

2024 DACOWITS' Recommendations:

1	The Secretary of Defense should expand health care practitioner resources and accelerate the deployment of creative strategies (including Artificial Intelligence) at Military Entrance Processing Stations to ensure female applicants remain engaged and are not discouraged due to lengthy medical processing times in this competitive civilian job market.
2	The Secretary of Defense should provide detailed waiver considerations for the top five female-specific disqualifying conditions to maximize female applicant qualifications while not forsaking health issues that may affect their future readiness to serve or deploy.
3	The Secretary of Defense should update early pregnancy loss accession policies to be based on an applicant's health care provider's recommendation rather than fixed timelines that vary across the Military Services.
4	The Secretary of Defense should expand and update guidance and provide oversight on assignment considerations, processes, and measures of effectiveness for geographic stability efforts to enable the Military Services to evaluate their strategies and maximize their effect on retention of Service members, especially women.
5	The Secretary of Defense should expand and update guidance and provide oversight on assignment considerations, processes, and measures of effectiveness for co-location efforts, including Inter-Service co-location, to enable the Military Services to evaluate their strategies and maximize their effect on retention of Service members, especially women.
6	The Secretary of Defense should expand the co-location policy (Department of Defense Instruction 1315.18) to include any active-duty military parent, regardless of marital status, who shares parental custody of minor child(ren) and desires to be assigned within the same geographic location as the co-parent for the benefit of the minor child(ren), similar to the Air Force's Court-Ordered Child Custody Assignment or Deferment Consideration Program.
7	The Secretary of Defense should direct the Military Services to establish educational programs that inform entry-level women (enlisted and officer candidates) on the career opportunities that were opened to women in 2016. This effort should include clear metrics to review the effectiveness of these educational programs.
8	The Secretary of Defense should direct the Military Services to incorporate best practices from previous integration efforts to increase women's participation in career fields that were opened to women in 2016.
CC	Women, Peace, and Security
9	The Secretary of Defense should include "restricted" reports in the calculation and reporting of total domestic abuse incidents to provide more accurate, comprehensive, and transparent reporting of domestic abuse incidents.

2024 DACOWITS' Recommendations:

10	The Secretary of Defense should (i) define the “reasonable suspicion” standard and criteria used to screen initial domestic abuse reports, and (ii) institute a quality control process to ensure the standardized criteria are being applied correctly and consistently by Family Advocacy Program officials.
11	The Secretary of Defense should eliminate use of the “met criteria” algorithm as a means of excluding domestic abuse reports.
12	The Secretary of Defense should (i) standardize the domestic abuse-related fatality review process to ensure consistent, reliable data collection and reporting across all Military Services, and (ii) require reporting and disclosure of all domestic abuse-associated suicides, of both victims and offenders, in Service reporting to DoD and in DoD’s annual reporting to Congress.
13	The Secretary of Defense should track the utilization rates of installation/Service domestic abuse hotlines to improve reporting and better assess staffing and resource requirements.
14	The Secretary of Defense should address the significant Family Advocacy Program position staffing shortages by, among other means, setting competitive pay rates, grading positions sufficiently and consistently, and identifying other benefit or incentive programs to bolster recruiting and retention of family advocacy and clinical provider professionals.
15	The Secretary of Defense should expedite completion of the ongoing project to design, develop, and implement a single, comprehensive, integrated, centralized domestic abuse database to track all allegations of domestic abuse, including fatality incidents, from first report (both restricted and unrestricted) through final disposition.
16	The Secretary of Defense should revise and expand DD Form 2697 to capture all data required to comprehensively assess reports of domestic abuse including, information on the nature of the abuse, the victim, the alleged offender, medical services offered/required, services offered/referred (to include referrals to civilian resources), victim safety assessment (to include offering and/or acceptance of a military protective order), investigative information, and case outcome information.
17	The Secretary of Defense should utilize relevant, existing, regularly fielded scientific DoD surveys to identify and assess the prevalence of domestic abuse and intimate partner violence in the military population.
18	The Secretary of Defense should develop and implement a method to track domestic abuse offender treatment and outcomes to include whether offenders opt to receive treatment (or not), type of treatment intervention received, whether they completed treatment (or not), and outcomes in terms of recidivism.
19	The Secretary of Defense should conduct a needs assessment to determine demand, optimal operating hours geared to Service member availability, and staffing requirements for walk-in contraceptive clinics to ensure timely access to Service members’ contraceptive methods of choice.

2024 DACOWITS' Recommendations:

20	The Secretary of Defense should implement the 2016 and 2017 National Defense Authorization Act mandates requiring (i) Service members receive comprehensive contraceptive counseling, and (ii) DoD track whether the counseling was received.
21	The Secretary of Defense should ensure that primary health care providers are properly educated on all contraceptive options available for Service members, and trained to provide compassionate, unbiased, comprehensive, and patient-centered counseling about available options.
22	The Secretary of Defense should accelerate and expand availability of telehealth options for Service members to access reproductive health care, family planning, and infertility treatment information and counseling.
23	The Secretary of Defense should direct a needs assessment to determine appropriate staffing and requirements for women's health care providers to improve access to and availability of women's health care resources.
24	The Secretary of Defense should direct servicewomen's health care training, adequate to achieve proficiency, for all primary care managers, unit-embedded health care providers, and deployable health care providers to improve access to and availability of women's health care resources.
25	The Secretary of Defense should modify policy to (i) exempt obstetrics/gynecology (OB/GYN) care from the Primary Care Manager referral requirement, and (ii) allow active duty servicewomen to choose a provider (including off-base referrals) for OB/GYN care, to reduce wait times, and improve access to and availability of women's health care resources.
26	The Secretary of Defense should direct the Military Services to allow servicewomen in deployable units to choose a health care provider in another unit for women's health care to promote professional decorum and preserve intra-unit relationships.
27	The Secretary of Defense should identify the demand for and current use of fertility services (covered and non-covered) and investigate options to expand fertility service coverage for all Service members, including cryopreservation, regardless of whether the need is due to a Service-related injury or illness.
28	The Secretary of Defense should make information on fertility services readily available through Military OneSource to enable robust use of such services and promote understanding of resources offered.
CC	Career Progression