



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

MAY 15 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness: Implementation Guidance

- References:
- (a) Supreme Court Order in *Shilling v. United States*, No. 25-cv-241-BHS (W.D. Wash.)
 - (b) Official Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum, "Compliance with Federal Court Order in *Talbott v. United States*, No. 25-cv-00240 (D.D.C.)," March 21, 2025 (rescinded)
 - (c) Official Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum, "Compliance with Federal Court Order in *Shilling v. United States*, No. 25-cv-241-BHS (W.D. Wash.)," March 28, 2025 (rescinded)
 - (d) Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Memorandum, "Additional Guidance on Treatment of Gender Dysphoria," April 21, 2025 (rescinded)
 - (e) Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Implementing Policy on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness," May 8, 2025
 - (f) Executive Order 14183, "Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness," January 27, 2025
 - (g) Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness," February 7, 2025
 - (h) Official Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum, "Additional Guidance on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness," February 26, 2025
 - (i) Official Performing the Duties of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Memorandum, "Clarifying Guidance of Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness: Retention and Accession Waivers," March 4, 2025
 - (j) Official Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum, "Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness: Military Department Identification," March 21, 2025
 - (k) Department of Defense Instruction 6025.19, "Individual Medical Readiness Program," July 13, 2022
 - (l) Department of Defense Manual 6025.18, "Implementation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule in DoD Health Care Programs," March 13, 2019

On May 6, 2025, the United States Supreme Court issued reference (a) in the case of *Shilling v. United States*. As a result, the March 27, 2025, preliminary injunction entered by the

United States District Court for the Western District of Washington, case No. 2:25-cv-241, is stayed; the injunction issued in *Talbott v. United States* was also stayed by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. As a result, references (b), (c), and (d) are rescinded.

As directed by the Secretary of Defense in reference (e), references (f)-(j) are effective with the following modification and direction.

Voluntary Separation. Pursuant to reference (e), Service members who have previously self-identified for voluntary separation, or who now come forward seeking voluntary separation, may be processed; such persons must come forward and request voluntary separation before the deadline established by reference (e), but such processing does not need to be completed before that deadline. The Military Departments will establish the process and procedures to require medical verification for Service members requesting voluntary separation pursuant to this policy to establish that they meet the separation criteria of a current diagnosis or history of, or exhibiting symptoms consistent with, gender dysphoria.

Military Department Identification. Reference (j) was not previously implemented due to the preliminary injunction issued in *Talbott v. United States*, No. 1:25-cv-240-ACR (D.D.C. March 18, 2025). This memorandum is now in effect with the following clarification:

The primary method of identifying, for involuntary administrative separation processing, Service members who have a current diagnosis or history of, or exhibiting symptoms consistent with, gender dysphoria — and who are no longer eligible for military service — will be in through compliance with reference (k), the Individual Medical Readiness (IMR) program and any Military Service-specific IMR guidance. As outlined in references (j) and (k), the assessment of medical readiness will be conducted through the DoD Periodic Health Assessment.

In accordance with reference (j), the Secretaries of the Military Departments will direct unit commanders — working in coordination with supporting medical assets — to ensure Service members comply with their IMR program obligations¹ and will immediately commence the identification of affected Service members. Commanders who are aware of Service members in their units with gender dysphoria, a history of gender dysphoria, or symptoms consistent with gender dysphoria will direct individualized medical record reviews of such Service members to confirm compliance with medical standards under the IMR program.

Consistent with existing law and Department policy, including reference (l), commanders shall protect the privacy of protected health information they receive under this policy in the same manner as they would with any other protected health information. Such health information shall be restricted to personnel with a specific need to know; that is, access to information must be necessary for the conduct of official duties.

¹ In accordance with reference (k), as a condition of continued participation in military service, Service members have a responsibility to report medical issues that may affect their readiness to deploy, ability to perform their assigned mission, or fitness for retention in military service to their chain of command.

During the voluntary separation eligibility period, the Military Departments will also begin identifying Service members pursuant to reference (j), as modified in this memorandum. On conclusion of the voluntary separation eligibility period, the Military Departments will initiate involuntary separation proceedings for Service members identified pursuant to reference (j).

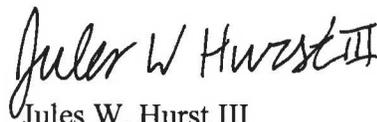
Separation Proceedings. Any Service member affected by the Department's gender dysphoria policy and not granted a waiver pursuant to reference (i) who has not sought voluntary separation will be processed for involuntary separation. Enlisted Service members will be processed for separation prior to the expiration of the member's term of service under Secretarial Plenary Authority following a determination that doing so is in the best interest of the relevant Military Service, using the JFF separation program designator code. Officers will be processed for separation on the basis that their continued service is not clearly consistent with the interests of national security using the JDK separation program designator code.

Service members discharged under this policy are ineligible for reentry unless a waiver is granted pursuant to reference (i). Service members will receive reentry code (RE-3) to reflect that they will not be considered fully qualified for reentry or continued service. Service members discharged under this policy are ineligible to serve in a Reserve Component.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments may delegate in writing separation authority under this policy to an official who is Presidentially Appointed, Senate-Confirmed. Further delegation is not authorized.

Separation Benefits and Services. Service members undergoing separation in accordance with reference (h) will be provided with benefits and support services to facilitate a shift from military service to civilian life. These individuals are entitled to a range of benefits, including pre-separation counseling, participation in the Transition Assistance Program, temporary healthcare coverage, employment assistance, financial counseling, and community reintegration services. Service members are strongly encouraged to utilize these resources. Service members separated under this policy are not authorized to participate in SkillBridge, which is a discretionary program.

Reporting. Pursuant to reference (h), the first compliance report is due no later than June 15, 2025. A template will be provided and tasked in the Correspondence and Task Management System (CATMS) no later than May 23, 2025.



Jules W. Hurst III
Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of
Defense for Personnel and Readiness

cc:
Commandant of the Coast Guard
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs
Director, Defense Health Agency
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Services Policy and Oversight
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy
Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1, U.S. Army
Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, U.S. Marine Corps
Chief of Naval Personnel, U.S. Navy
Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, U.S. Air Force
Deputy Chief of Space Operations, Personnel
Director for Manpower and Personnel, J1
Surgeon General of the Army
Surgeon General of the Navy
Surgeon General of the Air Force