

DACOWITS RFI # 7 (SEPTEMBER 2023)

Subj: DACOWITS RFI # 7 - PREGNANCY IN THE MILITARY

RFI # 7: In December 2017, via RFI 4, the Committee asked about the Military Services related to pregnant/postpartum residency at development professional military education (PME) schools, to include Command and General Staff College, War College, Senior Enlisted Academies, Top Level Schools, or the Service equivalent. The Committee remains concerned about whether pregnant or postpartum servicewomen are being permitted to attend PME. In 2022, the Army published a new directive titled, "Army Directive 2022-06 (Parenthood, Pregnancy, and Postpartum)," which outlines that a pregnancy profile will not inhibit women from attending PME. In addition, in cases in which fitness testing is required to satisfy eligibility and/or graduation requirements, a passing physical fitness test of record dated within the last 24 months must receive a waiver from the school's commandant.

The Committee requests an updated written response from the Marine Corps, regarding current policies. Provide the following:

7a. Are there any barriers, prohibitions, or other restrictions preventing pregnant or postpartum servicewomen from attending PME?

Response 7a. There are currently no barriers, prohibitions, or other restrictions that prevent pregnant or postpartum service women from attending professional military education (PME). Per MCO 5100.12F, pregnancy is not a factor in selection for resident yearlong PME or similar programs; nor does a pregnancy that occurs during the academic year constitute a basis for disenrollment from resident programs.

7b. Is completion of a fitness test or fitness assessment waived, if not an essential element of the PME?

Response 7b. Marines are expected to complete a fitness test in accordance with the PME's program of instruction and graduation requirements. Fitness tests and waivers are conducted in accordance with MCO 6100.13A Ch/4. Marines who are pregnant/post-partum are exempt from fitness tests for twelve months.

7c. Does the Marine Corps have a similar regulation to the Army's which delineates PME requirements for pregnant or postpartum servicewomen.

Response 7c. All Marines are held to the same PME standards.

7d. Who has oversight of school commandant policies/regulations related to the approval/disapproval of eligibility and/or graduation requirements for pregnant or postpartum servicewomen? Who has authority to grant fitness waivers? Is there an appeal process?

Response 7d. The Commanding General (CG), Education Command (EDCOM) governs all PME schools. In policy letter 3-23, EDCOM provides guidance for military parental leave program while enrolled in resident PME programs. CG, EDCOM is allowed to grant waivers in accordance with MCO 6100.13A.