

## INFORMATION PAPER

Department of the Army, G-1  
19 Nov 19

**SUBJECT:** DACOWITS December 2019 RFI 10: Primary Caregiver Leave & Caregiver Sabbatical

1. Purpose: To reply to the DACOWITS Primary Caregiver Leave & Caregiver Sabbatical RFI 10 for December 2019 Quarterly Business Meeting.

The Committee continues to be interested in the enhancement of parental leave policies to help encourage workforce recruitment and retention of Service members by making military benefits more competitive with private sector benefits.

**Question 10a:**

What is the current length of maternity/primary caregiver leave authorized for Service members following a birth or adoption?

**Response 10a:** Regular Army Soldiers on active duty, Reserve Component Soldiers performing Active Guard Reserve duty or full-time National Guard duty for a period in excess of 12 months, and Reserve Component Soldiers performing duty under a call or order to active service in excess of 12 months that have given birth are authorized 6 weeks non-chargeable maternity convalescent leave, and up to 6 weeks non-chargeable primary caregiver leave, for a maximum of 12 weeks maternity/primary caregiver leave.

**Question 10b:** Provide details on any analysis conducted on how the length of this leave impact retention. Detail any current or ongoing studies to assess whether this leave is having a positive impact on retaining servicewomen.

**Response 10b:** The Army currently has no retention studies focused on length of maternity/primary caregiver leave; however, the Army Talent Management Task Force, in coordination with the Army Research Institute, Army Analytics Group, and the Research Facilitation Laboratory is developing a combined Exit and Retention survey with an anticipated release of 2nd Quarter FY 2020. This survey will enable Soldiers to raise any concerns they have with the maternity/primary caregiver leave.

**Question 10c:** Provide details on any analysis that considers whether extending the leave beyond the current length could lead to the increased retention of servicewomen.

**Response 10c:** Following development of the combined exit/retention survey, the Army will identify trends and concerns in order to shape future policy.

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**Question 10d:** Address the benefits and/or potential risks to your Service if extended time off was offered to primary caregivers beyond the current authorized parental leave.

**Response 10d:** If extended time off was offered to primary caregivers beyond the current authorized parental leave, benefits could include additional bonding time between primary caregiver and child, increased recovery time following pregnancy, reduced stress levels of the primary caregiver, and people-focused marketing to increase recruitment and retention of service members. The potential risks could include decreased unit readiness, reduced opportunities for teamwork development, and less time available for individual professional development. As this is a new inquiry, however, the Army has not conducted a formal study to empirically ascertain actual data.