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

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

SUBJECT: Review of Hazing, Bullying, and Harassment Definitions

Department policy defining conduct by Service members that constitutes hazing, bullying, and harassment is overly broad, jeopardizing combat readiness, mission accomplishment, and trust in the organization. To maintain a lethal and ready Force, leaders must be empowered to make the right decisions, enforce standards, and restore good order and discipline. However, definitions that are overly broad hinder leaders' ability to effectively execute the mission.

I am directing the Under Secretary of War for Personnel and Readiness to conduct a 30-day review of the Department's definitions of these behaviors. When commanders face undue administrative burdens, it distracts from their core mission. This review aims to strike a balance, ensuring leaders have the tools necessary to foster a warrior ethos rooted in mutual respect and accountability, while also maintaining a lethal and ready Force.

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

MEMORANDUM FOR UNDER SECRETARY OF WAR FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS

SUBJECT: Adverse Information Policy

While the Department of War remains firmly committed to upholding the highest standards of integrity and exemplary conduct, the current adverse information policy has too often resulted in unproven allegations being considered adverse information, cumulative penalties for a single event, procedural redundancies, and unnecessary administrative burdens.

To address these concerns, I am directing a revision of the Department's adverse information policy within 45 days. The primary objective is to strengthen fairness, safeguard due process, and streamline promotion-related decision making.

The revision must accomplish the following:

- Establish preponderance of the evidence as the minimum evidentiary threshold for adverse information.
- Reinforce the 10-year rule to limit consideration of outdated adverse material, with narrow exceptions.
- Affirm recognition of the Military Departments' internal processes as valid and reliable alternatives to non-statutory Special Selection Review Boards.
- Prohibit repetitive consideration of the same adverse information across multiple promotion points, except as required by law.

By embracing these changes, the Department will not only honor its commitment to fairness and integrity but also reinforce the core principles of the warrior ethos — courage, selflessness, and unwavering commitment to the mission. These changes will empower leaders to make well-founded decisions that reflect the values of trust, growth, and accountability. In doing so, they will support the rebuilding of a stronger, more resilient military and strengthen our capacity for national deterrence. This forward-looking approach respects the past, learns from it, and ensures our personnel policies evolve to meet the highest standards of excellence, readiness, and resolve.

PBH

SECRETARY OF WAR
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS

SUBJECT: Policy Memorandum Revision

The Military Departments have developed comprehensive, multi-layered promotion review procedures that match or exceed the scrutiny provided by special selection review boards (SSRB) and can be accomplished more efficiently with less delay for the officers involved. Therefore, effective immediately, the second and fourth paragraphs of Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Special Selection Review Boards," May 20, 2021 (attached), are rescinded. This rescission will allow the Military Departments the discretion to use promotion review procedures other than an SSRB when an SSRB is not required by statute.

Attachment:
As stated

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

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

SUBJECT: Military Fitness Standards

As I stated in my initial message to the Force, "Our standards will be high, uncompromising, and clear." To ensure the lethality and readiness of America's fighting Force, military leaders at all levels must ensure our Warfighters are prepared to meet the demanding requirements of combat by enforcing standards and leading by example. Our military's discipline and excellence are what sets it above others across the globe.

My goal is unmistakable: our core fighting formations must not just meet the standard — they must embody it. We need high, uncompromising, sex-neutral standards rooted in combat effectiveness. Every warfighter must be held to the same rigorous expectations.

This directive outlines immediate actions to ensure every warfighter meets the physical and professional demands of combat, for which every Service member must be prepared. These requirements are not optional — they are foundational to our lethality and readiness.

Fitness Testing Requirements

Active Component Service members will execute two fitness tests annually:

- One will be the existing Service Fitness Test.
- The second will be:
  - A Combat Field Test for combat arms personnel (see attached list).
  - A Combat Readiness Test for non-combat arms personnel or the Service Fitness Test.
- Service members will perform physical fitness training every duty day.

National Guard and Reserve Component members will:

- Take personal responsibility to maintain an appropriate physical fitness regimen, regardless of duty status.
- Complete one fitness test annually, aligned to their combat or non-combat arms designation.

Each Military Department will verify and validate its Combat Field Test within 60 days and submit an execution plan for National Guard and Reserve Component implementation.

Regardless of Component, failure to meet established standards may be used to withhold favorable personnel actions, to include denied promotions, and administrative separation in accordance with standing regulations.

Fitness Testing Matrix

The following matrix outlines the specific fitness test requirements for combat arms and non-combat arms personnel. It is designed to clarify which evaluations apply to each category of Service member and ensure consistent enforcement across the Joint Force.

Test Type	***Combat Arms Personnel***	***Non-Combat Arms Personnel***
Service Fitness Test	Sex-neutral; age-normed (simplified); male-standard; must achieve 70% average across all elements	Sex-normed, age-normed
Combat Field Test	Required: Service-determined standards*; must be executable in any environment, at any time, with combat equipment	Not applicable
Combat Readiness Test	Not applicable	Required; but may be substituted with the Service Fitness Test; must be executable in any environment, at any time, with combat equipment as appropriate.
**For example, Army Expert Physical Fitness Assessment or Marine Corps Combat Fitness Test*		

Body Composition

Each Military Department will align with medically validated, streamlined approaches — using height and waist circumference method — to promote consistency and fairness across the Joint Force. The Military Departments will ensure that Service members are evaluated twice per year.

Within 60 days, the Office of the Under Secretary of War for Personnel and Readiness will publish additional guidance on the height and waist standards that will take effect during the next calendar year.

High performers on fitness tests may be granted exemptions, but only within defined limits. High performance does not excuse non-compliance with body composition standards.

Members exceeding body composition limits will be placed in remedial programs; those not demonstrating adequate progress will be subject to administrative measures to include processing for administrative separation.

Leadership and Enforcement

To uphold these standards across the Force, leadership must be both entrusted to lead and accountable for failure. The following actions are required to ensure consistent enforcement and transparency at every level:

- Standards must be clearly communicated across the Force to set high expectations.
- Leaders at all levels are expected and empowered to enforce standards consistently. Standards left unenforced are not truly standards.
- Leaders will be held accountable if physical fitness and body composition standards are not enforced within their units.

Each Military Service will establish or enhance electronic training records to ensure:

- Performance outcomes, including scores — not just pass/fail — are recorded and reflected in fitness reports and evaluations.
- Individual physical training requirements are documented and visible to each Service member.
- Regular evaluations of the electronic training records are conducted to assess compliance.

Our Warfighters must always demonstrate the highest standards of physical fitness and combat readiness. Where expectations are not met, we must choose quality over quantity and lethality over complacency.

Fitness should be regarded with the same seriousness as Professional Military Education. Fitness is not a checkbox – it is a core competency, as vital as Professional Military Education. Every Military Unit and individual Service member must strive to exceed the standard, not settle for it.

If someone consistently treats the bare minimum as their standard, then they are not a fit for our fighting Force. The American people expect nothing less — and we must deliver.

Attachment:
As stated

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

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
DEPARTMENT OF WAR AGENCY AND DOW FIELD ACTIVITY
DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Department of War Military Education and Training Standards 60-Day Review

To prepare for large scale combat operations in a rapidly changing global landscape, the Department of War requires a renewed focus on accountability, meritocracy, and rigorous standards in the military education and training programs that forge leaders with the character, skills, and knowledge essential for maintaining our military's dominance.

To ensure we are developing the warriors we need to dominate in theater- and multi-theater warfare, I direct a comprehensive 60-day, "Education System Curricula and Training School Standards Review," including all Military Service Academies, military educational institutions (MEIs), and military training schools.

Comprehensive Review. Military education and training must equip our warfighters with the physical and cognitive skills and experiential instruction required to execute our strategy and meet the high standards required to succeed in combat. To achieve these objectives, I direct the following actions within 60 days of this memorandum:

- The Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff will each conduct a comprehensive review of their respective MEI curricula.

- The Secretaries of the Military Departments will also comprehensively review their training school standards, with a particular emphasis on warrior-focused combat training programs such as, and not exclusively, The Basic School, Airborne School, Ranger School, and Basic Underwater Demolition School.

  - Report any changes to program standards since 1990 and make recommendations on whether to restore any standards that have been lowered since that time.

- The Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff will each report their findings to the Under Secretary of War for Personnel and Readiness.

The strength and lethality of our military is forged in professional development and training programs anchored in mission accomplishment. We must act today to develop the warfighters we need tomorrow.

PBH

SECRETARY OF WAR
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MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
DEPARTMENT OF WAR AGENCY AND DOW FIELD ACTIVITY
DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Reduction of Mandatory Training Requirements to Restore Mission Focus

The Department of War is committed to enabling our warfighters to focus on their core mission of fighting and winning our Nation's wars without distraction. Mandatory Department training will be directly linked to warfighting or otherwise be consolidated, reduced in frequency, or eliminated.

To ensure these actions are implemented expeditiously, I direct the Military Departments to work, in coordination with the Components listed herein, on the following actions:

- Chief Information Officer of the Department of War:
  - Narrowly tailor *Records Management* training to Service member roles and allow flexibility in training delivery.
  - Relax the mandatory frequency for *Cybersecurity* training.
  - Automate information management systems to eliminate training requirements.
- The Under Secretary of War for Intelligence and Security:
  - Relax the mandatory frequency for *Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI)* training.
- The Assistant to the Secretary of War for Privacy, Civil Liberties, and Transparency:
  - Remove *Privacy Act Training from the Common Military Training (CMT) list.*
- The Under Secretary of War for Personnel and Readiness:
  - Eliminate mandatory frequency for *Combating Trafficking in Persons* refresher training after appropriate legislation is enacted.
  - Consolidate mandatory training topics, as appropriate.

CMT Consolidation. The Military Departments will provide the Under Secretary of War for Personnel and Readiness an integrated CMT program plan, incorporating the following guidelines:

- Coordinate with the Office of the Secretary of War Components that oversee CMT topics to ensure all learning objectives meet expected outcomes.

- CMT focused on harmful behaviors must clearly delineate the differences between prevention and response, identifying appropriate response procedures and resources to adequately address Service member support, chain of command actions, and requirements for investigation and legal action.

- Integrated training programs may be delivered online, in-person, or in hybrid formats, and may incorporate Service-mandated content along with CMT topics. The use of test-out options is strongly encouraged for refresher training.

These critical efforts to eliminate, reduce, and consolidate focus topics advances my emphasis on warfighting. The Department will prioritize these actions and execute with urgency to strengthen the lethality of our Nation's fighting Force.

SECRETARY OF WAR
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
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MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Implementation of Military Equal Opportunity and Equal Employment Opportunity Reform Plan

References: (a) Secretary of Defense Memorandum "Restoring Good Order and Discipline Through Balanced Accountability," April 23, 2025
(b) Acting Chair, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Memorandum "Restoring and Protecting the Presumption of Innocence in the EEO Complaint Process," May 15, 2025
(c) Acting Chair, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Memorandum "Ending Unauthorized Monetary Sanctions Against Federal Agencies," May 15, 2025
(d) Acting Chair, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Memorandum "Guidance to Agencies for Applying Deferred Resignation Program Agreements to Pending EEO Complaints," May 15, 2025

The Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) programs are important for preventing and responding to incidents of discrimination and harassment. On April 23, 2025, I directed a comprehensive review of the Department of War's MEO and EEO programs (reference (a)).

Based on the results of that review, I direct the Under Secretary of War for Personnel and Readiness (USW(P&R)) to implement key reforms across the Department's MEO and EEO programs to optimize organizational effectiveness, ensure readiness, and prevent abuse of process. The USW(P&R) will coordinate with the Secretaries of the Military Departments and other DoW Components as necessary to obtain information, ensure alignment, and drive consistent execution of these reforms across the Department. The USW(P&R) is authorized and delegated the authority to provide additional policy and implementation guidance as needed outside the normal DoW issuance process to facilitate implementation efforts and ensure synchronization across all applicable stakeholders. This authority may not be further delegated.

These reforms must ensure that:

- Complaints are promptly (within 30 days) addressed and dismissed if they lack actionable, credible evidence;

- Favorable personnel actions such as awards, promotions, and retirements, involving alleged offenders are only withheld where a preliminary or subsequent investigation indicates that the complaint is likely to be substantiated; and

- Those who knowingly submit false complaints and repeatedly submit frivolous complaints are held accountable, pursuant to applicable laws and regulations.

MEO Reforms:

- To foster a more effective support and resolution-based program, replace the current anonymous reporting option with a confidential complaint reporting option to MEO professionals and request that the Joint Service Committee on Military Justice consider revising Military Rule of Evidence 514 to include communications to MEO professionals.

- To strengthen efficiency and fairness within the MEO complaint resolution process, standardize the intake processes to provide mediation as a first-line alternative to filing a formal MEO complaint in accordance with Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1350.02, "DoD Military Equal Opportunity Program," September 4, 2020, as amended. This approach fosters early conflict resolution and reduces administrative burden. Unless required by law, MEO complaints that lack sufficient merit to trigger an investigation will be systematically dismissed under new threshold criteria, ensuring that resources are directed toward complaints containing credible evidence. Credible evidence will be defined in updated policy.

- To promote prompt closure and accountability, mandate a strict resolution timeline for commanders to address unsubstantiated MEO complaints, within 7 business days, to ensure timely resolutions.

- I direct the USW(P&R) to amend and update DoDI 1350.02 to include provisions clarifying that false complaints may constitute a violation of Article 107 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. These updates will reinforce the integrity of the MEO complaint process.

EEO Reforms:

- Centralize EEO Program Organization and Operation. Consolidating and centralizing EEO counselor operations will ensure consistent application and timely resolution of EEO complaints, allowing DoD leaders to focus on national security. Within 30 days from the date of this memorandum, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy (DASW(CPP)) will develop and implement a plan to establish a DoW pilot within the Defense Agencies and the DoW Field Activities (DAFAs) to consolidate and centralize EEO personnel, offices, and operations. This pilot will also establish a temporary EEO Task Force that includes OSD manpower, human resources, comptroller, information technology (IT), and legal representatives; representatives from the DAFAs; and other relevant stakeholders as needed. Additionally, the pilot will institute a technology solution and define funding resources required. The DASW(CPP) will conduct an evaluation at the end of the pilot to incorporate the Military Departments.

- Expedite Senior Official EEO Cases. Preventing delays and avoiding the indefinite suspension of careers empowers DoW leaders to get back to doing what they do best, warfighting. The Director, Defense Human Resources Activity (DHRA) will define and allocate funding for the Investigations and Resolutions Directorate (IRD) to leverage outsourcing and alternative IT solutions, like artificial intelligence to expedite investigation of cases that directly affect general/flag officers and senior executives.

- Centralize EEO Investigations. Consolidating investigations under the IRD enhances accountability, increases oversight, and standardizes policy implementation. Within 30 days from the date of this memorandum, the Director, DHRA, will provide a plan of action and milestones to the DASW(CPP) detailing the process for eliminating the EEO investigation backlog and manpower and funding resources required to sustain long-term operational capability in accordance with 29 CFR Part 1614 and EEOC Management Directive 110.

- Acceptance and Dismissal of EEO Complaints. In accordance with 29 CFR §§ 1614.106(b) and 1614.107(a), where the Agency has made a written request for the complainant to provide relevant information or documentation, if the complainant fails to respond or adequately address the Agency's request within 15-days of receipt, the complaint be dismissed. The DASW(CPP) will, no later than 60 days, coordinate with EEOC to request an establish exception to modify the timeline for acceptance and dismissal of EEO complaints.

- Adhere to EEOC Reform Initiatives. EEOC's reforms are also DoW's priority to advance timeliness, efficiency, and accountability across the Department's EEO process. Consistent with references (b), (c), and (d), I hereby direct the USW(P&R) to advance an EEO policy memorandum to remove unauthorized monetary sanctions and dismissal of outstanding claims for individuals who exercised the Deferred Resignation Program with general release clauses. Additionally, I direct the USW(P&R) to update current DoW policy to eliminate the practice of withholding or delaying promotion of an employee or Service member based on an EEO complaint without a substantive finding of misconduct or not based on objective and credible evidence. The USW(P&R) will update DoW policy to reflect the definition of credible evidence contained in reference (a) consistent with applicable law.

- DoW Exception to EEOC timelines for Processing Investigations. Timely investigations bolster the credibility of the EEO process by ensuring complaints are addressed timely. The Department's priority must be to preserve the integrity of the EEO process for both the complainant and alleged offender. The DASW(CPP) will, no later than 60 days from the date of this memorandum, coordinate with EEOC to establish an exception to modify DoW's EEO investigation timelines.

- Establish Compliance Measures to Track EEO Reform Actions. Tracking and monitoring the execution and implementation of the EEO process is essential to upholding the efficacy of the Department's commitment to provide timely resolutions

of allegations. The DASW(CPP) will develop a compliance assessment framework to monitor the implementation of the EEO reform actions and submit an annual progress report to the USW(P&R).

Timely adjudication of complaints will minimize the impact of false claims, swiftly provide resolution for all involved, and increase readiness across the total force. I am fully committed to promoting good order and discipline through accountability for all involved in the complaint process.

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

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF MILITARY DEPARTMENTS

SUBJECT: IG Oversight and Reform: Enhancing Timeliness, Transparency, and Due Process in Administrative Investigations

The Department of War is committed to restoring timeliness, predictability, and transparency in administrative investigations while safeguarding due process. Consistent with applicable laws, I direct the Secretaries of the Military Departments to work with the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of War to implement the following actions:

Intake and Timelines. The current intake phase for administrative investigations is inefficient and inconsistent. To fix this, as permitted by law, a credibility assessment must be completed within seven duty days following receipt of a complaint. At that point, the complaint must either be closed or an investigation initiated. The subject of the complaint will not be flagged during the credibility assessment unless credible evidence supports the allegation. To meet this timeline, the Military Departments should explore the use of artificial intelligence with human oversight to classify and route complaints, enforce deadlines, protect privacy, and maintain audit logs. All non-credible complaints must be closed no later than seven duty days after receipt. Non-credible complaints include those filed more than a year after the alleged event, unless new compelling evidence is presented, and repeat submissions with no new facts, which should be labeled "duplicate," linked to the original case, and the complainant notified.

Opening Criteria and Standards. As permitted by law, apply uniform, legally sound thresholds to ensure formal investigations are initiated only when clearly warranted. The seven duty day credibility assessment must remain distinct from the investigation to prevent unnecessary delays, personnel holds, or premature external notifications. An investigation should be initiated only if the complaint meets credible-evidence standard. Complainants who submit complaints that do not meet this standard should be provided guidance, assistance, or referral to another venue, as appropriate. Treat triage and fact-finding as preliminary steps, not triggers for formal action. Command directed investigations must be closed within 30 days from initiation, using standardized notifications, templates, and closure documentation. Ensure investigators are properly trained and credentialed in interviewing techniques, evidence handling, bias mitigation, and report writing to maintain consistent quality across all investigations.

Transparency and Predictability. Written updates on the status of investigations shall be provided every 14 days to the subject of the complaint, his or her commander, and the complainant by the investigating agency. Each update will include the current status of the investigation, the anticipated completion date, and the forthcoming steps. However, these updates will not contain any pre-decisional or deliberative information. Except in limited circumstances, the existence of an investigation alone shall not affect an individual's eligibility for promotion, enrollment in Professional Military Education, assignment opportunities, or other personnel actions.

Tracking Complainants and Subjects. Create a single, accurate case picture from intake to closure and use comparable data to drive improvement, compliance, and accountability. Prepare for transition to the Defense Case Activity Tracking System–enterprise; until then, adopt a common data schema and include command initiated investigations in the repository. Maintain and report a small, common set of metrics — cycle times, percent closed at intake, aged-case inventory, substantiation rates, and notification timeliness — while ensuring privacy and records compliance.

Repeat and Serial Complainants. Establish clear and enforceable procedures to identify and manage complainants who submit multiple complaints without credible evidence, that are frivolous, or that knowingly include false information. Escalate reviews to higher authorities when necessary to maintain oversight and accountability. Track and maintain detailed records of repeat complainants, including linked case numbers and closure reasons, to identify patterns and improve complaint resolution processes. Ensure all actions safeguard due process, protect whistleblower rights, and uphold the fairness and impartiality of the investigation process. Article 107 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) prohibits making a false statement with the intent to deceive or making a false swearing under oath. Individuals who violate Article 107 of the UCMJ will be held appropriately accountable.

These reforms strengthen readiness, fairness, and trust. We will move fast, track outcomes, and sharpen the Department's lethality and readiness.

cc:
CJCS
USW(P&R)
DOWIG

SECRETARY OF WAR
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

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

SUBJECT: Grooming Standards for Facial Hair Implementation

This memorandum provides implementing guidance pursuant to the August 20, 2025, directive, "Grooming Standards for Facial Hair," which established uniform grooming standards across the Force.

In an era of increasingly complex operational demands — including high-tempo deployments, multi-domain warfare, and expanded emergency response roles — strict grooming compliance ensures personnel can safely and effectively employ protective equipment. This is critical not only for defense against chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) threats, but also for firefighting, disaster relief, and other hazardous mission sets where respiratory protection may be required, often on short notice. These standards are essential to maintaining equipment compatibility, operational readiness, and deployable force posture.

Accession Standards

- All applicants, including reentry candidates, must meet grooming standards prior to entry.
- Applicants unable to comply will be deferred from accession until standards are met.

In-Service Compliance

- All personnel must maintain a clean-shaven face.
    - Sideburns will be above the ear opening.
    - Beards, goatees, and other facial hair are prohibited unless specifically authorized.
    - Mustaches are authorized but will be neatly trimmed; not to extend past the mouth corners or into a respirator seal zone.
- Special Operations Forces units may request modified standards via validated mission-essential requirements. However, personnel will be clean-shaven when deployed to environments with a high threat of CBRN attack.

Medical and Religious Accommodations

- Medical Accommodations
  - The Department will revert to pre-2020 standards; only temporary profiles for medical conditions such as pseudofolliculitis barbae will be considered.
  - All requests require individualized review for operational impact.
  - Approved profiles will be limited to 12 months and must include a treatment plan.
  - Permanent conditions will result in evaluation for administrative separation.
- Religious Accommodations
  - The Department will revert to pre-2010 standards; facial hair waivers are generally not authorized.
  - Individualized review required per Department of War Instruction 1300.17, "Religious Liberty in the Military Services," of September 1, 2020.
  - Documentation demonstrating the sincerity of the religious or sincerely held belief will be a central factor in evaluating accommodation requests and must be sufficient to support a good faith determination by the approving authority.
  - Approvals will be limited to non-deployable roles with low risk of chemical attack or firefighting requirements.

Training and Certification

- All personnel will complete annual training to validate mask fit and reinforce grooming compliance. Masks may be a gas mask or firefighting equipment.
- Units will integrate training into annual training cycles and report completion rates.

Deployment and Personnel Tracking

- Noncompliant personnel — due to refusal, exemption denial, or failed tests — will be flagged as non-deployable in the appropriate Military Service personnel system.
- Repeated noncompliance may result in administrative separation.

Implementation Timeline

- The Secretaries of the Military Departments will provide an implementation plan to the Under Secretary of War for Personnel and Readiness (USW(P&R)) within 60 days. The implementation plan will include:
    - An assessment of the ability to implement training and certification requirements, to include any barriers or proposed exemptions for certain Active Component, Reserve Component, and National Guard units.
- The USW(P&R) has the authority to establish policy, assign responsibilities, provide procedures, and grant exceptions, as necessary, to implement this guidance.
- The Secretaries of the Military Departments will publish implementing directives no later than 30 days following the submission of their implementation plans, incorporating any exceptions to policy granted by the USW(P&R).

Uniform grooming standards are not about appearance — they are about survivability, interoperability, and mission execution. Consistent enforcement ensures personnel can operate protective equipment, meet deployment requirements, and support combat and emergency operations. These guidelines underscore the Department's commitment to readiness and force protection.

SECRETARY OF WAR
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MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARY OF WAR FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS

SUBJECT: Requirement to Formally Present Purple Heart Medals and Valor Decorations

As part of my commitment to restore the warrior ethos within the Department of War, it is imperative that we honor and distinctly recognize Service members and veterans for their valorous combat actions and those that are injured in combat.

Effective immediately, all Purple Heart medals and valor decorations will be formally presented to the recipient, or their primary next of kin (PNOK) in the case of a posthumous award, in a suitable ceremony that honors the recipient. The only exception is when the recipient or PNOK requests otherwise.

This change will be codified in Department of Defense Instruction 1348.33, "DoD Military Decorations and Awards Program," December 21, 2016, as amended, and Department of Defense Manual 1348.33, Volume 3, "Manual of Military Decorations and Awards, DoD-Wide Personal Performance and Valor Decorations," December 21, 2016, as amended, during the next update.

This renewed focus on honoring our combat heroes strengthens the warrior ethos and reaffirms our dedication to the core mission of deterring conflict and decisively defeating threats to the United States, when necessary.

PB

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

SUBJECT: Modern Workforce Management

My priority as Secretary of War is restoring the warrior ethos. This applies to every member of the Department, including our highly skilled civilian employees, who are oftentimes paid less than their private sector equivalents. These employees provide critical continuity in support of our Service members and act as force multipliers in defending this great Nation.

We recently surveyed our civilian workforce. We heard loud and clear that personnel policies must better reflect our high-performance culture. This requires reforming how we treat both top and bottom performers. Winning organizations optimize the workforce spectrum.

First, we need to incentivize and reward our top performers. Department employees are not in it for the money, but our best performers need to be appropriately recognized for their performance, including through meaningful monetary awards. Second, managers need more guidance on how to separate underperforming employees. Complex offboarding creates cultural drag that hurts morale across the Department and hinders our mission.

This cultural refresh will be led by the Under Secretary of War for Personnel and Readiness, whom I am directing to immediately issue specific guidance to address two complementary but distinct objectives: encourage workforce rewards and demystify the removal process. The Department of War attracts the highest performing workforce in the Government because we are mission focused. Collectively, we serve the volunteers who have committed to fight for their country, and we will ensure the Department's leaders have the most modern workforce optimization tools available to support our Service members.

PB