

Fact Sheet: The Next Two Links to the Force of the Future

Approved Military Personnel Initiatives:

Enhance Lateral Entry Authority.

- Would enable experts and specialists in critical skills (e.g., cyber, scientific and technical fields, other “high-skill, difficult-to-fill” positions), to join the military at a mid-career level, in the same manner currently authorized only for medical officers.
- Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Defense, the Secretaries of the Military Departments would be authorized (but not required) to expand lateral entry opportunities by extending to other specialties the constructive service credit presently available only for medical officers.
- Military Departments would have a greater degree of flexibility in recruiting experts in a diversity of specialties who would otherwise be unlikely to access into the military if required to enter at the most junior officer grade.
- This proposal requires legislation.

Voluntary “Opt Out” of Promotion Cycle.

- The Secretary of a Military Department would be authorized to approve an officer’s request to be temporarily excluded from consideration by a promotion board to allow them to undertake activities to deepen expertise or pursue enrichment opportunities, without adverse impact on career advancement.
- Officers who have not followed traditional career paths—for any number of reasons—would not be adversely affected by being required to meet a promotion board before meeting all of DOPMA’s promotion requirements.
- This initiative would boost officer management flexibilities and enhance force retention objectives, without undermining the valuable purposes that DOPMA continues to serve. The Department would benefit from the retention of high-quality officers and the infusion of the new skills and ideas they would glean from the opportunity to broaden or deepen their experience, making us more capable of thinking outside of the “five-sided box”.
- This proposal requires legislation.

Permit Adjustment of Lineal Numbers.

- Would incentivize the best military performers by authorizing (but not requiring) the Secretaries of the Military Departments to establish policies for adjusting the lineal numbers of officers selected for promotion, based upon an individual officer’s superior performance, instead of promoting in an order of seniority that is pre-determined by the date on which the officer was initially commissioned.
- Letting the military services adjust lineal numbers based on superior performance is a key part of good talent management.
- This proposal requires legislation.

Provide Flexibility for Critical Career Fields.

- Would authorize the Secretary of a Military Department to establish programs to build the capability and capacity of military personnel in critical career fields.

- When proposed by the Secretary of a Military Department and approved by the Secretary of Defense, select Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) requirements for, or constraints on, officer promotion and management, could be waived with respect to a critical career field.
- A program developed under this authority could include measures to enhance recruitment, retention, training, and other career-building measures for military personnel in the designated career field.
- This initiative would afford each of the Services new flexibility to promote and manage its officers in a way that is tailored to the Service's unique capability requirements and particular personnel needs, without undermining the valuable purposes that DOPMA continues to serve.
- A workforce that is ready to meet the challenges of the future is an invaluable asset to the Department. This proposal would enable us to invest in that future by giving the Services the authority to respond to emergent demands for capability—demands we may not be able to anticipate today—and to act quickly to generate that capability.
- This proposal requires legislation.

Modernize U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command (MEPCOM).

- This Force of the Future initiative will transition MEPCOM to a modern, digital, standards-based data collection, screening, and exchange architecture. It will develop and facilitate MEPCOM interface with, and access to, applicant electronic medical records and ensure that all accessions and recruiting forms are accessible online and integrated with Service pay and personnel systems, allowing for a substantive exchange of information between the Services and MEPCOM from the point of accession forward. It will bring the military testing program into the modern age.
- Today, our military recruiting and accession business processes and systems rely on a patchwork of outdated technology solutions, manual functions, and fixed geographic locations for processing. This results in an inefficient and often frustrating operating environment for the Military Departments, recruits, and their influencers (like parents, clergy, and coaches), who use the system.
- Force-wide, enlistment alone requires processing 70 to 80 million pieces of paper every year—a slow, duplicative, and expensive process. Troops talk about having to fill out the same packets of paperwork over and over again—not a good sign for a new applicant who has responded to the recruiting message that we are the most technologically advanced military. First and foremost, this initiative will mean “no more paper forms”.
- In addition, over the past 35 years, the Department has done little to modernize the processes and screening tests used to select and classify military applicants for enlistment into military training courses and jobs. MEPCOM modernization will adopt expanded computerized testing, and add personality and interest measures to the enlistment screening process.
- This initiative does not require legislation.

Expand Joint Advertising, Market Research and Studies (JAMRS)/Defense Manpower Data Center Micro-targeting to Create a Recruiting Database.

- The Department must not only ensure that it is meeting recruiting objectives today, but that it will continue to meet those objectives into the future.

- We will create a more robust recruiting database patterned after the existing JAMRS database. This expanded database will be provided to all Services for use in officer and enlisted recruiting, and we will also explore the merits of expanding the database for use in civilian recruiting.
- The database will leverage predictive analytics and micro-targeting strategies, presenting an opportunity that the Services have not fully leveraged before now: to tackle challenging recruiting essentials like talent and diversity—not just recruiting numbers.
- Being able to identify the relevant recruiting market data, and to use it in simpler and faster ways, will improve recruiter engagement across a larger population with a higher propensity for military service, better optimizing recruiter time and effort to reach out to and engage with America’s talented youth.
- As the Secretary of Defense has said, “we can’t keep fishing in the same old ponds; instead, we have to fish in more ponds, new ponds, and ponds we haven’t been to in a long time—we have to draw talent from our country’s entire pool of population for our all-volunteer force.”
- This initiative does not require legislation.

Approved Civilian Workforce Initiatives:

Enable Direct Hiring of Students and Recent Graduates.

- Would enable the Department to recruit and hire “on-the-spot” the best and brightest on-campus talent by authorizing the direct hire of students and recent graduates into the civilian workforce.
- This initiative would establish Department-wide authority for non-competitive student appointment in the civil service and would facilitate on-campus recruiting.
- Right now, if a DoD recruiter meets an undergraduate student, a graduate student, or a recent graduate who is perfect for a particular job, the recruiter must direct the candidate to the USAJOBS website. For the job-seeker, this begins the process of creating an online resume, uploading transcripts and other documents, responding to supplemental questions, waiting for the application to be processed, and much more—a process that takes at least 90 days, under the best of circumstances.
- In today’s highly competitive job market, students and recent graduates cannot afford to wait many months for DoD to make a job offer. By the time a DoD offer is extended, top talent has accepted an offer in the private sector and already reported to work.
- This authority has the potential to be a “game changer” for DoD.
- This proposal requires legislation.

Establish a Public-Private Talent Exchange.

- Would authorize the creation of a two-way exchange program through which DoD and some of America’s best and most innovative private companies could temporarily exchange employees—pioneering a new vehicle for sharing new ideas and “state of the art” practices between government and industry.
- This new, DoD-specific authority would authorize the Secretary of Defense to prescribe regulations allowing for the temporary assignment of DoD employees to a private-sector organization, or for the assignment of a private-sector employee to the DoD, for a minimum period of 3 months, and for as long as 4 years.

- We believe that many leading companies and their employees would be attracted by the ability to contribute to the mission and purpose of the Department of Defense. We envision the exchange of information and perspectives as a two-way street—that as we learn from the private sector, the private sector can also learn from DoD.
- Implementation regulations will establish processes to safeguard compliance with government ethics laws and rules, address funding mechanisms, and provide guidance on issues associated with potential billet and mission gaps created by temporary employee absences from the workplace while participating in an exchange.
- This proposal requires legislation.

Expand Use of Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay (VSIP).

- Would raise the cap on VSIP from \$25,000 to \$40,000, establishing VSIP as an important force shaping incentive to compensate employees who elect to depart early from employment with DoD.
- The maximum amount of VSIP that may be paid to a civilian employee has not changed since DoD was first authorized to provide such incentives in 1993. Meanwhile, the buying power of a dollar has decreased dramatically. While \$25K was considered an appropriate amount to induce employees to voluntarily separate in 1993, it cannot possibly provide the same incentive in current dollars.
- DoD currently has a separate statutory authority for VSIP; however, if Congress provides the legislative authority for an increase, we anticipate it may apply to the whole of government.
- This proposal requires legislation.

Provide 6 Weeks of Paid Parental Leave for DoD Civilian Employees.

- Would provide 6 weeks of paid parental leave in connection with the birth or adoption of a child, to be used within 12 months of the birth or adoption placement.
- Presently, civilian employees are not authorized any period of paid parental leave.
- This proposal requires legislation.

Leverage Authority to Employ Highly Qualified Experts (HQEs).

- This initiative will build critical capabilities within the Department by growing the number of HQEs to meet changing requirements for specialized skills and broadening the criteria applicable to HQE hiring to enhance access to expert talent.
- Today, we have about 90 HQEs onboard across DoD—including talented and innovative people like the director of the Defense Digital Service, the head of DoD’s Strategic Capabilities Office, and the Air Force Chief Scientist.
- DoD is well below the maximum number of HQEs authorized. Having access to such expertise is a force-multiplier; we will benefit from using this authority more often
- The DoD Components will identify mission areas in which increased expertise is needed, with a view to increasing the number of HQEs by 10% annually over the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP), with regular reevaluation to ensure that the targets are achievable and in the best interest of the Department.
- The Department will expand the definition of HQE and the criteria applicable to HQE hiring to enhance flexibility.
- This initiative does not require legislation.

Leverage Career Broadening Rotational Programs.

- We will utilize existing rotational programs (such as the White House Leadership Development Program and the Defense Senior Leader Development Program) to increase the number and quality of career-broadening experiences available to civilian employees.
- We plan to manage the program through a centralized coordinator in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (OUSDP&R)), and establish an objective to increase the number of rotational opportunities by 10% annually over the FYDP, with regular reevaluation to ensure that the targets are achievable and in the best interests of the Department.
- This initiative does not require legislation.

Increase the use of Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation (SMART) Defense Scholarships.

- Increasing the use of the SMART Defense Scholarship Program will attract talent in Mission Critical Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) occupations.
- Enrollment will be increased gradually, by 10% annually over the FYDP, to ensure that the Department is able to place and fully utilize scholarship graduates in a STEM/Mission Critical Occupation position in the DoD workforce. Regular reevaluation will ensure that targets are achievable and in the best interests of the Department.
- This initiative does not require legislation.

Allow Optional Parental Phased Return Through Part-Time Work after the Birth or Adoption of a Child.

- Allowing DoD civilian employees to work part-time for the first year after the birth or adoption of a child, or subsequent to beginning service as a foster parent, allows them to “phase in” their return to full-time employment.
- Options for flexible work schedules or telework will remain available.
- Approval decisions in individual cases will be made by the affected DoD Component, after taking into consideration any capability/mission gap or readiness concern.
- This initiative does not require legislation.

Expand the use of the Student Training and Academic Recruitment (STAR) Program.

- We will expand the use of the STAR program from its current four locations to additional college/university campuses and coordinate program expansion with the use of direct hire authority for students and recent graduates, if authorized by Congress.
- Through peer-to-peer interaction, students who are employed part-time by DoD through the STAR Program market DoD’s many employment and scholarship opportunities to other students. DoD Components participating in STAR are encouraged to hire full-time students majoring in academic disciplines matching DoD’s mission critical skill needs.
- STAR student recruiters may be offered full-time DoD employment on graduation.
- Expansion of the program will be reassessed on an annual basis, to ensure that the program is serving its intended purpose.
- This initiative does not require legislation.

Better Leverage Civilian Employee Training Funds.

- In consultation with each DoD Component, we will establish annual objectives for funding the training and development of the civilian workforce.
- The Components will be required to report to OUSD(P&R) annually on spending for civilian employee training and development.
- This initiative does not require legislation.

Remove Barriers to Mobility Between Civilian Jobs in Different DoD Components.

- We will establish a working group to identify actionable program, policy, and process changes to eliminate or minimize barriers to employee mobility between DoD Components.
- The objective is to use existing DoD authorities to streamline onboarding requirements and reduce the time, effort, and duplication of recordkeeping required for employees to transfer between DoD Components.
- This initiative does not require legislation.

Fact Sheet: Building the First Link to the Force of the Future

On his first day in office, Secretary Carter announced his goal to build the Force of the Future in order for the Department of Defense to maintain our competitive edge in bringing in top talent to serve the nation. In March, Secretary Carter delivered a speech at his high school in Abington, Pennsylvania to discuss some of the goals for this initiative. Following those remarks, Secretary Carter directed the Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Brad Carson, to undertake a comprehensive review of the Department's civilian and military personnel systems.

The review occurred from April to August, and included over 150 subject matter experts from the Military Services, scholars, and researchers. A core research and writing team from the Personnel and Readiness office reviewed over 100 studies and commission reports related to civilian and military personnel management, talent management, and private sector human resources practices.

The review focused on ways in which the Department could increase permeability of personnel and ideas between the public and private sector, increase recruiting results and outcomes for the Department, and emphasize talent management and retention to ensure that the quality of today's current force would translate to a "Force of the Future".

The review produced a document in excess of 150 pages and included 29 reform proposals that captured almost 80 individual reform initiatives. After receiving the document for his review, the Secretary of Defense directed the Deputy Secretary of Defense and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to oversee a principal level working group to evaluate all the reform initiatives against the backdrop of force readiness and maintaining an all-volunteer Joint Force. That Working Group has recommended an initial tranche of over 20 reform initiatives, focused on permeability, recruitment, and retention - 12 of which will be highlighted in the Secretary's November 18, 2015 speech at George Washington University. The group will continue to work on many of the other reforms the working group identified in the months ahead.

Reforms Highlighted in Secretary Carter's George Washington University Speech

Improve and Enhance College Internship Programs. The Department will create a centralized process to better manage its vast array of internship opportunities to increase the likelihood of interns receiving full time placement in the Department of Defense. With more young Americans pursuing internships today, it is imperative that we are leveraging this talent pool to attract future talent to the civilian workforces as many other agencies have done. The USD (P&R) will work with the Military Services to develop more robust mechanisms to transition successful and promising interns from temporary to permanent employees. Additionally, since many college students do not realize what kinds of civilian job opportunities DoD offers, USD (P&R) will also work to improve DoD's on-campus presence.

Establish the Defense Digital Service (DDS). Working closely with the White House lead United States Digital Services (USDS), DoD will establish the Defense Digital Service (DDS). DDS will be composed of a small team of talented engineers and digital experts, brought in to DoD on a temporary basis from the private sector to work with senior leaders to improve the

Department's technological agility and solve its most complex IT problems. Chris Lynch, a well-respected tech entrepreneur, will lead this organization starting today.

Launch Entrepreneur-in-Residence Program. DoD will launch an Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EIR) Pilot Program to embed up to three entrepreneurs in different parts of the Department to work on special projects sponsored by senior leaders. The goal of the EIR program is to align the attitude, expertise, experience, and professional networks of successful entrepreneurs against the mission and challenges facing large, complex, bureaucratic organizations. The EIR program is designed to unleash the powerful advantages of an entrepreneurial mindset such as creativity, urgency, independence, and calculated risk-taking into organizational cultures and/or against a specific problem. The new EIRs will be paired with a senior leader project sponsor from among the Military Services and Office of the Secretary of Defense to spearhead an entrepreneurial approach to tackling a specific DoD challenge. The EIRs will also participate in educational and mentorship programs that will contribute to a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in DoD.

Designate Chief Recruiting Officer. DoD will designate a Chief Recruiting Officer (CRO) within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to lead executive recruitment throughout the Department. The new CRO will essentially function as an executive headhunter, and work with leadership among the Military Services and Office of the Secretary of Defense to bring in highly qualified executives from the private sector to assist the Department in managing key portfolios and issue areas where private sector experience could be valuable.

Expand Secretary of Defense Corporate Fellows Program. DoD will expand and upgrade its Secretary of Defense Corporate Fellows Program, in terms of both attendance and scope, and rename it consistent with its expanded focus: Secretary of Defense Executive Fellows Program (SDEF). This program allows service-members to serve in top industrial institutions – including places like Microsoft, Amazon, SpaceX, and Accenture – and bring back what they learn to keep DoD on the cutting-edge. The program will also expand the fellowship mandate to include fellowships with state and local government to help prepare service-members for leadership at strategic levels. Finally, the program will now also include eligible senior non-commissioned officers, as well as commissioned officers. Where previously the fellowship was a one year billet it will now be two years enabling the fellows to apply what they have learned in the private sector to a commensurate activity within the Department.

Increase Size of the Career Intermission Program. DoD will pursue Congressional action to lift the pilot restrictions for the Career Intermission Program (CIP). The CIP allows service-members to take a sabbatical from military service for a few years while they are starting a family, exploring different career opportunities (such as time in the private sector), or getting a new degree. The program promises to not only give service-members increasing flexibility as they pursue their military careers, but also enables them to bring new and innovative skills back to DoD. Many Service members are reluctant to use the program based on the current pilot status; elimination of pilot authority will provide maximum flexibility for Service members and the Secretaries of the Military Departments to expand the utility, participation, and duration of the CIP based on individual Service needs, and ensure that taking advantage of this opportunity does not harm chances for promotion.

Update and Modernize Retirement System. DoD will continue to refine the Blended Retirement System approved by Congress in the FY16 National Defense Authorization Act. For decades, service-members have had to serve 20 years before becoming eligible for any retirement benefits, and since 80% of military personnel depart before 20 years, most do leave without any retirement benefits presenting a disadvantage in comparison to their peers. Under the new system, the member is expected to achieve a retirement that is equivalent or better than under the current system, while many Service members who leave prior to achieving full retirement will also now depart with a portable retirement benefit. This system will let current and future generations of service-members the choice to have more flexibility in their careers.

Implement Web-Based Talent Management System. The Military Services will pilot web-based systems that help match the right knowledge, skills, and abilities of Service members with available assignments. These web-based platforms will provide an opportunity for Service members and gaining units to “shop around” and discover mutual matches that better satisfy all parties involved. These are roughly equivalent to a “LinkedIn”-style system, in which service members will populate an online database with information they believe is important, which would then be wedded to official personnel data. Commanders and Service members will be able to search for the right job, using data that has not currently been captured by the Department. The Military Services will closely monitor these new systems to ensure there is no degradation of readiness or dearth of talent in certain geographic locations.

Establish Office of People Analytics. The USD (P&R) will immediately establish the Office of People Analytics (OPA) to better harness the Department’s big data capabilities in managing our talent. DoD has limited visibility into the characteristics of civilian and military personnel and lacks the ability to conduct comprehensive analysis on how policy or environmental changes will affect the performance or composition of the workforce. OPA is designed to serve in direct analytic support to the Military Services and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) to fix this gap and inform better personnel policies that attract, recruit, and retain high performers within/to DoD. OPA will be prepared to partner with the Military Services and OSD on questions pertaining to recruiting, hiring and retention, succession planning, training, and increased talent-based assignment matching throughout the Department.

Implement Exit Surveys. The Military Services will begin to monitor the reasons that Service members are leaving in order to better refine personnel policies that retain top talent and appropriately divest low performers. Detailed exit surveys will become a fully integrated, standard requirement in the Transition Assistance Program (TAP).

Examine Ways to Improve Recruiting. USD (P&R) will supervise a study to identify ways in which military recruiters can be rewarded for recruit performance in basic training and initial enlistment term. In addition to improving the overall incentives for successful recruiting, recommendations from the study could inform future pilot programs and save the Department lost time and money. DoD will commission a study, likely working through and with the Fully Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs), to better understand the factors affecting poor recruit outcomes and present recommendations to the Secretary of Defense. Completion of

the studies, and submission of any recommendations for further action by the Secretary or the Military Services, will occur within the next year.

Diversity Briefings. Senior leaders (Vice Chiefs and Under Secretaries) will begin receiving semiannual briefings on the racial and gender diversity within each branch, career field, and military occupational specialty. USD (P&R) will also supervise a study to identify the primary causes and anticipated impacts of the geographic and familial concentration of military recruits.

Additional Approved Force of the Future Initiatives

Talent Management Centers of Excellence. The Military Services will establish Talent Management Centers of Excellence to provide labor economics data and modelling for Service personnel chiefs and senior leaders.

Civilian Skills in Reserve Component. DoD will better align individual capabilities with mission requirements by cataloging civilian skill sets inherent in reserve component Service members.

Compensation Study. The USD (P&R) will conduct a comprehensive study for the purposes of better aligning basic and special pays with the principles of talent management. This study will build upon the recent findings of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (MCRMC) by focusing exclusively on possible reforms associated with basic and special pays.

Increased Use of Reserve Component Service Members. The Military Services will conduct studies to determine the utility of employing Full Time Support (FTS) personnel from their Reserve Components in certain billets like ROTC cadre, recruiters, and military school instructors.

Doctoral-Level Program in Strategy. The USD (P&R), in conjunction with the Joint Staff and the Military Services, will establish a doctoral-level program in Strategy through the current Professional Military Education (PME) system. USD (P&R) will coordinate with Joint Staff and the Military Services to identify an initial location (likely National Defense University) for the program and to develop a fully accredited curriculum.

Center for Talent Development. DoD will establish a Center for Talent Development (CTD) to provide Department-wide guidance on talent development policy and strategy, offer world class professional development opportunities to the civilian workforce, and serve as a repository of expertise on talent development.

Civilian Human Capital Innovation Laboratory. The Department will establish a Civilian Human Capital Innovation Laboratory (CHIL) to ensure DoD's human resources (HR) personnel remain at the forefront of human capital best practices. The CHIL's primary purpose is to continuously design, launch, and evaluate pilots, prototypes, and experiments aimed at formulating and testing concepts and practices that improve HR outcomes for DoD stakeholders, accelerate and simplify business processes, and reduce costs.

Defense Innovation Network. DoD will establish a Department-wide Defense Innovation Network (DIN) for the purpose of identifying, connecting, empowering, and encouraging military and civilian personnel throughout the DoD workforce who are or aspire to be involved in innovation.

Active and Reserve Component Permeability. The Department will form a Task Force, chaired by the USD (P&R), to identify mechanisms that increase the speed and ease with which Service members can transition from the Active Component to the Reserve Component.

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Fact Sheet: Building the Second Link to the Force of the Future
Strengthening Comprehensive Family Benefits

On his first day in office, Secretary Carter set a goal to build the Force of the Future in order for the Department of Defense to maintain our competitive edge in attracting top talent to serve the nation. After directing a comprehensive review of the Department's civilian and military personnel systems, Secretary Carter announced in November 2015 at George Washington University a series of reforms to increase permeability of personnel and ideas between the public and private sector and improve recruiting, talent management, and retention.

Secretary Carter is now announcing a second tranche of reforms focused on improving the quality of life of military parents so they may better balance commitments they make to serve in uniform and start and support a family. The stresses of military service on our families are heavy and well known and it is one of the top reasons people transition out of the military. Secretary Carter believes this comprehensive package of family benefits will enable the Department to attract, incentivize, and retain the best talent today and in the future while improving overall mission effectiveness and the strength and health of our teams.

Establish a DoD-wide standard for Paid Maternity Leave of 12 Weeks

Across the Department, women service members will receive 12 continuous weeks of fully paid maternity leave as the standard across the Joint Force – doubling the maternity leave offered to all service members from when Secretary Carter took office. This immediately puts DoD in the top tier of institutions nationally and will have significant influence on decision making for our military families.

This benefit will be offered to the over 200,000 women in uniform today who comprise 14.8 percent of enlisted personnel and 17.4 percent of the officer corps. The percentage of women in the military has increased significantly over the last few decades and this benefit will be even more critical for the future.

As a point of comparison, a 2015 Survey by “Working Mother” found the 100 Best Companies offered on average eight weeks of paid maternity leave; only the top quartile of these highly rated companies offer twelve weeks. The extension of this benefit to our entire force is unprecedented for an organization of DoD's size as well as diversity of job functions.

This decision applies to all service members in the active duty component, and those Reserve component service members serving in a full time status or on definite active duty recall or mobilization orders in excess of twelve months. Sailors and Marines who are currently pregnant or become pregnant within 30 days of the enactment of this policy

will still be eligible to take the full 18 weeks of paid maternity leave, consistent with the Department of the Navy's 2015 announcement.

Expanding Paternity Leave to 14 Days

The Department will seek legislation to expand the current ten day paternity leave benefit offered to service members to a 14 day (two week) non-continuous leave. Secretary Carter is also encouraging men to take the leave that is currently available to support their new families.

Expanding Adoption Leave

Currently, the Department provides three weeks of adoptive leave to one parent. In the case of dual military couples, the Department will seek authority from Congress to provide two weeks of leave for the second parent as well. There are 84,000 military to military marriages that may take advantage of this new benefit.

Extend Childcare Development Center Hours To A 14 Hour Minimum

Today, nearly half of all military families have to rely on an additional provider to meet their childcare needs outside the hours provided by DoD subsidized Child Development Centers. The Department will extend hours of CDCs to overlap the normal working shifts of service members by at least two hours to ensure hours of operation consistent with the work patterns of the majority of service members at each specific installation. For example, for a normal workday of 0700 to 1700, CDCs would remain continuously open from 0500 to 1900, providing a minimum of 14 hours of continuous coverage. Each child will receive up to 12 hours of subsidized care per day.

Modify Or Install Mothers' Rooms At Each Military Installation

To further help transition from maternity leave, DoD will set a single Department-wide standard requiring installation or modification of Mothers' Rooms throughout all facilities when there are more than fifty women regularly assigned. That will result in the improvement or establishment of 3,600 rooms across DoD installations. These rooms must be a designated, clean, and private space that is not a restroom. The room must also be equipped with electrical outlets, as well as table and chair access for each person using the room. Finally, the room must be as close as possible to a water source for washing hands and rinsing equipment, and there must be assured access to dedicated refrigeration or other cooling devices for breast milk.

Examine Additional Options For Childcare Services

The Secretaries of the Military Departments will conduct long-range strategic planning and assessments for childcare options to improve access and usability. Planning will require the services to a) develop a strategic plan to expand capacity in critical areas where wait times for Childcare Development Center (CDC) enrollment exceed 90 days; b) ensure all service members can go on CDC waiting lists upon receipt of orders, rather than requiring them to wait until they have arrived at the next duty station; c) create a universal CDC application for major military concentration areas which will enable service members to apply only once for multiple CDC waiting lists; d) develop training for CDC directors on how to connect parents to other regional care resources; e) direct CDCs to sponsor new parent mentor networks, local forums for home-based child care, and to establish parent advisory boards. The Services should complete their reports and submit their findings no later than June 1, 2016.

Allow Service Members to Remain at a Station of Choice For Family Reasons

The Department will seek an amendment to existing Title 10 authorities to permit Service members to postpone a Permanent Change of Station and remain at their duty station in certain instances where it is in the best interests of the family. For example, if a daughter is in her senior year of high school, or a spouse is getting a graduate degree at a local university, or a service member needs to care for a nearby ailing parent, the service member would be able to stay at their current station to address those needs. In exchange, the service member would agree to an additional commensurate active duty service obligation.

Provide egg and sperm cryopreservation

Through the TRICARE purchased care network, the Department covers the cost for active duty service members to freeze their sperm or eggs. This benefit will apply only to active duty service members through a pilot mechanism within the current governing rules of TRICARE. One purpose of the pilot is to understand the costs and potential recruiting and retention benefits for providing this medical service. After two years, the pilot may be renewed or service members can pay for additional storage out of pocket. The Department is also committed to continuing to look at how we can broaden reduced cost Advanced Reproductive Technologies to the active force beyond current care at some Military Treatment Facilities.

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