



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

MAY 08 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Implementing Policy on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness

As the President of the United States clearly stated in Executive Order 14183, "Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness," January 27, 2025, expressing a false 'gender identity' divergent from an individual's sex cannot satisfy the rigorous standards necessary for Military Service. Service by individuals with a current diagnosis or history of, or exhibiting symptoms consistent with, gender dysphoria is not in the best interest of the Military Services and is not clearly consistent with the interests of national security.

On Tuesday, May 6, 2025, the United States Supreme Court granted the U.S. Government the requested stay of the preliminary injunction in *Shilling v. United States*. As a result, the following policy memoranda are reinstated effective immediately:

- Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness," February 7, 2025
- Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum, "Additional Guidance on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness," February 26, 2025
- Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Memorandum, "Clarifying Guidance on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness," February 28, 2025
- Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Memorandum, "Clarifying Guidance of Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness: Retention and Accession Waivers," March 4, 2025
- Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum, "Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness: Military Department Identification," March 21, 2025

In accordance with policy now reinstated, Service members who have a current diagnosis or history of, or exhibit symptoms consistent with, gender dysphoria may elect to separate voluntarily; such Service members may also be eligible for voluntary separation pay. The eligibility window to self-identify for voluntary separation is extended to June 6, 2025, for Active Component Service members and July 7, 2025, for Reserve Component Service members. Additionally, the Military Departments will immediately begin processing for



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separation Service members who previously self-identified for voluntary separation prior to March 26, 2025. On conclusion of the self-identification eligibility window, the Military Departments will initiate involuntary separation processes pursuant to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum "Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness: Military Department Identification," March 21, 2025.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness is authorized and delegated the authority to provide additional policy and implementation guidance, as needed, outside of the normal DoD issuance process to ensure swift implementation of this direction. This authority may not be further re-delegated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "P. B. K." with a stylized flourish at the end. Below the signature, the alphanumeric code "SD29" is written in a similar handwritten style.