

Headquarters Marine Corps - Manpower & Reserve Affairs - Manpower Plans & Policy Division

Subj: DACOWITS DECEMBER 2019 RFI #1

1. Purpose. Provide written response to DACOWITS RFI #1.
2. Response to RFI #1

a. RFI A. Provide an update to your co-location policy, to include the status of action to address the DACOWITS' 2017 recommendations noted above. COMMENT. There have been no updates to personnel assignment policies. MCO 1300.8, Marine Corps Personnel Assignment Policy, was last updated on 18 September 2014. Current Marine Corps dual military co-location policy is consistent with the governing directive for dual military couple assignments, DoDI 1315.18, updated on 23 July 2018. The Marine Corps is prepared to review and comment on any official, specific DoD-proposed changes to policy regarding these issue.

b. RFI B. Provide policies or procedures pertaining to co-location for members of the Reserve and/or Guard when they have an Active Duty spouse. COMMENT.

(1) Service policy specific to Active Component (AC) and Active Reserve (AR) program Marines is Marine Corps Order (MCO) 1300.8 - Marine Corps Personnel Assignment Policy - <http://www.marines.mil/Portals/59/MCO%201300.8.pdf>. Per this policy, which conforms to Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1315.18, Procedures for Military Personnel Assignments, a "military couple" is defined as "service members married to each other, both of whom are on active duty in any of the Military Services." Further, non-AR Reserve Marines are generally only ordered to active duty at a particular location, for a specific duty, for a temporary period of time. Accordingly, co-location for members of the non-AR Reserve is not applicable for such particular circumstances. A dual military co-located couple:

(a) Are two active duty service members married to each other; active duty spouses. Military couples are not considered dependents of each other.

(b) Both active duty spouses are permanently assigned within close proximity to each other's duty station.

(c) Active duty spouses, not stationed within close proximity to each other's duty station may request a transfer for the purpose of establishing a joint household. Both service members must be married at the time that they request a transfer.

(2) Pursuant to the governing directive for dual military couple assignments (i.e., DoDI 1315.18 - Procedures for Military Personnel Assignments), the Marine Corps has instituted policy that presumes favorable consideration of requests received from Service members, married to each

other, to transfer for the purpose establishing a joint household when: a valid staffing requirement (grade and MOS) exists at or in close proximity to the location of the other service member, and the member has completed his/her currently prescribed tour.

(3) The presumption of favorable consideration to a co-location request is based upon the effort to minimize dual-military couple separations that may be longer than those normally encountered by Marines with non-military spouses. Further, the Marine Corps judiciously utilizes its authority to waive currently prescribed time-on-station/tour length requirements. However, there are circumstances that can complicate and/or prevent even the best efforts of the Service(s) to locate dual-military couples near each other, to include:

(a) The absence of a valid staffing requirement that matches a Marine's qualifications (i.e., grade and MOS) at the spouse's location.

(b) When one member of the couple is a member of another service (e.g., a Marine Recruiter assigned to a small Recruiting Station in an area without a Navy billet nearby).

(c) Inter-service coordination actions depend on both members of the couple notifying their respective manpower representatives.

(c) Normal career assignments, to include school, special duty assignments, and unaccompanied overseas tours, may take place in order to "enhance career attractiveness and professional development."

(d) The timing of a marriage may influence ability to co-locate. For example, if a Marine acquires a spouse by marrying another service member while on duty in an overseas area after the effective date of the Marine's orders, the originally assigned tour lengths and locations of the respective members (especially if there is an "inter-service marriage") may be a factor, unless one or both members request a tour conversion to serve the longer (accompanied) tour at that location.

(e) Cases where both military parents who do not desire to be co-located.

(4) Current assignment policy (i.e., MCO 1300.8) doesn't specifically address co-location of active duty dual-military parents, who are not married and share physical and legal custody of the same minor child(ren). However, CMC (MM and RA) have latitude to reasonably accommodate, on a case-by-case basis, co-location requests from unmarried dual-military parents who share legal and physical custody of a dependent child(ren).

(a) In some cases, this may not be necessary (e.g., a pregnant, single Marine, already co-located with the father, may simply request to convert her overseas unaccompanied tour to an accompanied tour, while the single father requests to extend his overseas tour).

(b) Circumstances, similar to those listed in paragraph 2.b(3), above, can complicate and/or prevent even the best efforts of the Service(s) to co-locate these parents (e.g., a single, pregnant Marine stationed in Virginia when the Marine father is stationed at a recruiting center in Kentucky, and neither Marine has enough contract time remaining to obligate

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for a PCS move due to service limitations as a function of not being selected for promotion).

(5) When possible, the Marine Corps utilizes its authority to waive currently prescribed time-on-station/tour length requirements to mitigate some circumstances that complicate co-location.