



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: Additional DAF Implementing Policy on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness

- References:
- (a) Executive Order (EO) 14183 Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness, 27 Jan 25
 - (b) OUSD (P&R) Memorandum, *Additional Guidance on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness*, 26 Feb 2025
 - (c) OUSD (P&R) Memorandum, *Clarifying Guidance on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness: Retention and Accession Waivers*, 4 March 2025
 - (d) OUSD (P&R) Memorandum, *Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness: Military Department Identification*, 21 Mar 2025
 - (e) OSD Memorandum, *Implementing Policy on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness*, 8 May 2025
 - (f) SAF/MR Memorandum, *DAF Implementing Policy on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness*, 9 May 2025
 - (g) OUSD (P&R) Memorandum, *Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness: Implementation Guidance*, 15 May 2025
 - (h) Department of Defense Instruction 6025.19, *Individual Medical Readiness Program*, 13 Jul 2022
 - (i) Air Force Instruction 10-250, *Individual Medical Readiness*, 22 Jul 2020
 - (j) SAF/MR Memorandum, *DAF Guidance on Retention and Accession Waivers*, 23 May 2025
 - (k) Department of Defense Manual 6025.18, *Implementation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule in DoD Health Care Programs*, 13 Mar 2019

On 9 May 2025, SAF/MR directed implementation of OUSD P&R guidance set forth in reference (e) for the voluntary separation/retirement of Airmen and Guardians with a current diagnosis or history of, or who exhibit symptoms consistent with, gender dysphoria. This memorandum provides additional implementation guidance to address voluntary separations/retirements and involuntary identification actions.

Voluntary Separations and Retirement

The voluntary separation/retirement window is open for Service members who self-identify through 6 June 2025 for Regular Air Force and Space Force members and 7 July 2025 for Air Reserve Component (ARC) members. Service members may be eligible for voluntary separation pay at a rate that is twice the amount of involuntary separation pay the Service member would have been eligible for in accordance with DoDI 13323.29.

Service members choosing voluntary separation will not have to repay any bonuses received prior to 26 February 2025. Remaining military service obligations, including service obligations incurred as a result of a bonus or transfer of post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to dependents, shall be waived. Service members who do not choose voluntary separation may be required to pay back any bonus or incentive payments received where the required obligation has not been satisfied.

Service members may apply for voluntary retirement or, if eligible, Temporary Early Retirement Authority (TERA). TERA is permitted in accordance with reference (b) for Service members with over 18 but less than 20 years of service. Service members with 15 – 18 years of service may request TERA as an exception to policy. Service members with 15 – 18 years of service who have already submitted a voluntary separation may withdraw the separation application and apply for retirement.

Service members are provided benefits and support services to include pre-separation counseling, participation in the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), temporary healthcare coverage, employment assistance, financial counseling, and community reintegration services. SkillBridge is not authorized. Benefits for ARC members may vary depending on status.

Service members meeting the criteria outlined in references (a) and (b) are encouraged to apply for voluntary separation/retirement. Commanders should be proactive in communicating the self-identification period and opportunity to initiate voluntary separation or retirement. **The DAF will initiate involuntary separation processes pursuant to reference (g) at the conclusion of the voluntary separation/retirement window.**

Retention Waivers

Service members who meet the criteria set forth in references (c) and (j) may request a retention waiver no later than 6 June 2025 for Regular Air Force and Space Force members or 7 July 2025 for ARC members. Waivers are considered on a case-by-case basis when there is a compelling Government interest in either retaining or accessing an individual who directly supports the DAF's war-fighting capabilities. Individuals 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 and Space Force members or the 7 July 2025 deadline for Air Reserve Component (ARC).

Administrative Absence

Administrative absence is authorized for Service members who elect voluntary separation/retirement when in the best interest of the unit and well-being of the Service member.

Additionally, where an exception to policy granted pursuant to DAFPM 2021-36-01, *Accessions and In-service Transition for Persons Identifying as Transgender*, is rescinded, commanders are authorized to place members on administrative absence to maintain good order and discipline.

Active orders for ARC members may not be extended or created for administrative absence.

Unit commanders may approve administrative absences up to 10 days and wing commanders may approve up to 30 days. Absences in excess of 30 days require approval by the Commander, Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC/CC).

Regardless of the administrative absence duration, commanders will proactively communicate with the member, ensure the member has accurate and up to date contact information, monitor the individual's well-being, and keep the member apprised of his/her status. Members not in an administrative absence status are required to report for duty, adhere to the standards, and use facilities consistent with their sex assigned at birth.

Identification and Commander Responsibilities

The primary method of identifying Service members for involuntary administrative separation processing will be managed through compliance with reference (h), the Individual Medical Readiness (IMR) program and guidance within this memorandum.

In accordance with reference (g), unit commanders, working in coordination with supporting medical assets, are directed to ensure Service members comply with IMR program obligations.

Commanders who have ***personal knowledge*** of a Service member in their units with gender dysphoria, a history of gender dysphoria, or symptoms consistent with gender dysphoria will refer the Service member to the Airman Medical Readiness Optimization (AMRO) Board via ASIMS "Refer to AMRO" module to conduct an IMR review.

Personal knowledge will be based ***only*** on the following criteria:

1. A Service member's prior request for an Exception to Policy (ETP) pursuant to DAFPM 2021-36-01, *Accessions and In-Service Transition for Persons Identifying as Transgender*;
2. A Service member's request for a Medical Treatment Plan, placement on applicable medical profile, or applicable deployment waiver;
3. A Service member's open and overt conduct regarding the member's gender dysphoria within the unit or in public; or
4. A Service member's disclosure provided by the member directly to the Commander.

Upon Service member self-identification, commander referral, medical appointment, or annual Periodic Health Assessment, military medical providers (to include Air National Guard Medical Units and Air Force Reserve Medical Units) will review the Service member's medical record to assess compliance with IMR standards as set forth in reference (i).

Commanders are directed to begin the identification process immediately, but ***shall not take action*** to initiate involuntary separation processing until the voluntary separation window closes and following the issuance of further guidance. A commander referring a Service member for IMR review at this stage does not preclude a member from voluntarily separating/retiring if the member submits an application prior to the deadline.

Consistent with existing law and Department policy, commanders shall protect the privacy of health information they receive under this policy in the same manner as they would with any other sensitive personally identifiable or protected health information. Such information shall be restricted to personnel with a specific need to know; that is, access to information must be necessary for the conduct of official duties. Commanders will not request from military medical providers or military treatment facilities lists identifying members based on diagnostic criteria, and military medical providers will not provide such information if requested by a commander.

Questions and inquiries may be directed to the SAF/MR Executive Order Tiger Team at SAF.mreo.readinessTigerTeam@us.af.mil.

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