

# Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness

## Implementation Guidance

May 22, 2025  (mailto:soldier@us.army.mil?subject=Re:Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness Implementation Guidance&body=Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness Implementation Guidance)

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Under recent changes to Department of Defense policy, individuals with a current diagnosis or history of, or exhibit symptoms consistent with gender dysphoria and/or have a history of cross-sex hormone therapy or a history of sex reassignment or genital reconstruction surgery as treatment for gender dysphoria or in pursuit of a sex transition are disqualified from military service.

The Army has developed a Phased approach.

Phase I is the voluntary separation phase. Identification is through self-identification.

Phase II is the involuntary separation phase. Identification is through personal knowledge. Personal knowledge is based on one of the following criteria: (1) an individual's prior request for an exception to policy (ETP) to grooming standards pursuant to AD 2021-22; (2) an individual's request for a medical treatment plan pursuant to AD 2021-22; (3) an individual's open or overt conduct regarding individuals gender dysphoria in the unit or in public/social media; or (4) an individual's private conversation with individuals commander disclosing individuals gender dysphoria.

### Separation Process (Upon Command Notification):

- Initiation Timeline: Commands have 30 days upon identification to initiate the separation process. Involuntary separation actions cannot begin until Phase II.
- Non-Deployable: Soldiers are immediately non-deployable.
- Redeployment: Deployed Soldiers will be redeployed within 30 days of notification, or as soon as practicable.
- Administrative Absence Status (AAS): Individuals may be placed in Administrative Absence Status (AAS), outlined in [AR 600-8-10](https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/ARN30018-AR_600-8-10-000-WEB-1.pdf) ([https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR\\_pubs/DR\\_a/ARN30018-AR\\_600-8-10-000-WEB-1.pdf](https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/ARN30018-AR_600-8-10-000-WEB-1.pdf)) with full pay and benefits, until separation is complete.
- Business Casual Attire: While on AAS, business casual clothing is authorized.
- Joint Billet ADCON: Soldiers who are assigned to the office of the Secretary of Defense, Defense Agencies, DoD Field Activities, Combatant Commands, and other joint assignments will remain in their current billet; Soldiers will be under Administrative Control (ADCON) of the Army Command, Army Service Command, or Direct Reporting Unit near their geographic location.

### Accessions Guidance:

- Initial Entry Training (IET): Applicants will not ship to IET and will be disqualified at the Military Entrance Processing Station.
- Delayed Entry Program (DEP): Applicants / accessions are disqualified from service.
- USMA/SROTC: Offers of admission to USMA will be rescinded. SROTC cadets may still participate in classes until separated or disenrolled.

- Cadets: Absent any other basis for separation or disenrollment, USMA and SROTC cadets will not be subject to monetary repayment of educational benefits (i.e., recoupment) nor subject to completion of a military service obligation.
- Green-to-Gold: Green-to-Gold Soldiers will be released from the program and separated in accordance with enlisted separations.

**Intimate Spaces Policy:**

- Access to intimate spaces will be determined by an individual's biological sex.
- Commanders will apply all standards that reflect consideration of the individual's biological sex, to include, but not limited to uniforms and grooming, body composition assessment, medical fitness for duty, physical fitness and body fat standards, bathroom, and shower facilities and military personnel drug abuse testing program participation.
- Commanders will ensure all such shared intimate spaces will be clearly designated for either male, female, or family use.

**Separation and Transition Assistance:**

- Disability Evaluation System (DES) Ineligibility: Individuals are not eligible for the DES solely for gender dysphoria. They may be referred if they have a comorbidity or other qualifying condition per AR 635-40, prior to completing their separation physical.
- Separation Pay: Soldiers may be eligible for voluntary separation pay IAW 10 U.S.C. 1175a and DODI 1332.43 at a rate that is twice the amount the Soldier would have been eligible for involuntary separation pay. A Soldier may NOT waive Voluntary Separation Pay or Involuntary Separation Pay as these are entitlements required in law. Individuals must elect to receive the voluntary separation pay. For eligibility, Soldiers must have a minimum of six Active Federal Service years. Reserve and National Guard Soldiers, not on active duty, must have minimum of six consecutive AFS years.
- GI Bill: Eligibility is based on individual circumstances. Please contact the nearest Installation Education Center. For individuals who have transferred post 9/11 GI Bill, these benefits will continue, and any remaining service obligation will be waived if transferred prior to initiating the separation action.
- Career Skills Program (CSP) / SkillsBridge: Soldiers separating are not authorized for participation in the CSP or SkillsBridge.
- TRICARE Eligibility: Eligible Soldiers (including Active-Duty Soldiers and Reserve or National Guard members when in a Title 10 status or on Active-Duty orders for 30 or more consecutive days) who are processed for separation or retirement in lieu of, along with their covered dependents, may remain eligible for Tricare for 180 days post separation IAW 10 U.S.C. 1145.
- Transition Assistance Program (TAP): All Soldiers will complete TAP IAW 600-81. Commanders will authorize Soldiers to wear appropriate business casual civilian attire during TAP and installation out-processing. If feasible, commanders will allow hybrid or virtual TAP participation.
- Temporary Early Retirement Authority (TERA): Active Component and Active Guard Reserve (USAR and ARNG) (AGR) Soldiers identified for separation, or retirement in lieu of, with over 18 but less than 20 years of total Active-Duty service are eligible for early retirement under TERA IAW DoDI 1332.46. TERA authority is withheld to the ASA (M&RA). Individuals with over 15 years and less than 18 years active federal service (AFS) can request an TERA exception to policy (ETP) for consideration.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How does the Department of Defense (DoD) define gender dysphoria?

Gender dysphoria refers to a marked incongruence between an individual's experienced or expressed gender and their assigned gender, lasting at least six months, as manifested by conditions causing clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

### How does the DoD define gender identity?

Gender identity is defined as an individual's internal and subjective sense of self, disconnected from biological reality and sex, existing on an infinite continuum. It does not provide a meaningful basis for identification and cannot replace sex.

### How does the DoD define sex?

The Department of Defense defines "sex" as an individual's immutable biological classification as either male or female.

### Who is impacted by this policy?

This policy applies to any Soldier, applicant, or cadet with a current diagnosis or history of gender dysphoria or who exhibits symptoms consistent with gender dysphoria. It also includes any Soldier, applicant, or cadet with a history of cross-sex hormone therapy, sex reassignment, or genital reconstruction surgery as treatment for gender dysphoria in pursuit of a sex transition.

### If an individual was diagnosed with gender dysphoria as a child, are they disqualified from military service?

Yes. Individuals may be considered for a waiver on a case-by-case basis, provided there is a compelling government interest that directly supports warfighting capabilities. The individual must be willing and able to adhere to all applicable standards, including those associated with their biological sex.

### Will offers of admission to the United States Military Academy (USMA) or ROTC programs be rescinded?

Yes. Offers of admission to USMA or the Reserve Officers' Training Corps for individuals disqualified under this policy will be rescinded. Waivers may be considered on a case-by-case basis, provided there is a compelling government interest that directly supports warfighting capabilities, and the applicant is willing and able to adhere to all applicable standards, including those associated with their biological sex.

### Will cadets be required to reimburse the government for their education?

No. Absent any other basis for separation or disenrollment, such individuals will not be subject to monetary repayment of educational benefits (i.e., recoupment) nor required to complete a military service obligation.

### Will Soldiers currently serving with a diagnosis of gender dysphoria be allowed to continue to serve?

No. Soldiers with a current diagnosis or history of gender dysphoria, or who exhibit symptoms consistent with gender dysphoria, or who have a history of cross-sex hormone therapy, sex

reassignment, or genital reconstruction surgery as treatment for gender dysphoria in pursuit of a sex transition, will be processed for administrative separation.

**Will any waivers be permitted?**

Yes. Soldiers may be considered for a waiver on a case-by-case basis, provided there is a compelling government interest in retaining the Soldier that directly supports warfighting capabilities and the Soldier meets all of the following criteria:

- (1) Demonstrates 36 consecutive months of stability in their biological sex without clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning;
- (2) Demonstrates they have never attempted to transition to a sex other than their biological sex; and
- (3) Is willing and able to adhere to all applicable standards, including those associated with their biological sex.

**Will Soldiers diagnosed with gender dysphoria be honorably discharged?**

Yes. Characterization of service will be honorable unless the Soldier's record warrants a lower characterization.

**Are Soldiers separated under this policy eligible for separation pay?**

Yes. Soldiers who voluntarily separate before June 6, 2025 (for active-duty, Reserve, or National Guard Soldiers in a Title 10 status or on active-duty orders for 30 or more consecutive days) or July 7, 2025 (for Reserve or National Guard Soldiers not in a Title 10 status or on active-duty orders for 30 or more consecutive days) may be eligible for voluntary separation pay in accordance with applicable law and Department policy. Eligible Soldiers may receive voluntary separation pay at twice the rate of involuntary separation pay. Soldiers may not refuse separation pay if eligible, as it is determined by applicable regulations.

**Will Soldiers being separated under this policy be afforded a separation board?**

Yes. All enlisted Soldiers involuntarily separated under this policy may request an administrative separation board. All officers involuntarily separated under this policy may request a Board of Inquiry/Board of Officers, in accordance with applicable law.

**Will Soldiers being separated under this policy be eligible for the Temporary Early Retirement Authority?**

Yes. Soldiers with over 18 but less than 20 years of total active-duty service are eligible for early retirement under the Temporary Early Retirement Authority, in accordance with current law and policy.

**Will Soldiers being separated under this policy remain eligible for TRICARE benefits?**

Yes. Eligible Service members (including active-duty Soldiers and Reserve or National Guard members on active-duty orders for 30 or more consecutive days) and their covered dependents remain eligible for TRICARE for 180 days post-separation, in accordance with applicable law.

**Are Soldiers separated under this policy eligible to participate in the Transition Assistance Program (TAP)?**

Yes. All Soldiers, whether voluntarily or involuntarily separated, will complete TAP. If feasible, commanders will allow Soldiers to participate in a hybrid or virtual TAP.

**Will Soldiers separated under this policy have to repay any bonuses received prior to their separation?**

Soldiers who voluntarily separate before February 26, 2025, will not have to repay any bonuses received, even if they have a remaining service obligation, pursuant to applicable law. The Army may recoup bonuses for Soldiers who are involuntarily separated.

**Will any remaining military service obligations be waived?**

Yes. Any remaining military service obligation for Soldiers separated under this policy will be waived.

**If Soldiers are required to serve in their biological sex, will Soldiers separated with gender dysphoria who have already had sex reassignment surgery be required to serve in their biological sex?**

Soldiers must conform to their biological sex immediately. Commanders are authorized to place such Soldiers in an administrative absence until their separation is complete.

**Will the records for Soldiers being separated under this policy be updated to reflect their sex?**

Yes. All military records, regardless of whether a Soldier is separated under this policy, will reflect the Soldier's biological sex.

**Will the records for Soldiers being separated under this policy be updated to reflect their name at birth?**

All military records will reflect the Soldier's legal name.

**Will Soldiers being separated under this policy be allowed to continue hormone therapy?**

Cross-sex hormone therapy for Soldiers with a current diagnosis or history of gender dysphoria, or who exhibit symptoms consistent with gender dysphoria, that began prior to this guidance may be continued until separation is complete, if recommended by a DoD health care provider to prevent further complications.

**Can Soldiers submit a voluntary separation packet at any time during their ETS window? (e.g., SPC Jones is set to ETS on March 29 but would like to submit a request to voluntarily separate instead of ETS.)**

Yes. Commanders should assist Soldiers with these requests.

**Can a Soldier request an extension to their ETS window to allow for chapter processing?**

Yes. Soldiers may request a voluntary extension to their ETS to complete necessary separation requirements (e.g., TAP, using accrued leave).

**Will Soldiers be allowed to PCS or finish military schools?**

Upon identification, commanders should place Soldiers in a non-deployable status and notify HRC of pending separation to prevent issuance of PCS orders. Schools NCOs will cancel pending courses. Soldiers currently in schools will be dropped from the course upon notification from the commander and returned to home station for separation.

**What medical care can I still receive?**

No DoD funds will be used to pay for Soldiers' unscheduled, scheduled, or planned medical procedures associated with facilitating sex reassignment surgery, genital reconstruction surgery as treatment for gender dysphoria, or newly initiated cross-sex hormone therapy. Cross-sex hormone therapy for Soldiers who have a current diagnosis or history of, or exhibit symptoms consistent with, gender dysphoria that began prior to 26 February 2025, may, if recommended by a medical provider to

prevent further complications, be continued until separation is complete.

**Additional Resources:**

Gender Dysphoria Policy (/wcm-api/sites/default/wcmfiles/2025-05/Gender%20Dysphoria%20Policy.pptx)

Soldiers Separation Resource Guide (/wcm-api/sites/default/wcmfiles/2025-05/Soldiers%20Separation%20Resource%20Guide.pptx)