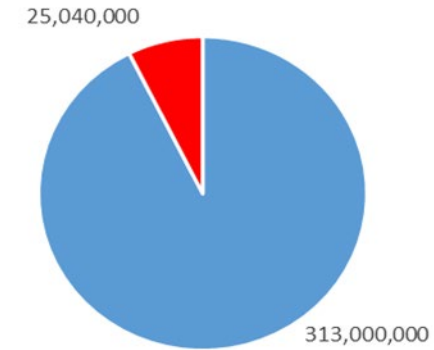


Veterans with PTS "D"



■ Total Veterans ■ Number of Veterans w/ PTS "D"

Civilians with PTS "D"



■ Total United States Population ■ Number of Civilians w/ PTS "D"

PTS "D" rate among veterans is between 2% - 20%

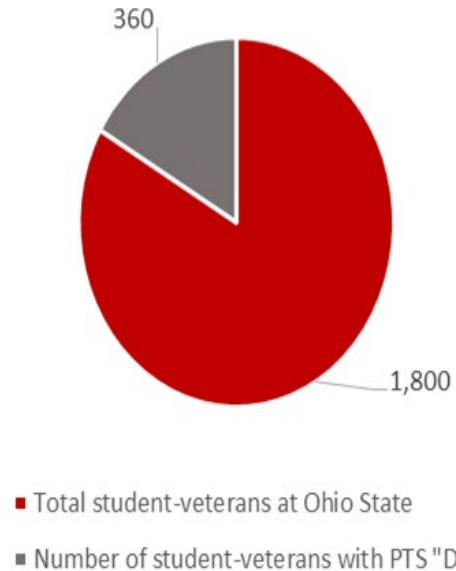
You're 5 times more likely to encounter a civilian suffering from symptoms of PTS!

PTS "D" rate among civilians is between 8% - 10%

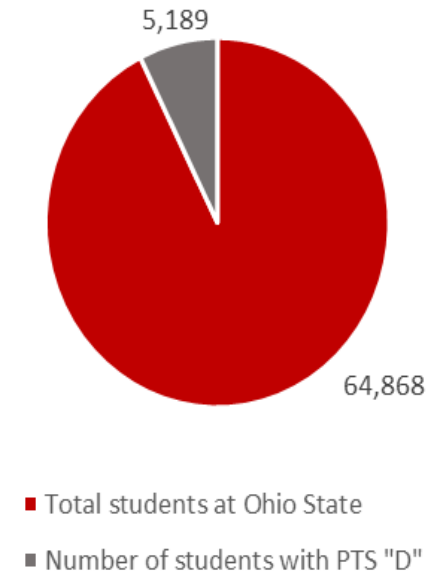
Addressing the Misconception of PTS "D"



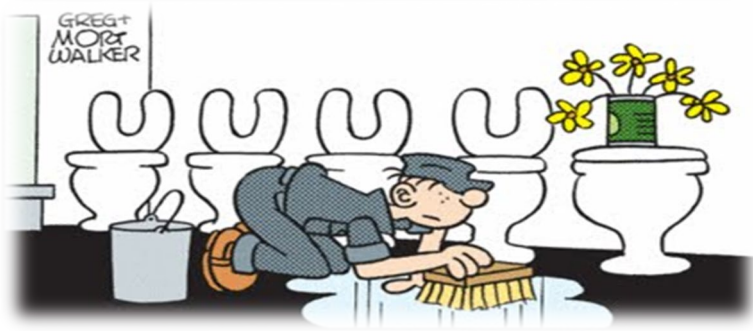
Ohio State student-veterans With PTS "D"



Ohio State students with PTS "D"



In the Ohio State example, you're over 10 times more likely to encounter a non-veteran student suffering from symptoms of PTS!



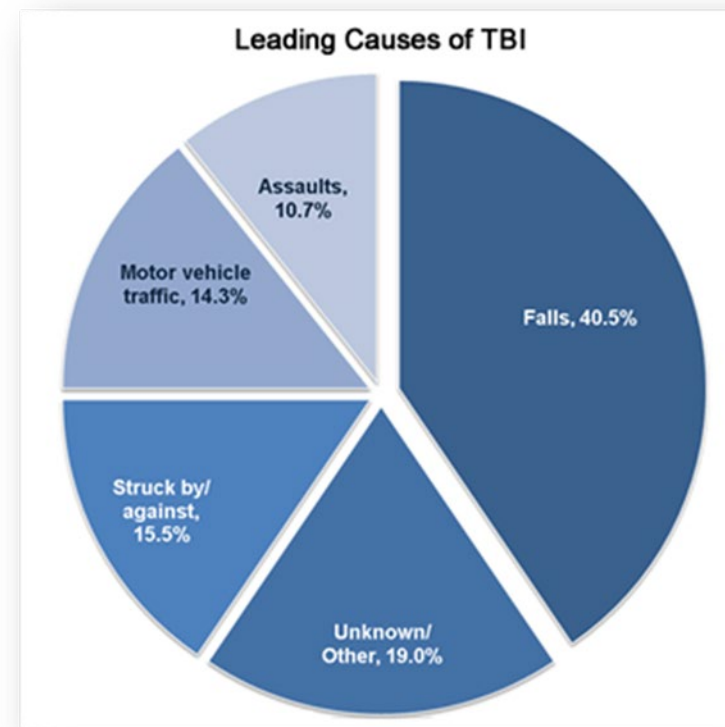
PTS “D” Myths



- Myth: Veterans suffer disproportionately from PTS
- Fact: While veterans do experience PTS, their susceptibility to PTS is no greater than the average person
- Myth: Due to combat induced PTS, veterans are a liability and can break at any moment
- Fact: There is no data that confidently links PTS with a propensity for violence

TBI Myth

- **Myth: Veterans get TBI in combat and are permanently damaged**
- **Fact: More than 1.7 million mild TBIs occur in the civilian community; most patients with mild TBI experience no long-term effects**

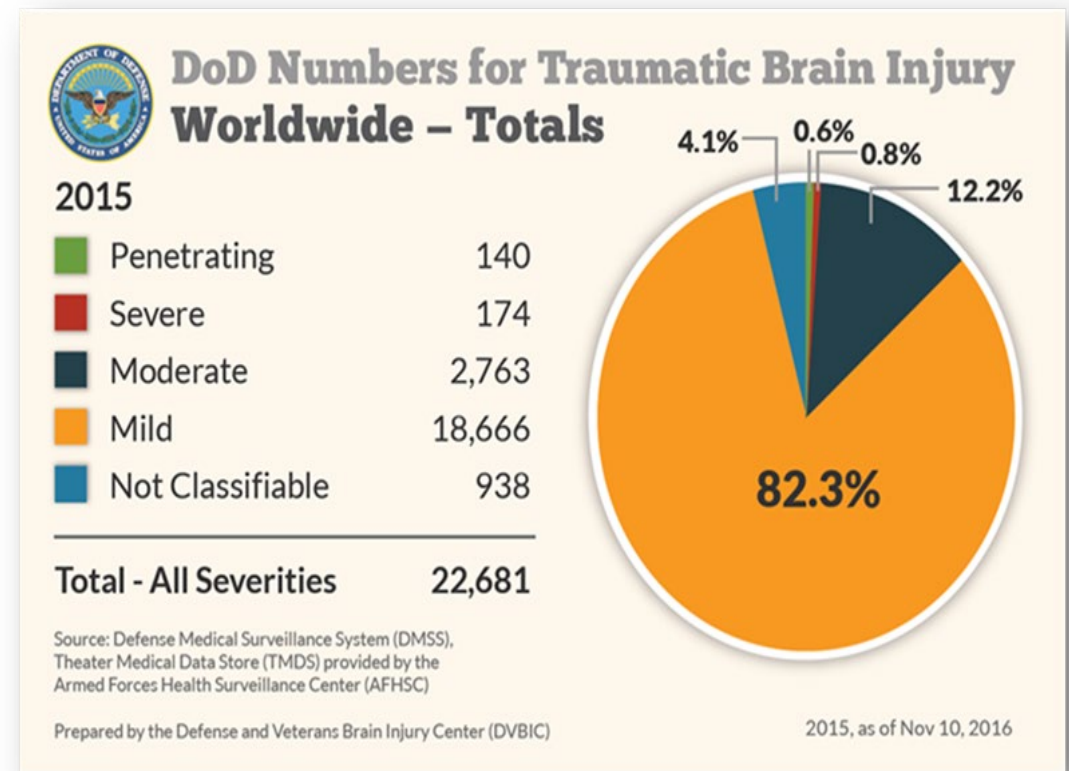


Source: Centers for Disease Control

TBI Myth



- **Myth: Veteran behavioral health challenges are specific to this generation**
- **Fact: Today's veterans are no more vulnerable to behavioral health challenges than previous generations; and have access to better diagnostic and treatment resources**



Accommodations



“Study results consistently show that the benefits employers receive from making workplace accommodations far outweigh the low cost.”

- JAN Accommodation and Compliance Series

[JAN - Job Accommodation Network \(askjan.org\)](http://askjan.org)

Employers' Considerations



- Person has to be qualified to perform essential functions of the job
- Maintain quantity or quality standards
- Consistent conduct standards

Tip: Have a procedure in place to process requests for reasonable accommodations

Source: Disability Rights Ohio





What is a Disability?

- Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of an individual
- Record of such impairment (medical documentation)

**# I'M A
PERSON
NOT A
DISABILITY**



What is a Disability?

- Major life activities include, but are not limited to:
 - Seeing, hearing, walking
 - Performing manual tasks
 - Caring for oneself
 - Sleeping
 - Learning
 - Concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working





Mitigating Measures

- Medications
- Prosthetics, including limbs
- Hearing aids
- Learned behaviors
- Use of assistive/adaptive technology
- Wheelchairs and walkers

- Work does not have to be the major life activity in which the individual is limited
 - i.e. limited in sleeping so needs flexible schedule



Process for Identifying a Disability

- Individual must self-identify as a person with a disability
- Must request reasonable accommodation

This Starts the Interactive Process

- You can ask for documentary proof
- That person has a disability
- That the accommodation is needed
- Cannot ask for therapy notes or all medical records

If more than one equally effective accommodation it's the employers choice which to provide

Process for Identifying a Disability



- Employer can ask employee with a disability to submit to a medical examination (i.e. fitness for duty) if need is job related and consistent with business necessity
- If there are performance issues and employer thinks employee might need an accommodation to perform the job

Accommodations for Invisible Disabilities



- Once employee self identifies as having a disability, ask:
 - How does the disability affect the ability to do the job?
- Look at what accommodations might be provided to enable employee to do the job
- Develop strategies to deal with conflict



Accommodations for Invisible Disabilities



- Attendance
- Problems with concentration
- Problems with memory
- Difficulty with being organized



Source: Disability Rights Ohio

Review



- Veterans' susceptibility to post-traumatic stress is no greater than the average American
- A traumatic brain injury is nothing more than a concussion.
- 58% of accommodations cost absolutely nothing



For More Information



General Information:

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
Business Relations Team

614-438-1200

ood.ohio.gov/employers

Accommodations:

<https://askjan.org/soar/>



OhioCares★



<https://ohiocares.ohio.gov>

Community Members

Questions?

workforce@dvs.ohio.gov



SHRM Code



24-YJSKU