CONSOLIDATED CREDIT™
When debt is the problem, we are the solution.

Transitioning out of military service—whether retiring or separating at the end of an enlistment—is a major financial pivot. To ensure a smooth financial transition into civilian life, use this step-by-step post-separation checklist:

1. Immediate Income & Expense Management

- ☐ **Build a Civilian Budget:** Account for new civilian expenses that were previously covered by military allowances, such as health insurance premiums, rent/housing, and state taxes.
- ☐ **Track the "Income Gap":** Prepare for potential delays between your last military paycheck/terminal leave pay and your first civilian salary or VA disability payment (plan for a 30- to 90-day buffer).
- ☐ **Audit Subscriptions & Automated Payments:** Update billing methods for recurring expenses tied to military credit cards or accounts that may change post-service.

2. Healthcare & Life Insurance

Enroll in Healthcare:

- ☐ **Retirees:** Complete enrollment in **TRICARE Prime** or **TRICARE Select**.
- ☐ **Separating Servicemembers:** Review eligibility for the **Transition Assistance Management Program (TAMP)** for 180 days of premium-free coverage, or apply for **Continued Health Care Benefit Program (CHCBP)** or healthcare via the ACA Marketplace/employer plans.

Transition Life Insurance:

- ☐ Convert **SGLI** (Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance) to **VGLI** (Veterans' Group Life Insurance) within **240 days** of separation to skip the medical underwriting/health exam requirement (or up to 1 year and 120 days total with health screening).
- ☐ Explore private term life insurance to compare rates and coverage.

3. VA Benefits & Claims

- ☐ **Track VA Disability Compensation:** Monitor your VA claim status via My HealtheVet / VA.gov. Ensure your direct deposit information is up to date.
- ☐ **Set Up VA Healthcare:** Register at your local VA Medical Center or Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) to establish care, even if you have private insurance.
- ☐ **Transfer or Use Education Benefits:** If using the **Post-9/11 GI Bill**, submit your application for the Certificate of Eligibility (COE) and register with your school's Veterans Resource Center.

4. Retirement Accounts & Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

Manage Your TSP:

- ☐ **Leave It:** You can keep your funds in the TSP to benefit from low expense ratios.
- ☐ **Rollover Option:** Roll your TSP into a civilian 401(k) or traditional/Roth IRA if you want to consolidate retirement accounts (avoid withdrawing cash early to prevent taxes and penalties).
- ☐ **Review the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP):** If retiring, verify your SBP elections and ensure payroll deductions align with your military retirement pay statements via DFAS.

5. Tax & Legal Housekeeping

- ☐ **Establish State Residency for Taxes:** Determine your tax home state post-service, as military tax exemptions under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) or MSRRA no longer apply once separated.
- ☐ **Update Estate Planning:** Update your will, power of attorney, and beneficiary designations across bank accounts, TSP, and life insurance policies (military JAG power of attorney documents may need civilian updates).
- ☐ **Collect Tax Documents:** Obtain your final **W-2** and active-duty pay statements from MyPay before your account access expires.

6. SCRA & Credit Protections Transition

- ☐ **Audit SCRA Benefits:** Be aware that SCRA interest rate caps (6%) on pre-service debts usually expire upon separation, except for mortgages, which extend for **one additional year** post-service.
- ☐ **Check Your Credit Reports:** Pull free annual credit reports at AnnualCreditReport.com to remove active-duty security freezes or fraud alerts if no longer deployed.