

T-Mobile expands jobs, services for veterans

20 April 2018, by Rachel Lerman, The Seattle Times

T-Mobile has launched a campaign geared toward veterans, with a hiring effort, discounts on phone lines, and investments in its network near military bases.

The telecom said Wednesday that it plans to hire 10,000 veterans and military spouses in the next five years, doubling its previous 2016 pledge to make 5,000 military hires.

It will also offer discounts on phone service for veterans, something the [company](#) has done sporadically in the past. The new discount, which T-Mobile says is not a temporary promotion, will give [military families](#) between 20 percent and 50 percent off their [phone](#) bill.

T-Mobile has one plan for all customers, T-Mobile One, which offers unlimited data streaming. Military families will receive 20 percent off the first line and 50 percent off each additional line up to six lines total.

A family of four would pay \$100 a month.

Notoriously competitive T-Mobile couldn't let its announcement go by without a dig at the No. 1 and No. 2 telecom companies – T-Mobile Chief Operating Officer Mike Sievert said the company's discounted plan will save families more than \$600 when compared to AT&T and Verizon's plans.

The next piece of T-Mobile's [veteran](#) push is to invest \$500 million this year in network upgrades and expansion near military bases. The company has said it plans to spend between \$4.9 billion and \$5.3 billion on total upgrades to its national network this year.

Much of that will be spent on incorporating into its [network](#) the new low-band 600mhz spectrum that it won during the federal airwave auction last year. The company is planning to use that spectrum to set the stage for upcoming 5G connectivity, the

superfast next-generation telecom service that is still being developed.

T-Mobile and other big wireless providers have started 5G testing, but phones that are compatible with the technology won't be released until next year.

Still, when it comes, T-Mobile plans for some military bases to be among the first to get it. In the meantime, the investments should improve coverage in those areas, which are often located outside densely populated urban areas.

The company has already made progress on its hiring goal: A "substantial portion" of the 5,000 veterans and military spouses currently working for the company have been hired since it announced its 2016 commitment, Sievert said.

The hiring effort is already paying dividends for the company, he said. The military hires have a higher retention rate than the average employee.

T-Mobile will also work with FourBlock, a nonprofit that provides career programs for veterans in 15 cities. T-Mobile will help it expand to 20 cities and build a free online curriculum geared to helping veterans find jobs in many industries.

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