

VETERANS JUNK REMOVAL | GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED: GWINNETT COUNTY'S VETERAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY

What Census and SBA Data Reveal About the Economic Contribution of Veteran Entrepreneurs in North Atlanta

2026 | A Community Research Report by Veterans Junk Removal

Data: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2022 & CBP 2023 | SBA Veteran Ownership Statistics 2024 | Federal Reserve Banks Small Business Credit Survey 2024

961 vet employer firms	\$2.9B est. annual contribution	10,250 jobs supported	37,754 veterans in Gwinnett	70% decline since 2001
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When Gwinnett County residents hire a veteran-owned business, they are making a choice that ripples through the local economy in ways most people never consider. The data is more significant than most residents realize.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2022 American Community Survey and 2023 County Business Patterns data, Gwinnett County is home to **961 confirmed veteran-owned employer businesses** — companies that have paid employees, operate at scale, and contribute meaningfully to the local economy. When estimated solo operators are included, the total veteran-owned business community in Gwinnett County reaches approximately **5,113 firms**. Together, Gwinnett's veteran employer firms generate an estimated **\$2.9 billion in annual economic activity**, support approximately **10,250 jobs**, and pay an estimated **\$567 million in annual wages** to Gwinnett County workers.

Behind those numbers is a community of **37,754 veterans** who chose Gwinnett County as their home after their service. Roughly 1 in 38 of those veterans has started a business that now employs their neighbors — carrying the same discipline, accountability, and mission-first orientation from their military careers into their entrepreneurial ones.

But the national picture carries an urgent warning. The veteran share of business ownership has **fallen from approximately 16% in 2001 to just 5.5% in 2022** — a 70% decline in two decades. The veteran business community is aging, with 53% of veteran business owners now over the age of 65. The community is shrinking. Every choice to support a veteran-owned business is, in a quiet but real way, a choice to keep this community alive.

THE 5 KEY FINDINGS

FINDING
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Gwinnett County is home to 961 confirmed veteran-owned employer businesses

961 firms

Confirmed veteran-owned employer businesses in Gwinnett County — Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022 (Reference Year 2022), FIPS code 13135

The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey confirms 961 veteran-owned employer businesses operating in Gwinnett County as of 2022 — companies with paid employees, formal payroll, and real economic footprint in the community. That figure represents 3.48% of Gwinnett County's 27,653 total employer establishments (U.S. Census Bureau County Business Patterns 2023). When the estimated population of nonemployer veteran firms — solo operators with no employees — is added using the national ratio from the SBA's 2024 Veteran Ownership Statistics report, the total Gwinnett County veteran business community reaches an estimated 5,113 firms. That is one veteran-owned business for every 38 residents of Gwinnett County — businesses operating in every industry from home services to healthcare, construction to professional services, restaurants to retail.

FINDING 2 **Gwinnett's veteran employer firms generate an estimated \$2.9 billion in annual economic activity**

\$2.9 billion

Estimated annual economic contribution of Gwinnett County's 961 veteran employer firms — calculated using national per-firm averages from SBA Veteran Ownership Statistics 2024

Nationally, veteran-owned employer businesses generated \$922.2 billion in total sales across 304,823 firms in 2021, according to the SBA's 2024 Veteran Ownership Statistics report — an average of approximately \$3.03 million per firm. Applied to Gwinnett County's 961 confirmed veteran employer firms, that produces an estimated \$2.91 billion in annual economic activity. Those same firms support an estimated 10,250 jobs — using the national average of 10.7 employees per veteran employer firm — and generate an estimated \$567 million in annual payroll flowing directly to Gwinnett County workers. These are not marginal contributions. They represent a business community that, if it were a standalone company, would rank among the largest employers in Gwinnett County — and most residents have no idea it exists at this scale.

FINDING 3 **37,754 veterans call Gwinnett County home — and 1 in 38 of them has started a business**

37,754

Gwinnett County veterans — U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2019–2023, Census QuickFacts FIPS 13135

Gwinnett County's 37,754 veterans represent 3.7% of the county's total population — a significant community whose contributions extend well beyond their years of service. For every 1,000 Gwinnett veterans, approximately 25 have started a business that employs other people in the community. That rate of employer-business formation reflects something documented at the national level: veterans are disproportionately entrepreneurial. According to the SBA's 2024 data, veteran business owners represent 5.5% of all business owners nationally despite comprising only 4.4% of the overall labor force — demonstrating that military service produces entrepreneurial orientation at an above-average rate. The skills are transferable: mission clarity, team leadership, resource management under pressure, and the willingness to accept responsibility for outcomes regardless of circumstances.

The veteran business community is shrinking — down 70% since 2001 and still declining

70% decline

Drop in veteran share of business ownership nationally from ~16% in 2001 to 5.5% in 2022 — Source: SBA Veteran Ownership Statistics 2024, U.S. Census American Community Survey

The most urgent finding in this report is not about the present — it is about the trajectory. According to the SBA's 2024 Veteran Ownership Statistics report, the veteran share of business ownership has fallen from approximately 16% in 2001 to just 5.5% in 2022 — a decline of roughly 70% over two decades. The total number of veteran-owned businesses decreased approximately 1% from the prior year in the most recent data. The veteran business community is not just smaller than it was. It is actively contracting. Several factors contribute: the overall veteran population is declining as World War II and Korean War-era veterans age out, post-9/11 veterans are building businesses at a slower rate than prior generations, and financial headwinds are real — the Federal Reserve's 2024 Small Business Credit Survey found that majority veteran-owned businesses are more likely than non-veteran businesses to report challenges with credit availability. Every veteran-owned business in Gwinnett County that opens, grows, and survives is doing so against a national current flowing the other direction.

FINDING 5 53% of veteran business owners are over 65 — more than twice the rate of non-veteran owners

53% over 65

Share of veteran employer firm owners aged 65 or older — compared to 21% for non-veteran business owners. Source: SBA Annual Business Survey 2021

The SBA's analysis of the 2021 Annual Business Survey reveals a striking generational gap: 53% of veteran business owners are over the age of 65, compared to just 21% of non-veteran business owners. The veteran business community is dramatically older than the broader small business population — a reality with significant implications for Gwinnett County's economic landscape. As veteran business owners reach retirement age, many of their businesses face an uncertain future. Succession planning for veteran-owned businesses is a largely unaddressed issue in community economic development conversations. When a veteran-owned business closes without a successor, the community loses not just a business but the culture that came with it — the punctuality, the accountability, the mission-first approach to customer service that characterizes the best veteran-owned operations. The businesses that remain open and operating, like the veteran entrepreneurs who are still building rather than winding down, deserve recognition and community support.

THE DATA: GWINNETT COUNTY & NATIONAL BENCHMARKS

GWINNETT COUNTY VETERAN BUSINESS PROFILE

Metric	Gwinnett County	Data Source
	961	Census ACS 2022
Estimated total vet firms (incl. nonemployers)	~5,113	SBA ratio applied to Census
	3.48%	CBP 2023 / ACS 2022
Veteran population	37,754	Census QuickFacts 2019–23
	3.7%	Census QuickFacts

Vet employer firms per 1,000 Gwinnett veterans	~25.5	Calculated
	\$2.9 billion	SBA avg applied to 961 firms
Estimated jobs supported	~10,250	SBA avg applied to 961 firms
	~\$567 million	SBA avg applied to 961 firms
Total Gwinnett employer establishments	27,653	Census CBP 2023

NATIONAL VETERAN BUSINESS CONTEXT (SBA 2024)

National Metric	Value	Significance for Gwinnett
	1,621,823	Gwinnett hosts ~0.3% of all U.S. vet firms
Veteran employer firms (national)	304,823	Gwinnett hosts ~0.3% of national total
	\$983.9 billion	\$2.9B Gwinnett est. = ~0.3% of national
Total employees at vet firms	3,251,345	10,250 Gwinnett est. = ~0.3% of national
	\$179.9 billion	\$567M Gwinnett est.
Vet share of business owners (2022)	5.5%	Down from ~16% in 2001
	4.4%	Veterans are proportionally more entrepreneurial
Vet owners aged 65 or over	53%	vs. 21% for non-veteran business owners
	4.83%	Veterans Junk Removal's industry sector
Minority-owned vet firm growth 2019–21	+22.3%	Growing diversity in vet entrepreneurship

VETERAN VS. NON-VETERAN BUSINESS OWNER AGE PROFILE (2021)

Owner Age	Veteran-Owned	Non-Veteran Owned	Difference
	0%	0%	—
25 to 34	2%	5%	Veterans 3pp lower
	8%	18%	Veterans 10pp lower
45 to 54	16%	26%	Veterans 10pp lower
	22%	30%	Veterans 8pp lower
65 or over	53%	21%	Veterans 32pp HIGHER

Source: SBA Veteran Ownership Statistics 2024, Annual Business Survey (Census). The 32-percentage-point gap in the 65+ category represents the single most striking demographic difference between veteran and non-veteran business owners.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR GWINNETT COUNTY

The data in this report tells a story that most Gwinnett County residents and business owners have never seen assembled in one place. Here is what it means in practical terms.

■ When you hire a veteran-owned business, you are supporting a community under pressure.

Veteran business ownership has declined 70% since 2001 and continues to fall. The businesses that remain open represent genuine entrepreneurial persistence against a national headwind. That's worth knowing — and worth supporting.

■ The economic impact is larger than most people assume.

An estimated \$2.9 billion in annual economic activity flows through Gwinnett County's 961 veteran employer firms. That's not symbolic. It's payroll, rent, supplier payments, and tax revenue that flows through the local economy and supports approximately 10,250 Gwinnett jobs.

■ The veteran business community is aging — and succession is an unaddressed challenge.

With 53% of veteran business owners over 65, many of Gwinnett's veteran-owned businesses will face ownership transitions in the next decade. Communities that actively support veteran-owned businesses now help ensure those businesses survive to the next generation of ownership.

■ Veterans bring a specific culture to their businesses.

The Federal Reserve's 2024 Small Business Credit Survey found that veteran-owned businesses are less likely to report weak sales and less likely to report cash flow problems than non-veteran businesses — suggesting that the discipline and operational rigor developed in military service translates directly into more resilient business management.

ABOUT VETERANS JUNK REMOVAL

Veterans Junk Removal is a veteran-owned junk removal company serving Gwinnett County and surrounding North Atlanta communities. We provide residential junk removal, appliance removal, yard waste and debris removal, and estate cleanouts — with the discipline, punctuality, and accountability you'd expect from a veteran-run operation.

We published this report because the story of veteran entrepreneurship in Gwinnett County deserves to be told — not as self-promotion, but as a genuine contribution to the community's understanding of what veterans bring to civilian life long after their service ends. The 961 veteran-owned employer businesses in this county are part of something worth knowing about, worth supporting, and worth preserving.

SUPPORT A VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESS IN GWINNETT COUNTY

Veterans Junk Removal provides fast, professional junk removal, debris removal, appliance removal, and estate cleanouts for homeowners and businesses throughout Gwinnett County and surrounding areas.

When you call Veterans Junk Removal, you're not just clearing out your space. You're supporting a veteran-owned small business — and the community of service that comes with it.

veteransjunkremoval.net | Gwinnett County, Georgia | Veteran-Owned & Operated ■■

METHODOLOGY & DATA SOURCES

Gwinnett County veteran employer firm count (961): U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022, Reference Year 2022, veteran-owned employer businesses, FIPS code 13135 (Gwinnett County, Georgia). This is a directly reported Census figure, not an estimate.

Gwinnett County total employer establishments (27,653): U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns 2023, NAICS all-sectors total, FIPS 13135. Released June 26, 2025. Source file: cbp23co.zip.

Gwinnett County veteran population (37,754): U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2019–2023, Census QuickFacts, FIPS 13135.

National veteran business statistics: U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy, Veteran Ownership Statistics 2024 (published November 2024). Underlying data: U.S. Census Bureau Nonemployer Statistics by Demographics (NESD), Annual Business Survey (ABS), and American Community Survey (ACS). Source: advocacy.sba.gov/2024/11/12/facts-about-small-business-veteran-ownership-statistics-2024/

Financial challenges and financing data: Federal Reserve Banks, Small Business Credit Survey, 2024 Firms in Focus: Chartbook — Veteran-owned Firms. Data year: 2023.

Economic impact estimates: The figures of \$2.9 billion in estimated annual economic contribution, 10,250 estimated jobs, and \$567 million in estimated annual payroll are derived by applying national per-firm averages from SBA 2024 data to Gwinnett County's confirmed 961 veteran employer firm count. These are estimates based on national averages and should be understood as approximations, not surveyed local figures. National averages used: \$3,025,362 average annual sales per veteran employer firm; 10.7 average employees per firm; \$590,179 average annual payroll per firm.

Estimated total veteran firms (~5,113): Applies the national ratio of employer to total veteran firms (304,823 employer ÷ 1,621,823 total = 18.8%) to Gwinnett's confirmed 961 employer firms to estimate the nonemployer (solo operator) population. National source: SBA 2024.

This report was produced by Veterans Junk Removal for community information purposes. It does not constitute legal, financial, or investment advice. All calculations and methodology are disclosed above for full transparency.