

# **Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS)**



**September 2022  
Request for Information**

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (MPE) Branch  
Manpower and Reserve Affairs  
Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps**



# Pregnancy in the Military RFI

**11. The Committee requests a briefing from each of the Military Services identifying initiatives and actions, anticipated or taken, to affect the Secretary's direction in the November 3, 2020, memorandum.**

a. All Service actions taken or anticipated to comply with the SecDef's direction, to include legislative changes made or proposed and the estimate time for implementation.

- **In 2021, the Service policy was changed to expand the post-partum exemption period from nine months to 12 months for servicewomen to return to compliance with weight standards and take fitness tests.**
- **The policy authorized a Servicewoman to combine annual leave and parental leave to expand time off after birth and removed deployment limitations for pregnant Service members.**
- **We are currently, actively participating with the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and other Services on drafting Department of Defense Instructions (DoDIs) for the expansion of the Military Parental Leave Program and implementation of Bereavement Leave.**

b. Please provide a copy of the follow-on briefing provided to the SecDef pursuant to his November 2020 memorandum.

- **See enclosure 1**



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c. How will the Services monitor, track, and enforce policy compliance?

- **The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (MPE) Branch uses the Prohibited Activities and Conduct Prevention and Response Program (PAC) functional area checklist, generated using Marine Corps Order (MCO) 5354.1F requirements, to assess Service organizations' compliance to the MCO during annual Inspector General of the Marine Corps evaluations.**
- **This order identifies pregnancy as a personnel status category protected from discrimination, harassment, bullying, and other prohibited behaviors. We will continue to periodically review the applicable policies, including via unit inspections, to ensure awareness, understanding, and compliance of the policies.**



# Pregnancy in the Military RFI

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d. When will/did training begin to educate Service members that pregnancy discrimination is prohibited and on how to address pregnancy in their units? What audiences will be offered this training? Does this training include how to prevent and mitigate negative attitudes and bias toward pregnant and postpartum servicewomen?

- **Annual PAC training was updated in April 2021, when the MCO was updated from 5354.1E to 5354.1F to align Marine Corps policy with the SecDef's November memo.**
- **This training is offered to every unit throughout the Service, and all personnel are required to attend their unit's respective periods of instruction.**
- **The training includes slides identifying how PAC behaviors, and perceptions of a command's climate, affect the unit, overall; as well as, the effects PAC behaviors have on individuals and units.**



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**11. The Committee requests a briefing from each of the Military Services identifying initiatives and actions, anticipated or taken, to affect the Secretary's direction in the November 3, 2020, memorandum. (cont.)**

e. Does your Service have any measures in place to track career progression and promotion of pregnant and postpartum servicewomen? If so, what are they? What are the trends?

- **The Marine Corps does not have any measures in place to track career progression or promotion of pregnant/postpartum Marines.**



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f. Has your Service conducted or commissioned any surveys, studies, or taken other measures to solicit feedback from servicewomen about workplace and career experience as a result of their pregnancy and/or postpartum leave and/or breastfeeding/lactation needs? If so, what were the key findings?

- **In 2018 and 2020, the Marine Corps participated in the Fiscal Year 2017 Department of Defense Workplace and Equal Opportunity Report of Active Component Members and the Fiscal Year 2019 Department of Defense Workplace and Equal Opportunity Report of Reserve Component Members data calls, respectively.**
- **The evaluations were focused on racial/ethnic harassment/discrimination rather than gender relations/perceptions.**

**Department-Wide Policy Review for Career Enhancement of Pregnant U.S. Service Members -- Actions Complete**

#	Directive / Policy / Instruction <i>The Issue</i>	Changes Made to a Directive, Policy, Instruction, etc.	Outcome/Impact of Implemented Changes(s) (include factors that were mitigated) <i>The Result</i>	Supporting Notes/Comments
1	MCO 5000.12F (Marine Corps Policy Concerning Parenthood & Pregnancy)	Review completed. With the exception of the deployment policy, pregnancy recovery time and extended time off during the postpartum period (Tab C), no changes are required.	Recently published MCO 5000.12F ensures, to the greatest extent practicable, that pregnant Marines' careers are not impacted negatively. Few restrictions are required during the normal pregnancy of a physically fit, well-trained Marine working in a safe environment; however, pregnant Marines shall not be assigned to duties that may adversely affect their health, the health of	
2	MCO 1700.27B CH-1 (MCCS POLICY MANUAL)	Review completed. No changes required.	This MCO advises Marines that appropriate family life education and counseling will be made available at MCCS Marine and Family Programs, specifically Semper Fit Health Promotion, throughout the Marine Corps to assist in planning for and carrying out the responsibilities of parenthood.	
3	MCO 1900.15 CH-1 (SEPARATION AND RETIREMENT MANUAL)	Review completed. No changes required.	This MCO advises Marines that they can request voluntary separation due to extenuating circumstances which preclude the Marine from further service.	
4	MCO 11000.22 CH -1 (BACHELOR AND FAMILY HOUSING MANAGEMENT)	Review completed. No changes required.	This MCO advises single Marines who are pregnant that they may request government family housing, based on availability, before the birth of the child; however, they are not authorized to occupy housing until after the child is born (unless there is excess housing), nor are they given special treatment.	
5	MCO 1700.23F (REQUEST MAST)	Review completed. No changes required.	This MCO provides direction for appeals to caregiver designations or disputes regarding the sufficiency of underlying justifications shall be resolved in accordance with this order.	
6	MCO 1610.7A (PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM)	Review completed. No changes required.	This MCO directs that evaluations and fitness reports will be based on demonstrated performance. In accordance with this order, medical limitations and/or assignment restrictions, or periods of absence because of pregnancy, associated medical care, or convalescent leave, in and of themselves, will not be the basis for downgrading marks or adverse comments.	
7	MCO 1050.3J (LEAVE, LIBERTY, AND ADMIN ABSENCE)	Review completed. No changes required.	This MCO directs that during pregnancy, Marines will continue to perform their duties as long as they are medically fit to do so. Also, convalescent leave following childbirth will be 42 days. The convalescent leave may be extended on the recommendation of the attending physician if the Marine's medical condition warrants. A Marine may return to duty voluntarily sooner than 42	
8	MCO 6100.14 (MARINE CORPS PHYSICAL FITNESS PROGRAM)	Review completed. No changes required.	This MCO informs pregnant Marines of the resources available at the installation to support a pregnant and post-partum physical fitness program (e.g., Semper Fit strength and conditioning coaches, force fitness instructors, civilian certified athletic trainers, etc.).	
9	MCO 1500.62 (FORCE FITNESS INSTRUCTOR PROGRAM)	Review completed. No changes required.	This MCO provides pregnant Marines with available physical fitness resources (e.g., Semper Fit, unit force fitness instructors, etc.).	
10	MCO 1040.31 (ENLISTED RETENTION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM)	Review completed. No changes required.	This MCO advises enlisted Marines, including Active Reserve (AR) Marines, who are pregnant, that they may reenlist or extend, provided they are otherwise qualified.	
11	MCO 5800.16 (LEGAL SUPPORT AND ADMINISTRATION MANUAL)	Review completed. No changes required.	This MCO advises Marines about the legal assistance services relating to domestic relations and family law.	
12	MCO 1020.34H (MARINE CORPS UNIFORM REGULATIONS)	Review completed. No changes required.	This MCO authorizes pregnant Marines to wear the maternity work uniform and/or the maternity service uniform.	
13	MCO 1740.13D (FAMILY CARE PLANS)	Review completed. No changes required.	This order advises Marines with dependents, regardless of marital status (single, married, or dual military couples) that they are responsible for initiating and maintaining a formalized Family Care Plan (FCP) .	

**Department-Wide Policy Review for Career Enhancement of Pregnant U.S. Service Members -- Actions Pending**

#	Directive / Policy / Instruction <i>Assessment of the Issue</i>	Recommended Change(s) to a Current Directive, Policy, Instruction, etc. <i>Assessment Findings</i>	Barriers to Recommended Changes(s) (budgetary, manpower, system constraints/limitations, etc) <i>Potential Roadblocks</i>	Military Department or OPR-level Action Required	OSD-level Action Required	Estimated Timeline Required to Implement	Supporting Notes/Comments
1	MCO 3000.13B (Readiness Reporting)	Per MCO 3000.13B, non-deployable personnel include personnel who are not medically ready or personnel on limited duty/temporary limited duty. Although MCO 3000.13B does not specifically address pregnancy as a deployment disqualifier, pregnancy is considered a medical condition, thus pregnant personnel are non-	There will likely be limitations on deployment locations	DON	Yes	Once DoD/DON changes its policy, the Marine Corps can update this order	
	MCO 5000.12F (Marine Corps Policy Concerning Parenthood & Pregnancy)	To meet the intent of the SecDef memo, the Marine Corps will need to change Ch 2, para 6.b. which states "a pregnant Marine is non-deployable. A Marine assigned to a deployed Marine unit, including aboard ship, who is confirmed pregnant shall be sent to the closest U.S. MTF that can provide OB/GYN care as soon as reasonably	There will likely be limitations on deployment locations	DON	Yes	Once DoD/DON changes its policy, the Marine Corps can update this order	DON, SECNAVINST 1000.10B informs MCO 5000.12F and the non-deployability of pregnant service members
2	MCO 5000.12F (Marine Corps Policy Concerning Parenthood & Pregnancy)	Military Parental Leave Program: The Marine Corps is currently considering options (e.g., Career Intermission Program) to extend the time off after the birth/adoption of a child. Recommend that DoD consider options to provide additional time off to new parents.	Title 10 constraints	N/a	Yes	TBD	
3	MCO 6110.3A CH-1 (MARINE CORPS BODY COMPOSITION AND MILITARY APPEARANCE PROGRAM)	The MCO states that "Pregnant Marines who have recently delivered, who are otherwise fully qualified for and desire reenlistment, but who exceed acceptable weight standards shall be extended for the maximum of up to nine months after delivery." The Marine Corps Human Performance Division is currently reviewing this policy	None	N/a	N/a	TBD	
4	MCO 6100.13A CH-1 (MARINE CORPS PHYSICAL FITNESS AND COMBAT FITNESS TESTS)	The MCO currently states "A Marine is exempt from physical fitness standards until at least nine months after the date of the birth event. Following the nine-month exemption, the Marine is expected to meet physical fitness standards at the next regularly scheduled unit physical fitness". The Marine Corps Human Performance	None	N/a	N/a	TBD	