



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
3280 RUSSELL ROAD
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134-5103

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MPO
1 Jun 20

From: Branch Head, Manpower Military Policy
To: Chair, Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

Subj: RESPONSE TO PRIMARY CAREGIVER LEAVE & CAREGIVER SABBATICAL
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

Ref: (a) DACOWITS RFIs for June 2020

1. The following is provided in response to the reference, specifically RFI #10 (Primary Caregiver Leave) and RFI #12 (Caregiver Sabbatical).

a. RFI #10: In March 2020, the Committee was briefed by the Military Services on the status of their Primary Caregiver Leave policies. It appears to the Committee that the Marine Corps has interpreted and made this policy more restrictive than the other Services. The Committee requests a written response from the Marine Corps on the justification for restricting the transfer of primary caregiver leave unless the birthparent (i.e., servicewoman) is incapacitated or unavailable, per MARADMIN 570/18.

Response: The transfer of Primary Caregiver Leave to the non-birthparent is not restricted or limited to cases where the birthparent is incapacitated or unavailable. MARADMIN 570/18 was cancelled on 21 April 2020; however, the information contained in the MARADMIN was included in the updated Marine Corps Policy Concerning Parenthood and Pregnancy (MCO 5000.12F) which was published on 13 April 2020. In MCO 5000.12F, it states that "Non-birthparent Marines may be designated as primary caregivers when justified and approved by COs/OICs. Justification includes, but is not limited to, incapacitation or unavailability of the birthparent". Thus, a non-birthparent's designation as Primary Caregiver is not limited to only incapacitation or unavailability of the birthparent. For example, dual military couples decide which member will be designated Primary Caregiver. Additionally, the information contained in MCO 5000.12F is derived from SECNAVINST 1000.10B (Department of the Navy Policy on Parenthood and Pregnancy) which states that a Primary Caregiver is "the parent with the primary responsibility for caring for a child, in most cases the non-military birth parent. In some cases, the Covered Service Member may be designated as the primary caregiver. Such cases may include, but are not limited to: situations where the Covered Service Member is the birthparent; dual military couples where one member of the couple is designated as the primary caregiver; the unavailability or incapacity of the birthparent if the birthparent is not a military member; the death of one of the parents; or other

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circumstances where the Covered Service Member must act as primary caregiver."

b. RFI #12: In March 2020, the Committee was briefed by the Military Services on the status of their Primary Caregiver Leave policies. During the briefing, the Marine Corps panelist shared that their Service was reviewing and considering the implementation of a one-year sabbatical following the birth or adoption of a child. The Committee requests a written response from the Marine Corps on the status of this initiative.

Response: Marine Corps options are still being developed for Commandant decision NLT July 2020. We look forward to sharing details once CMC is briefed.