



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

JUN 13 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND
READINESS
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR LEGISLATIVE
AFFAIRS
ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PUBLIC
AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: Establishment of the Military Service Recruitment Task Force

This memorandum establishes the Military Service Recruitment Task Force (RTF) to analyze the recruiting environment and develop solutions that support Department of Defense (DoD) objectives to recruit and sustain the All-Volunteer Force.

Given the recent positive momentum, the Department seeks to capitalize on the gains made in recruiting since the election of President Trump in November 2024. By analyzing the current recruiting efforts and trends, the Military Service RTF will ensure that the Department stands ready to consistently attract, prospect, and retain talent to meet current and future force requirements. Changing environmental factors demand a targeted and strategic approach to strengthen recruiting efforts across the Department.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) and the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ATSD(PA)) will co-chair the RTF. Together, they will develop an integrated strategy that aligns policy, communications, and outreach initiatives. The following officials will provide the specified support to the RTF:

- a. USD(P&R). Provide subject matter experts, data, and policy guidance to achieve the RTF's objectives.
- b. ATSD(PA). Offer subject matter expertise and recommendations to enhance DoD communication and public engagement in recruiting efforts.
- c. Secretaries of the Military Departments. Deliver subject matter expertise, insights, data, and operational coordination to ensure alignment with Service-level needs. Specifically, the Military Departments shall provide:
 1. A subject matter expert in public affairs from each Military Service,
 2. A subject matter expert in recruitment marketing from each Military Service, and
 3. Subject matter experts in recruiting policy, operations and oversight from each Military Service.
- d. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs (ASD(LA)). Provide subject matter expertise to address Congressional interests and contribute insights for legislative proposals.



- e. DoD General Counsel. Provide legal review and advice to ensure RTF initiatives, strategies, and communications comply with applicable laws, regulations, and policies.

The RTF will provide actionable recommendations to my office on a rolling basis focused on:

- a. Synchronizing recruiting messaging across the accession enterprise.
- b. Identifying innovative strategies to expand eligibility for and interest in military service.
- c. Using data-driven insights to optimize recruiting outreach efforts.
- d. Removing barriers that hinder recruitment and onboarding processes.

The RTF will provide the following reports:

- a. Within 30 days, an overall assessment of the current recruiting environment.
- b. Within 60 days, a list of proposed policy changes and legislative proposals addressing recruiting challenges, developed in coordination with ASD(LA).
- c. Within 90 days, a communication and engagement plan supporting marketing and advertising efforts by the Military Services and the Joint Advertising, Market Research and Studies program. This plan will incorporate the 2025 250th birthdays of the Navy, and Marine Corps, along with America's 250th birthday in 2026.

The RTF will report to my office through the USD(P&R) and ATSD(PA). It will conduct periodic reviews to assess progress and adjust its strategy, composition, or scope, as needed.

The RTF will engage internal and external stakeholders as needed. Unless otherwise directed, it will remain in effect for 12 months from the date of this memorandum.

Within two weeks, recipients will identify representatives at the paygrade O-6, GS-15, or equivalent level to participate in the RTF; all representatives must be Service members on active duty or full-time civilian employees, or permanent part-time civilian employees. Individuals on the RTF will spend on average 10 - 15 hours a week focused on RTF duties. Please provide names and contact information to Ms. Abbey D. Lower, at (703) 693-5388 or abbey.d.lower.civ@mail.mil.

