

CONTENTS

SECDEF memorandum to Service Secretaries, et al.

Accession

Summary of changes
DoDD 1304.26, Qualification Standards for Enlistment, Appointment
and Induction
Applicant Briefing Item on Accession and Separation Policy
Restrictions On Personal Conduct in the Armed Forces
Memorandum “Briefing Armed Forces Applicants”

Administrative Separation

Summary of changes
DoDD 1332.14, Enlisted Administrative Separations
DoDD 1332.30, Separation of Regular Commissioned Officers
Enclosure to DoDD 1332.14 and DoDD 1332.30, 93Guidelines for
Fact-Finding Inquiries into Homosexual Conduct⁹⁴

Criminal Investigation

Summary of changes
Synopsis of Procedures for Criminal Investigations of Adult Private
Consensual Sexual Misconduct
DoDI 5505.8, Investigations of Sexual Misconduct by the Defense
Criminal Investigative Organizations and Other Law
Enforcement Organizations

Personnel Security

Summary of changes
Changes to DIS Manual 20-1, Sexual Conduct
Memorandum, “Implementation of ‘Policy Guidelines on
Homosexual Conduct in the Armed Forces’ in Security Clearance
Investigation and Adjudication”

Military Training

Summary of changes
DoDD 1322.18, Military Training
Memorandum to the Services, “Training Guidance for DoD Policy on
Homosexual Conduct in the Armed Forces”
Training Plan
Hypothetical Teaching Scenarios

Changes to Accession Policy

- Establishes new DoD Directive 1304.26 containing basic entrance qualification standards for enlistment, appointment and induction into the Armed Forces.
- Augments physical standards promulgated in DoD Directive 6130.3, “Physical Standards for Enlistment, Appointment, and Induction.”
 - Revised DoDD 6130.3 deleting reference to homosexual behavior is awaiting release.
- Implements SecDef policy on homosexual conduct in the Armed Forces.
 - Establishes homosexual conduct, and not sexual orientation, as a cause for rejection for military service.
 - States that applicants will not be asked or required to reveal their sexual orientation.
 - Requires that applicants be informed of separation policy before enlistment.
- Requires that personal conduct policy and bases for administrative separation be set forth in the documents used to effectuate enlistment and appointment of members in the Armed Forces.
- Reflects in entry standards and documents the separation policy established by section 654 of Title 10, U.S. Code.

Department of Defense
DIRECTIVE

NUMBER 1304.26

SUBJECT: Qualification Standards for Enlistment, Appointment, and Induction

- References:
- (a) Title 10, United States Code
 - (b) DOD Instruction 1205.1, "Implementation of the Universal Military Training and Service Act with Respect to Medical and Dental Registrants," September 27, 1960
 - (c) Title-32, United States Code
 - (d) Compact of Free Association between the United States and the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Government of the Marshall Islands, 99 Stat. 1770 (1986) (reprinted as amended at 48 (U.S.C.A. 1681 note)
 - (e) through (f), see enclosure 1

A. Purpose

This Directive:

1. Establishes basic entrance qualification standards for enlistment, appointment, and induction into the Armed Forces in accordance with Section 113 of reference (a) and delegates the authority to specify certain of those standards to the Secretaries of the Military Departments.
2. Establishes the age, citizenship, education, aptitude, physical fitness, dependency status, moral character, and other disqualifying conditions that are causes for rejection for military service. Other standards may be prescribed in the event of mobilization or national emergency.
3. Sets standards designed to ensure that individuals under consideration for enlistment, appointment, or induction are able to perform military duties successfully, and to select those who are the most trainable and adaptable to Service life.

B. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

This Directive applies to:

1. The Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Military Departments. The term "Military Services," as used herein, refers to the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marine Corps, the Coast Guard (by agreement with the Secretary of Transportation when it is not operating as a Military Service in the Navy) and their National Guard and Reserve Components.
2. Applicants for initial enlistment into the Regular Armed Forces and the Reserve components.
3. Applicants for appointment as commissioned or warrant officers in the Active and Reserve components.

4. Applicants for reenlistment following release from active duty into subsequent Active or Reserve components (including the Army National Guard of the United States and the Air National Guard of the United States) after a period of more than 6 months has elapsed since discharge.

5. Applicants for the Scholarship or Advanced Course Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC), and all other Armed Forces special officer personnel procurement programs, including the Military Service Academies.

6. All individuals being inducted into the Armed Forces.

C. DEFINITION

Reserve components. Includes the Army National Guard of the United States, the Army Reserve, the Naval Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve, the Air National Guard of the United States, the AirForce Reserve, and the Coast Guard Reserve.

D. POLICY

It is DoD policy to:

1. Encourage to the maximum extent practical the use of common entrance qualification standards.
2. Avoid inconsistencies and inequities based on gender, race, religion, or ethnicity in the application of these standards by the Military Services.
3. Judge the suitability of persons to serve in the Armed Forces on the basis of their adaptability, potential to perform, and conduct.

E. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness shall:
 - a. Review, coordinate, approve, and issue modifications to the standards in enclosure 2.
 - b. Ensure that the U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command assists the Services in implementing these standards.
2. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs shall act as an advisor to the ASD (P&R) concerning the physical and medical aspects of these standards.
3. The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs) shall act as an advisor to the ASD (P&R) concerning the Reserve enlistment and appointment standards.
4. The Secretaries of the Military Departments:
 - a. Shall ensure conformance with this Directive.
 - b. Shall recommend to the ASD(P&R) suggested changes to this Directive.
 - c. Shall review all standards on an annual basis.

d. Shall establish procedures to grant waivers to the standards in individual cases for appropriate reasons.

e. Shall establish other standards as necessary to implement this Directive.

f. May issue generalized exceptions to these standards as permitted by law, with approval from the ASD (P&R).

F. PROCEDURES

The standards in enclosure 2 shall be used to determine the entrance qualifications for all individuals being enlisted, appointed, or inducted into any component of the Military Services.

G. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION

This Directive is effective February 5, 1994. Forward one copy of the implementing documents to the ASD(P&R) within 30 days.

Enclosures - 2

1. References

2. Qualification Standards for Enlistment, Appointment, and induction

REFERENCES, continued

(e) D5D Directive 1145.1, 93Qualitative Distribution of Military Manpower,94 January 22, 1986

(f) DOD Directive 6130.3, 93Physical Standards for Enlistment, Appointment, and Induction,94 March 31, 1986

Qualification Standards for Enlistment
Appointment, and Induction

A. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. Entrance Considerations. Accession of qualified individuals shall be a priority when processing applicants for the Military Services.

2. Eligibility. Eligibility shall be determined by the applicant's ability to meet all requirements of this Directive, to include obtaining waivers. Applicants shall not be enlisted, appointed, or inducted unless fully qualified.

B. BASIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. Age

a. For service in the Active and Reserve components, the minimum age for enlistment is 17 years and the maximum age is 35 years (See 10 U.S.C., 510, reference (a)). The maximum age for a prior service enlistee is determined by adding the individual's years of prior service to 35. The Secretaries of the Military Departments concerned shall establish age standards for enlistment in the Reserve components (10 U.S.C., 510, reference (a)).

b. Age limitations for appointment as a commissioned or warrant officer normally depend on the Service concerned. In prescribing the age qualification for appointment as a Reserve officer, the Secretary of the Military Department concerned may not prescribe a maximum standard of less than 47 years for the initial appointment of a person who will serve as a medical, dental, or nurse officer in a specialty designated by the Secretary concerned as critically needed in wartime. (see DOD Instruction 1205.1 (reference (b)).)

c. By law (10 U.S.C. 532, reference (a)), persons appointed as commissioned officers must be able to complete 20 years of active commissioned service before their 55th birthday in order to receive a Regular commission. The Secretary of the Military Department concerned may defer the retirement for certain health profession officers on a case-by-case basis (10 U.S.C., 1251 reference (a)).

2. Citizenship

a. To be eligible for enlistment in the Regular Army or Air Force, an individual must be an American citizen, or lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence (10 U.S.C. 3253 and 8253, reference (a)). There is no equivalent statute limiting enlistment in the Regular Navy and Marine Corps, but they usually apply the same citizenship requirements as those required for the Army and Air Force.

b. To be eligible for enlistment in the Reserve components, an individual must be a citizen of the United States or lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence (10 U.S.C., 510, reference (a)).

c. To be eligible for appointment as a commissioned or warrant officer, U.S. citizenship is required except for Reserve appointment where an individual

must be lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence (Sections 532 and 591 of reference (a)). For regular appointment, when tendered, U.S. citizenship is required. Law requires National Guard officers to be U.S. citizens (32 U.S.C., 313, reference (c)).

d. Citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia or the Republic of the Marshall Islands also are eligible for enlistment in the Active and Reserve components (see the Compact of Free Association (reference (d)).)

3. Education

a. Possession of a high school diploma is desirable, although not mandatory, for enlistment in any component of the Military Services. Section 520 of reference (a) states, "A person who is not a high school graduate may not be accepted for enlistment in the armed forces unless the score of that person on the Armed Forces Qualification Test is at or above the thirty-first percentile; however, a person may not be denied enlistment in the Armed Forces solely because of his not having a high school diploma if his enlistment is needed to meet established strength requirements." Alternative credential holders (i.e., General Education Development certificates and certificates of attendance and completion) and nongraduates may be assigned lower enlistment priority based on their first-term attrition rates.

b. Educational requirements for appointment as a commissioned or warrant officer are determined by each Military Service. Generally, a bachelors degree is a required prerequisite for a commission or appointment. In addition, special occupations (e.g., physician, chaplain) may require additional vocational credentials, which are determined by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned.

4. Aptitude

a. Overall aptitude requirements for enlistment and induction are based on applicant scores on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) derived from the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery. Applicant scores are grouped into percentile categories. Persons who score in AFQT Category V (percentiles 1-9) are, by law (10 U.S.C., 520 and DOD Directive 1145.1 (references (a) and (e))), ineligible to enlist. By law (10 U.S.C., 520, reference (a)), the number of persons who enlist during any fiscal year who score in AFQT Category IV (percentiles 10 to 30) may not exceed 20 percent of the total number of persons enlisted. The Secretary of Defense delegates to the Secretaries of the Military Departments the authority to specify more restrictive aptitude standards for enlistment.

b. Generally, for officers and warrant officers, no single test or instrument is used as an aptitude requirement for appointment.

5. Physical Fitness

a. DoD Directive 6130.3 (reference (f)) establishes the standards for entrance under the authority of 10 U.S.C. (reference (a)).

b. The pre-accession screening process should be structured to identify individuals with any medical condition that disqualifies an applicant for military

service. Specifically, each applicant shall be independently evaluated by an authorized physician or a physician at a Military Entrance Processing Station to ensure the applicant is:

- (1) Free of contagious or infectious diseases;
- (2) Free of medical conditions or physical defects that would require excessive time lost from duty or would likely result in separation from the Service for medical unfitness;
- (3) Medically capable of satisfactorily completing required training;
- (4) Medically adaptable to the military environment;
- (5) Medically capable of performing duties without aggravation of existing physical defects or medical conditions.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20301-000

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (MANPOWER
AND RESERVE AFFAIRS)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (MANPOWER
AND RESERVE AFFAIRS)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
(MANPOWER, RESERVE AFFAIRS, INSTALLATIONS, &
ENVIRONMENT)
COMMANDER, U.S. MILITARY ENTRANCE
PROCESSING COMMAND

SUBJECT: Briefing Armed Forces Applicants

Reference: (a) DoDD 1304.26, Qualification Standards for Enlistment, Appointment, and Induction

(b) Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Manpower & Personnel) Memorandum, "Armed Forces Applicant Screening and Periodic Briefing on Military Justice--Policy Guidance," February 3, 1993

(c) SecDef Memorandum, "Policy on Homosexual Conduct in the Armed Forces," July 19, 1993

This memorandum forwards an applicant briefing item on separation policy and an annex to be used as part of the documents that effectuate the enlistment and appointment of members in the Armed Forces. These items shall be used to brief prospective entrants to the military in accordance with reference (a) and to document those restrictions.

Interview briefings provided to officer and enlisted program applicants must be expanded to include the attached information effective immediately. These briefings shall specifically include a discussion of the restrictions outlined in the attached briefing item and form, and must be presented on the following occasions:

- Enlisted and Officer Accessions: For those who enlist through a Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS), the briefing shall be presented by the MEPS staff in accordance with USMEPCOM Regulation 601-23, "Enlistment Documents." The briefing shall be presented prior to the oath of enlistment during the Preenlistment Interview (PEI) and/or Preaccession Interview (PM).
 - To implement this change, USMEPCOM Regulation 601-23, Chapter 4, "Preenlistment Interview (PEI) and Preaccession Interview (PAI)", paragraphs 4-6, 4-10, and 4-12 a. (1) shall be written to include a requirement for an interview briefing regarding separation policy and restrictions on personal conduct in the Armed Forces. In addition, Tables 4-1 and 4-2 must include the following question: "Have you

been briefed on, and do you understand the separation policy and the restrictions on personal conduct in the Armed Forces?”

- Officer Accessions: The briefings shall be presented as follows:
 - Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC): Prior to administration of oaths, students shall be briefed as part of their processing for initial membership in the ROTC program.
 - Service Academies: During the initial 72 hours of reception activities, briefings shall be presented to new cadets or midshipmen
 - Officer Candidate School (OCS)-Type Programs: Although many officer candidates might have been briefed either at a MEPS as specified earlier, or at their military units (for in-service entrants), the orientation should be repeated as a part of reception activities, within 72 hours of commencement of inprocessing.
 - Direct Appointment Programs: The briefings shall be presented prior to the administration of oaths of appointment. If group presentations are not feasible, individual orientations shall be provided by the person administering the oath. Service policies may specify another briefer, as appropriate.

Secretaries of the Military Departments and USMEPCOM may adopt procedures to fit circumstances not specifically addressed herein, provided the timing conforms as closely as possible, and that the briefings are comprehensive, uniformly presented, and afford the opportunity for an exchange of questions and answers sufficient to ensure that the content of the briefing is understood by those entering the Armed Forces.

Edwin Dorn

Attachments

As stated

cc:

Assistant Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs)

Director, Joint Staff

Chief, Office of Personnel and Training

Department of Transportation

Applicant Briefing Item on Separation Policy

As military members, you occupy a unique position in society. You represent the military establishment. This special status brings with it the responsibility to uphold and maintain the dignity and high standards of the U.S. Armed Forces at all times and in all places. The Armed Forces must also be ready at all times for world-wide deployment. This fact carries with it the requirement for military units and their members to possess high standards of morale, good order and discipline, and cohesion. As a result, military laws, rules, customs and traditions include restrictions on your personal behavior that may be different from civilian life. Members of the Armed Forces may be involuntarily separated before their enlistment or term of service ends for various reasons established by law and military regulations. Some unacceptable conduct may be grounds for involuntary separation, such as:

You establish a pattern of disciplinary infractions, discreditable involvement with civil or military authorities or you cause dissent, or disrupt or degrade the mission of your unit. This may also include conduct of any nature that would bring discredit on the Armed Forces in the view of the civilian community.

Because of parental responsibilities, you are unable to perform your duties satisfactorily or you are unavailable for worldwide assignment or deployment.

You fail to meet the weight control standards.

Although we have not and will not ask you about your sexual Orientation, you should be aware that homosexual conduct is grounds for discharge from the Armed Forces. This means that if you do one of the following, you could be involuntarily separated before your term of service ends:

(1) Homosexual acts. You engage in, attempt to engage in, or solicit another to engage in a homosexual act or acts. A "homosexual act" means touching a person of your same sex or allowing such a person to touch you for the purpose of satisfying sexual desires. (For example, hand-holding or kissing, or other physical contact of a sexual nature.)

(2) Homosexual statements. You make a statement that demonstrates a propensity or intent to engage in homosexual acts. This may include language or behavior that a reasonable person would believe intends to convey the statement that you are a homosexual or bisexual.

(3) Homosexual marriage. You marry or attempt to marry a person of your same sex.

You may not be discharged if you do or say these things solely to end your military service.

The Armed Forces do not tolerate harassment or violence against any servicemember, for any reason.

RESTRICTIONS ON PERSONAL CONDUCT IN THE ARMED FORCES

(For use of this form, see USMEPCOM Reg. 601-23)

1. Military life is fundamentally different from civilian life. The military has its own laws, rules, customs, and traditions, including numerous restrictions on personal behavior, that would not be acceptable in civilian society. These are necessary because military units and personnel must maintain the high standards of morale, good order and discipline, and unit cohesion that are essential for combat effectiveness.
2. The Armed Forces must be ready at all times for world-wide deployment. Military law and regulations, including the Uniform Code of Military Justice, apply to servicemembers at all times, both on base or off base, from the time the member enters the Service until the member is discharged or otherwise separated from the Armed Forces.
3. Members of the Armed Forces may be involuntarily separated before their term of service ends for various reasons established by law and military regulations, such as:
 - a. A member may be separated for a pattern of disciplinary infractions, a pattern of misconduct, commission of a serious offense, or civilian conviction
 - b. A member who has been referred to a rehabilitation program for personal drug and alcohol abuse may be separated for failure through inability or refusal to participate in, cooperate in, or successfully complete such a program.
 - c. A member may be discharged by reason of parenthood, if it is determined the member because of parental responsibilities, is unable to perform his or her duties satisfactorily or is unavailable for worldwide assignment or deployment
 - d. A member may be separated for violation of laws or regulations regarding sexual conduct of members of the Armed Forces, for example, engaging or attempting to engage in a homosexual act or soliciting another to engage in such an act; for stating that he or she is a homosexual or bisexual, or words to that effect; or for marrying or attempting to marry an individual of the same sex.
 - e. A member may be separated for failure to meet Service weight control standards.
 - f. A member may be separated for harassment or violence against any servicemember.

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