

Military Service by Transgender Persons and Persons with Gender Dysphoria

Fact Sheet for: Military Recruiters

Things to Know:

- The new Department of Defense policy with respect to *Military Service by Transgender Persons and Persons with Gender Dysphoria* is effective April 12, 2019.
- All persons will continue to be treated with dignity and respect.
- The new policy is NOT a ban on the accession of transgender persons. In fact, it prohibits the denial of accession solely on the basis of gender identity and ensures equal application of military standards regardless of gender identity in order to maintain military effectiveness and lethality.
- Nothing in the new policy will prevent transgender persons who meet all standards from serving.
- All Service members must adhere to the standards associated with their biological sex. The new policy does not require transgender Service members to conceal their gender identity.
- The new policy allows persons with a history of gender dysphoria to join the military if they can demonstrate a period of 36 months of stability in their biological sex. Persons who have a history of gender dysphoria and cannot meet the stability requirements or who have a history of sex reassignment or genital reconstruction surgery are disqualified.
- Applicants who access on or after April 12, 2019 will be accessed or commissioned based on the new policy, provided they are medically qualified in all respects in accordance with DoDI 6130.03.
- Applicants who are accessed prior to April 12, 2019, and are medically qualified in their preferred gender are exempt from the new policy and subject to the standards of the 2016 policy.

FOR A COPY OF THE DIRECTIVE-TYPE MEMORANDUM 19-004, GO TO:
[HTTPS://WWW.ESD.WHS.MIL/DD/](https://www.esd.whs.mil/DD/)

FOR ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS: CONSULT YOUR CHAIN OF COMMAND AND/OR YOUR
SERVICE CENTRAL COORDINATION CELL

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This chart shows the differences between the Defense Department's 2016 transgender policy and the 2018 update to that policy.

Service Members

Transgender with No Diagnosis or History of Gender Dysphoria

| Pre-2016 | 2016 | 2018 |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Generally disqualified | May serve in biological sex | May serve in biological sex |

Service Member with Diagnosis of Gender Dysphoria

| Pre-2016 | 2016 | 2018 |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Generally disqualified | May serve in preferred gender, upon completing transition | Unless exempt, may serve in biological sex. If unable or unwilling to serve in biological sex, separation procedures may apply |

New Applicants

Transgender with No Diagnosis or History of Gender Dysphoria

| Pre-2016 | 2016 | 2018 |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Generally disqualified | May serve in biological sex | May serve in biological sex |

Applicant with Diagnosis or History of Gender Dysphoria

| Pre-2016 | 2016 | 2018 |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Generally disqualified | Presumptively disqualified unless stable for 18 months in preferred gender or biological sex | Presumptively disqualified unless stable for 36 months and willing and able to serve in biological sex |

Applicant with History of Medical Transition Treatment *

| Pre-2016 | 2016 | 2018 |
|------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Generally disqualified | Presumptively disqualified unless stable for 18 months in preferred gender or biological sex | Presumptively disqualified |

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Gender Dysphoria



A marked incongruence between one's experienced/expressed gender and assigned gender. Associated with clinically significant distress and impairment of functioning.



Biological Sex



A person's biological status as male or female, based on chromosomes, gonads, hormones, and genitals.



Exempt Persons



Service members who joined the military in their preferred gender or were diagnosed with gender dysphoria before the 2018 policy took effect are exempt.



Waivers



Military services may grant waivers on a case-by-case basis.

* Medical Transition Treatment: Cross-sex hormone therapy, or sex reassignment

THIS GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION MAY NOT REPRESENT ALL CASES OR CIRCUMSTANCES.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Does the new policy (2018 policy) mean the Services will stop recruiting transgender applicants immediately?

A: No. Anyone who can meet the military's demanding standards for military service and readiness without special accommodations can and should be able to serve. Under both the 2016 policy and the new policy, transgender persons are not disqualified from service solely on account of their gender identity. Pursuant to DoD Directive-Type Memorandum (DTM) 19-004, "Military Service by Transgender Persons and Persons with Gender Dysphoria," DoD accessions personnel will consider the following:

- The Services will continue to recruit and access transgender applicants who meet all applicable standards, holding them to the same physical and mental fitness standards associated with their biological sex as everyone else who wants to join the military.
- Exempt Individuals. Applicants who are exempt from the new policy in accordance with DTM 19-004 will be appointed, enlisted, or inducted into the Military Services based on the medical standards in place under the 2016 policy, provided they are medically and otherwise qualified in all other respects in accordance with DoDI 6130.03 and other pertinent guidance. Individuals are considered exempt from the new policy if, prior to the effective date of the new policy, they:
 - Entered into a contract for enlistment into the Military Services using a DD Form 4, or an equivalent, or were selected for entrance into an officer commissioning program through a selection board or similar process before the effective date of the 2018 policy; **and,**
 - Were medically qualified for Military Service or selected for entrance into an officer commissioning program in their preferred gender in accordance with DTM-16-005; or
 - As a Service member, received a diagnosis of gender dysphoria from, or had such diagnosis confirmed by, a military medical provider.
- Non-Exempt Individuals. Applicants are not exempt from the new policy if they do not meet the exemption criteria above. Individuals who are not exempt and are otherwise qualified pursuant to DoDI 6130.03 will be accessed or commissioned in accordance with DTM 19-004. (See *Military Service by Transgender Persons and Persons with Gender Dysphoria Fact Sheet (for Applicants)*)

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Q: What should a recruiter do if a transgender applicant wants to enlist?

A: The recruiter should explain the new policy (2018 policy) for military accession as set forth in DTM 19-004. This is also a good time to ensure the applicant understands all requirements and to assist him or her as you would any other applicant.

Q: Is a transgender individual who met the requirements under the 2016 policy and is now in the Delayed Entry Program (DEP) disqualified under the new policy?

A: Applicants who signed a contract (such as a DD Form 4, Enlistment/Reenlistment Document) prior to the effective date of the new policy and were medically qualified for service in their preferred gender in accordance with DTM-16-005 when they entered into the DEP are considered exempt under the new policy, as are officer candidates who were selected for a commissioning program prior to the effective date of the new policy and were medically qualified under DTM-16-005.

Q: Does the new accession policy mentioned above apply to the Service Academies, the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), or other officer commissioning programs?

A: Yes. The gender identity of an otherwise qualified individual will not bar them from enlisting in the military, from admission to the Military Service Academies (MSA), or from participating in ROTC or any other accession program. However, unless they are exempt under the new policy, they must adhere to the accession standards in accordance with DTM 19-004 and be willing and able to meet accession, retention, medical, and sex-based standards associated with their biological sex prior to being accepted into a MSA, or ROTC program, or commissioned into a Military Service.

Q: Will the accession standards for the 2016 policy apply to exempt Service members who are currently serving but who are required to meet accession standards for commissioning after the effective date of the 2018 policy?

A: Yes. Service members who are serving and are exempt but seek to commission, and thus must satisfy accession standards to do so, after the effective date of the 2018 policy shall be subject to the accession standards under the 2016 policy.