



Looking for Work? The Army's Hiring Civilian Employees

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By Jamie Colby

FOX NEWS

At a time when many companies are cutting jobs and families are losing their health care and retirement benefits, the U.S. Army is offering an attractive alternative — take the career you know and apply those skills to supporting men and women in uniform. ADVERTISEMENT

The Army currently has 325,000 civilians employed worldwide. These civilians work in 550 different occupations, including as scientists, customer service representatives, crime scene investigators, archeologists and childcare workers, to name a few.

The hiring of civilians dates back to 1776, and today the Army is the Department of Defense's largest federal employer. Civilian workers serve an essential role, says Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey. They provide stability, continuity and skill sets that complement the force supporting the mission at hand.

"It's really soups to nuts — there is really opportunities across the board for folks," Gen. Casey said in an exclusive interview with Fox News.

And beyond those great opportunities, the work is also hugely rewarding, Gen. Casey said.

It's the satisfaction of "knowing that you are contributing to something larger then yourself, and that you are part of an organization that is the best in the world at what it does, and you are contributing to supporting your country in a time of war," Gen. Casey said.

And while some businesses are cutting benefits, Army jobs come with competitive salaries, comprehensive health care and retirement plans, flexible work schedules and — if you qualify — repayment of student loans.

With civilian military jobs on the rise, the Army itself has also had a strong year. Gen. Casey points out that they've had the best recruiting season in about five years.

"Over 275,000 men enlisted or relisted in the Army, the Army Guard or the Reserve. I was just in Fort Benning talking to some of these young men going to infantry training and it's heartening to see that eight years into this war you still have young men and women who have values and ideals that this country stands for and are willing to join the Armed Forces knowing that they are going to war," Gen. Casey told Fox News.

There is also a new and rather a unique benefit to becoming a civilian with the Army right now.

Each and every one of the 1.1 million army staffers will participate in a comprehensive soldier fitness mental health assessment and resource program. The assessment is expected to help Army employees, spouses and even children get access to resources that will help them better handle stress. Gen. Casey asked University of Pennsylvania Professor Dr. Martin Seligman to support the Army in developing this global assessment tool.

"We teach people a variety of techniques in which they take the most catastrophic thoughts they have and we teach them to argue against them," Seligman told Fox News.

"What we found involving thousands of people is when you learn resilience, depression goes down and becomes less likely, anxiety becomes less likely and it's highly relevant to post-traumatic stress disorder."

Gen. Casey says the mental fitness of our troops and Army support staff goes hand in hand with physical strength. The program will identify those soldiers and employees in need of resources through a confidential online mental assessment.

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