



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON

26 MAY 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Army Directive 2016-19 (Retaining a Quality Noncommissioned Officer Corps)

1. References:

- a. Army Regulation (AR) 135-18 (The Active Guard Reserve (AGR) Program), 1 November 2004.
- b. AR 135-178 (Enlisted Administrative Separations), 18 March 2014.
- c. AR 140-111 (U.S. Army Reserve Reenlistment Program), 9 May 2007, Rapid Action Revision Issued 6 September 2011.
- d. AR 600-8-19 (Enlisted Promotions and Reductions), 18 December 2015.
- e. AR 601-280 (Army Retention Program), 1 April 2016.
- f. AR 635-200 (Active Duty Enlisted Administrative Separations), 6 June 2005, Rapid Action Revision No.3 Issued 6 September 2011.

2. The policies in this directive revise the Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Corps' developmental timelines and will ensure that the NCOs with the most potential have an avenue for continued service. By retaining those NCOs who have exhibited the highest caliber attributes expected of a professional, all-volunteer force, our professional NCO Corps will remain the "backbone" of our great Army.

3. The policies in this directive apply to Soldiers serving in the Regular Army (RA), Army National Guard (ARNG)/Army National Guard of the United States (ARNGUS), and U.S. Army Reserve (USAR), including NCOs serving under the AGR Program.

4. The following policy changes are approved for implementation as indicated:

- a. Retention Control Points (RCPs) (apply to RA and USAR/ARNGUS Soldiers serving under the AGR program in a Title 10 status). Soldiers may perform service on active duty (provided they are not barred from continued service or otherwise separated) up to the following RCPs or age 60, whichever occurs first. This includes all senior NCOs selected by a Headquarters, Department of the Army centralized promotion board convened after the date of this directive. Soldiers who were 40 years of age or older on the date of their enlistment may exceed age 60 to complete the minimum time for regular or non-regular retirement for their respective component.

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**Army RCPs**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Total Years Active Service</b>
Private/Private First Class	5
Corporal/Specialist (including those promotable)	8
Sergeant (including those promotable)	14
Staff Sergeant (including those promotable)	20
Sergeant First Class (including those promotable)	24
First Sergeant/Master Sergeant	26
First Sergeant/Master Sergeant (promotable)	30
Command Sergeant Major/Sergeant Major	30

**Notes:**

1. Active service is defined as service on active duty.
2. Command sergeants major (CSMs) and sergeants major (SGMs) (at Headquarters, Department of the Army and Army Commands) serving in nominative positions where the CSM/SGM is rated by a general officer, member of the Senior Executive Service, or equivalent, or is serving as CSM at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy or as Executive Officer to the Sergeant Major of the Army are authorized to serve beyond 30 years total active service while serving in the position. The Vice Chief of Staff of the Army must approve exceptions for operational reasons. Upon leaving a position which authorizes service beyond 30 years, NCOs who have not applied for retirement will be classified using special reporting code 09U (see note 4).
3. "Promotable" refers to RA and USAR only. The ARNG AGR Title 10 program has no "promotable" status; those RCPs are established at the "nonpromotable" grade.
4. The RCP for Soldiers classified in special reporting code 09U is 9 months from the effective date of classification.

(1) Effective 1 October 2016, senior NCOs selected by a Headquarters, Department of the Army centralized promotion board that convened before the date of this directive will have an RCP based on the next table or a minimum of 12 months remaining in service, whichever is longer. The Army will complete this "rollback" of RCPs over a 3-year period.

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**Reduction of RCP Changes for NCOs**

Soldiers' BASD	SFC & SFC(P)
1 October 1992 and earlier	26
2 October 1992 through 1 April 1994 (inclusive)	25
2 April 1994 and later	24
Soldiers' BASD	1SG/MSG
1 October 1989 and earlier	29
2 October 1989 through 1 October 1990 (inclusive)	28
2 October 1990 through 1 April 1992 (inclusive)	27
2 April 1992 and later	26
Soldiers' BASD	1SG/MSG(P) & CSM/SGM
1 October 1986 and earlier	32
2 October 1986 through 1 April 1988 (inclusive)	31
2 April 1988 and later	30

**Abbreviations Used:**

1SG: First Sergeant	P: Promotable
BASD: Basic Active Service Date	SFC: Sergeant First Class
CSM: Command Sergeant Major	SGM: Sergeant Major
MSG: Master Sergeant	

(2) Soldiers who exceed their RCP as a result of their reduction in grade or removal from a promotion list must retire or separate from the Army no earlier than 90 days or no later than 180 days after the effective date of their reduction in grade. Soldiers with 18 or more years of active Federal service who exceed their RCP as a result of a reduction in rank may serve to meet the minimum retirement eligibility unless involuntarily separated by the Secretary of the Army or his designated representative.

b. NCO Career Status Program. Effective 1 October 2016, the Army redesignates the Indefinite Reenlistment Program (RA and USAR only) as the NCO Career Status Program. NCOs in the rank of staff sergeant and higher who are eligible for reenlistment in accordance with AR 601-280 and AR 140-111 must have more than 12 years of Federal service on the date they reenlist under the NCO Career Status Program.

c. Bar to Continued Service. Effective 1 October 2016, the Army redesignates the bar to reenlistment (RA and USAR only) as the bar to continued service. A bar to continued service places a Soldier on notice that his or her continued service may not be in the Army's best interest. Applicable to all enlisted ranks regardless of the established RCP/maximum age for each rank, a bar to continued service limits continued service to Soldiers of high moral character and personal competence.

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Accordingly, Soldiers who currently serve under the NCO Career Status Program, including Soldiers transitioning from the RA to a reserve component, may be barred from continued service. Soldiers who do not overcome a bar to continued service will be separated from the Army in accordance with AR 635-200 and AR 135-178. Enclosure 1 to this directive supersedes AR 601-280, chapter 8 in its entirety and adds Appendix K. Enclosure 2 replaces selected portions of AR 140-111, chapter 1. Soldiers who are separated because of a bar, or who depart the Army with a bar in place, will have a reentry code of "3" annotated on their Department of Defense Form (DD Form) 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge From Active Duty) or established in their permanent records. USAR Soldiers not eligible for a DD Form 214 will have a "Bar to Continued Service" annotation in the remarks section of their discharge orders. This code requires a waiver for reentry into any Army component.

d. Qualitative Management Program (RA and USAR AGR only). Effective immediately, NCOs who are not promoted to the next grade because of their failure to complete the appropriate level of NCO Education System training for the next higher grade are subject to the denial of continued service through the Qualitative Management Program process (AR 635-200, chapter 19). NCOs in the following categories are eligible for the Qualitative Management Program:

(1) NCOs in the rank of staff sergeant with 36 months time in grade who have not graduated from the Advanced Leaders Course, or

(2) NCOs in the rank of sergeant first class with 36 months time in grade who have not graduated from the Senior Leaders Course.

e. Qualitative Service Program (RA and USAR AGR only). Effective immediately, NCOs (staff sergeant and above) with 2 or more years time in grade and more than 18 months until their established RCP are eligible for the potential denial of continued service under the Qualitative Service Program (AR 635-200, chapter 16) when their primary military occupational specialty and grade are announced during the Qualitative Service Program process.

5. The Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS), G-1 is the proponent for this policy. The DCS, G-1 will issue an Armywide message to inform the force of these changes, as well as implementing guidance. The DCS, G-1 will incorporate the provisions of this directive and the implementing guidance into the next revisions of AR 140-111, AR 600-8-19, AR 601-280, and AR 635-200.

6. Any deviation from the policy in this directive must be formally requested as an exception to policy in accordance with the references. If the references do not explicitly

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address exceptions to policy, requests must be addressed to the Office of the DCS, G-1; Director, Military Personnel Management (DAPE-MPE-PD); 300 Army Pentagon; Washington, DC 20310. The DCS, G-1 may further delegate his approval authority, in writing, to a division chief within the proponent agency, its direct reporting unit, or field operating agency in the grade of colonel or the civilian equivalent.

7. This directive is rescinded upon publication of the revised Army regulations.



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