

10 Jan 19

MEMORANDUM

From: Lieutenant Colonel Charles C. McLeod 1113765425/4402 USMC  
To: Captain William L. Rountree 1369406694/0302 USMC

Subj: DACOWITS DECEMBER 2018 QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

1. Purpose. To provide a response to Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service (DACOWITS) follow-up questions pertaining to request for information (RFI) #10: Breastfeeding and Lactation Support.

2. Questions and Responses

a. "Describe how your Service-branch, to include the Reserve and Guard components, are tracking the effectiveness of the Breastfeeding and Lactation Support Policies. Please describe methods of tracking policy and program compliance; how feedback is solicited from affected servicewomen; and what trends and constraints are noted from those who elect/don't elect to breastfeed their newborns."

(1) Policy compliance is achieved through open communication. Unit commanders promote and safeguard the physical well-being and general welfare of their Marines. Should they fail to do so, Marines may communicate grievances directly to the chain of command or to the Inspector General. Additionally, command processes are inspected regularly in conjunction with the Commanding General's Inspection Program.

(2) Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps (HQMC) has not conducted or commissioned an official study to identify trends and constraints associated with Marines' elections to breastfeed their newborns. Several surveys currently under development are designed to capture previously unsolicited feedback regarding Marine Corps culture. Such surveys may provide insight into parenthood and pregnancy in the Marine Corps, including, but not limited to, the challenges associated with breastfeeding and lactation support.

(3) HQMC collects feedback from Marines and Sailors annually. Pregnant and post-partum Marines are not distinguished from other Marines for survey purposes; however, the Marine Corps command climate survey provides opportunities

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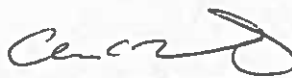
for pregnant and post-partum Marines to include free text responses to any survey question.

b. "During the Navy presentation on this topic, they highlighted having a 'Command Advisor on Pregnancy and Parenthood (CAPP).' This is a voluntary command role to ensure Sailors receive proper counseling and support to fully understand their rights, responsibilities and resources regarding pregnancy and as new parents. This is an impressive best practice. DACOWITS is interested in knowing what similar best practices for pregnancy and post-partum are in place by the other Military Services."

(1) The Marine Corps recognizes the benefits of breastfeeding to mothers and their children and has implemented two programs to support the establishment of a breastfeeding regimen. The New Parent Support Program promotes breastfeeding by providing support to mothers as they consider feeding options for their infants and assisting nursing Marines to overcome some of the challenges they may experience while breastfeeding. Services are free and available at all Marine Corps bases and stations. Some services are offered outside of normal duty hours to accommodate the needs of working parents. Additionally, the Breastfeeding Support Program promotes breastfeeding in the workplace by ensuring workplaces are free from environmental and occupational hazards.

(2) Although Marines at individual commands throughout the Marine Corps may voluntarily perform duties similar to the CAPP, HQMC has not formally established such an advisory position or mandated its use.

3. Point of contact is Lieutenant Colonel McLeod at DSN 278-9386/7, commercial (703) 784-9386/7, or fax (703) 784-9812.

  
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