



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

May 23, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL MAJCOM-FOA-DRU-FLDCOM-/CC, SAF/AM
Distribution C

FROM: SAF/MR
1660 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1665

SUBJECT: DAF Guidance on Retention and Accession Waivers

References: (a) Executive Order 14183 Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness, 27 January 2025
(b) OUSD (P&R) Memorandum, *Additional Guidance on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness*, 26 February 2025
(c) OUSD (P&R) Memorandum, *Clarifying Guidance on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness: Retention and Accession Waivers*, 4 March 2025
(d) OSD Memorandum, *Implementing Policy on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness*, 8 May 2025
(e) OUSD (P&R) Memorandum, *Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness: Implementation Guidance*, 15 May 2025

Department of Defense policy as stated in reference (c) is that the medical, surgical, and mental health constraints on individuals who meet the following criteria are incompatible with military service:

1. Individuals with a current diagnosis or history of, or exhibit symptoms consistent with, gender dysphoria.
2. Individuals with a history of cross-sex hormone therapy or sex reassignment or genital reconstruction surgery as treatment for gender dysphoria or in pursuit of a sex transition.

Service members and applicants to the services may be considered for a retention or accession waiver on a case-by-case basis when there is a compelling Government interest in retaining or accessing such individuals that directly supports the Department's warfighting capabilities.

A compelling Government interest that directly supports warfighting capabilities includes special experience, special training, and advanced education in a highly technical career field designated as mission critical and hard to fill by the Secretary of the Air Force (SecAF) if such experience, training, and education is directly related to the operational needs of the Air Force or Space Force. SecAF is the approval authority for retention and accession waiver requests.

To be eligible for waiver consideration, the individual must meet the following criteria:

1. The individual demonstrates 36 consecutive months of stability in the individual's sex without clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other-important areas of functioning; **and**
2. The individual demonstrates that he or she has never attempted to transition to any sex other than his or her birth sex; **and**
3. The individual is willing and able to adhere to all applicable standards, including the standards associated with his or her birth sex.

Service members may concurrently apply for voluntary separation/retirement and a retention waiver; however, applying for a waiver will not extend the 6 June 2025 deadline for Regular Air Force or Space Force members or the 7 July 2025 deadline for Air Reserve Component members to apply for voluntary separation/retirement. Retention waiver requests will be processed independently from requests for voluntary separation or retirement. Members should advise their chain of command if they are simultaneously applying for both a retention waiver and voluntary separation/retirement and indicate on their separation/retirement application that they have applied for a retention waiver. A denied waiver means the member will separate voluntarily, and an approved waiver will allow the member to withdraw their voluntary separation application.

Retention waivers may be submitted through myFSS; further instructions can be found in myFSS [article #10379](#) (RegAF/USSF), article [#10377](#) (AFR), and article [#10473](#) (ANG). Accession waivers are processed through the Air Force Accessions Center for members in the Delayed Entry Program/ROTC and through 2 AF or 19 AF for members in the Initial Training pipeline. Any questions should be sent to the SAF/MR Executive Order team workflow at SAF.mreo.readinessTigerTeam@us.af.mil.

GWENDOLYN R. DEFILIPPI, SES, DAF
Acting Assistant Secretary of the Air Force
for Manpower and Reserve Affairs

Attachment:
Accession/Retention Waiver Template

cc:
AF/A1
USSF/S1
NGB/A1
AF/RE
MAJCOM/A1
FLDCOM/S1

ATTACHMENT

SAMPLE TEMPLATE FOR ACCESSION/RETENTION WAIVER

[Component Letterhead]

MEMORANDUM FOR SECAF

FROM: [Grade/Name of Waiver Applicant]

SUBJECT: Waiver for Retention/Accession [name of member]

I am a [prospective] servicemember with a current diagnosis or history of, or exhibit symptoms consistent with, gender dysphoria, requesting a waiver to [remain/access] into the Department of the Air Force.

[Service member explains the compelling Government interest to be retained/accessed that directly supports the Department's warfighting capabilities and confirm that the member is not undergoing any adverse actions]

In addition to my special experiences and training in a mission critical hard-to-fill specialty, I also certify that I meet the eligibility criteria required to submit a waiver.

- I have had 36 consecutive months of stability in my birth sex without clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other areas of functioning; and
- I have never attempted to transition to any sex other than my birth sex; and
- I am willing and able to adhere to all applicable standards, including the standards associated with my birth sex

I (am or am not) submitting a voluntary separation/retirement concurrently with this waiver request. I understand that failure to submit a voluntary separation/retirement request could result in involuntary separation if my waiver is disapproved.

The point of contact for this memorandum is [insert telephone number and email address].

[MEMBER SIGNATURE]

1st Ind, [UNIT/CC]

Reviewed and concur/non-concur with waiver request. [Commanders may add a supportive statement]

[UNIT/CC SIGNATURE BLOCK]

2d Ind, [MDG/SGH for retention waivers] or [AFAC/AM for accession waivers]

Based on available medical records, Service member [meets / does not meet] the medical eligibility criteria for a/an [retention / accession] waiver.

[MDG OR AFAC SIGNATURE BLOCK]

3d Ind, [WG/CC]

Recommend [retention / accession] waiver for [name of member] based on a review of eligibility criteria and compelling government interest.

[WG/CC SIGNATURE BLOCK]

4th Ind, [SAF/MR]

Reviewed and concur/non-concur with waiver request.

[SAF/MR SIGNATURE BLOCK]

5th Ind, [SECAF]

Reviewed and concur/non-concur with waiver request.

[SECAF SIGNATURE BLOCK]