



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

UNDER SECRETARY OF WAR
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

APR - 1 2026

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

SUBJECT: Maximum Use of Military Spouse Employment Flexibilities

- References: (a) Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy and Acting Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management Memorandum, "Merit Hiring Plan," May 29, 2025
(b) Department of Defense Instruction 1400.25, Volume 315, "DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Employment of Spouses of Active-Duty Military," March 19, 2012, as amended
(c) Department of War Instruction 1400.25, Volume 1800, "DoD Priority Placement Program," July 17, 2023
(d) Under Secretary of War for Personnel Readiness Memorandum, "Implementation of Executive Order 14170, Reforming the Federal Hiring Process and Restoring Merit to Government Service," August 13, 2025

The Department of War (DoW) is deeply committed to supporting Service members and their families. A crucial component of this support is ensuring the well-being, stability, and financial security of military families. No issue impacts stability more than military spouse employment. As documented in the 2024 Active Duty Spouse Survey, the current unemployment rate for military spouses is 20 percent, which is far higher than the national average and results in undue hardship on military families.

Improving opportunities for military spouse employment is imperative to the Department. To make the Department a model employer of military spouses, we must eliminate unnecessary barriers to military spouses joining and remaining in the civilian workforce. All DoW Component heads must make maximum use of military spouse employment flexibilities. These flexibilities include authorizing alternate worksites for spouses accompanying active duty Service members on assignments outside the commuting area of the position's primary worksite and using non-competitive military spouse hiring authorities.

When hiring for position vacancies in the competitive and the excepted service, absent extenuating circumstances, hiring managers will consider qualified military spouses for non-competitive appointment before considering candidates who are not otherwise eligible for a hiring preference. This policy applies to all hiring actions, regardless of the personnel system or hiring authority being used. Hiring managers must document reasons for the non-consideration of military spouse resumes and for the non-selection of a candidate from any of the resumes considered. Lists of qualified military spouses who are eligible for non-competitive appointment will be developed using the following measures:

- Agency-wide job announcements of continuous duration that are not tied to a particular vacancy. To maximize use of the military spouse hiring authority at 5 U.S.C. § 3330d, Agency Talent Teams will develop “open continuous job announcements” for most occupations within the Agency. Hiring paths will be limited to military spouses, veterans, and individuals covered by the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program. Agency human resources (HR) professionals will use these postings to create a resume bank from which hiring managers may non-competitively select qualified military spouse candidates to quickly fill vacancies as they occur, without further advertisement.
- DoW candidate inventory. The Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of War for Military Community and Family Policy maintains an inventory of military spouse candidates through the Military Spouse Education & Career Opportunities (MySECO) website. Agency Talent Management Teams will coordinate with the Office of Spouse Employment (OSE) to provide MySECO access and training to agency HR professionals. Agency HR professionals will use the MySECO candidate inventory to identify military spouses who are eligible for appointment using available direct hire and non-competitive appointment authorities for further consideration of their qualifications. Agency HR professionals can contact OSE by emailing osd.mc-alex.ousd-p-r.mbx.spouse-employment-team@mail.mil.

Reporting Requirements

DoW Component heads are requested to provide monthly reports with the following information to the Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service. Please submit reports to dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.list.ec-policy@mail.mil by the 15th of the month following the month covered by the report. The reports will be used to assess the feasibility and desirability of making changes to Department policy to improve employment opportunities for military spouses. Reports will include the following:

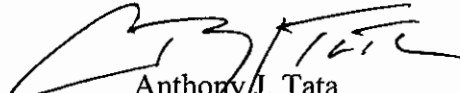
- 1) The number of recruit/fill requests;
- 2) The number of requests for which military spouse candidates were identified (and how);
- 3) The number of requests for which military spouses were selected;
- 4) The top three reasons that a military spouse was not selected; and
- 5) Any recommendations for improving military spouse hiring opportunities.

Pilot Program on Eliminating Unnecessary Barriers to Employment

As an exception to policy, the requirements in Paragraphs 2.b.(1)-(3) of Enclosure 3 of reference (b) are suspended for a period of 18 months from the date of this memorandum. No later than October 30, 2026, the Assistant Secretary of War for Manpower and Reserve Affairs will provide findings and recommendations to me concerning changes to be incorporated into reference (b) and other Department policies.

The Deputy Assistant Secretary of War for Civilian Personnel Policy will incorporate these temporary changes into the Priority Placement Program Handbook pursuant to reference (c).

My point of contact is Mr. Michael A. Cogar, Deputy Assistant Secretary of War for Civilian Personnel Policy, at michael.a.cogar3.civ@mail.mil or 703-571-9282.



Anthony J. Tata