

# MILITARY SPOUSE PREFERENCE PROGRAM

## *What Is It?*

The purpose of the Military Spouse Preference (MSP) Program is to lessen the career interruption of spouses who relocate to accompany their military sponsor on a permanent change of station move. By registering in the MSP Program, eligible spouses will receive priority consideration for vacancies at DoD activities within the commuting area of the sponsor's new duty location. The MSP Program applies to spouses of active duty military members of the U.S. Armed Forces, including Coast Guard. The MSP program:

- Applies only if the military spouse accompanies the military sponsor to the new/different geographical duty station;
- Applies only **within** the commuting area of the sponsor's temporary (training) and/or permanent new duty station, which is outside of the military sponsor's previous commuting area;
- Does not apply when the sponsor is stateside and is separating or retiring. Military Spouses are eligible to register as civilian spouses when the sponsor is separating or retiring from Alaska, Hawaii, or overseas.
- Applies only if the spouse entered into the marriage with the military sponsor prior to the reporting date to the new geographical duty assignment.

## *Who Is Eligible?*

Within the U.S., its territories, and possessions, immediately appointable military spouses who have previously held or are presently holding Federal positions are eligible for referral through Program "S" of the Priority Placement Program (PPP). To meet the appointability requirement under Program "S," the spouse must be in one of the following categories:

- Current federal career/career-conditional employee;
- Current Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) employee or Schedule A appointee for persons with disabilities;
- Reinstatement eligible;
- E.O. 12721 eligible (Eligibility of Overseas Employees for Noncompetitive appointment with written documentation of 52 weeks of creditable service);
- Competitive service eligible based on employment under other merit systems;
- Executive Order 13473 - Noncompetitive Appointment of Certain Military Spouses (*Effective 11 September 2009*): Spouses of armed forces member serving on active duty (other than training) for 180 days or more provided the spouse relocates to the member's new permanent duty station within two years from the date of the PCS order. Spouses with no prior federal service.

## ***When To Register***

A spouse may register no earlier than 30 days prior to the sponsor's reporting date and anytime after relocating.

## ***Where To Register***

Prior to relocating: at the losing personnel office (upon arrival at the new commuting area, MUST re-register)

After relocating: at any personnel office in the commuting area of the sponsor's new duty station

## ***How To Register***

1. Please review the [Military Spouse Information Sheet](#) and complete according to instructions.
2. Please review the applicable Activity Referral Sheet below for your commuting area and select the activities you want to be registered for:

[Hampton Roads, Virginia](#)  
[Eastern North Carolina](#)  
[Quantico/Washington, D.C.](#)

3. To apply online, go to the Department of the Navy web site at <http://www.public.navy.mil/donhr>. Once at that site, click on Employment, then click on Access Chart Now for detailed instructions on how to apply. ***Reminder: Your resume will expire after six months.***
4. If registering for GS-4 and/or below, please review the listing of Clerical and Administrative Positions in the [GS-300 Occupational Series](#) to determine if you wish to register for this generic series.
5. After complying with the above guidance under "How To Register", you must provide the Required Documents listed below. If you do not have these documents, you must obtain them before you can be registered.

### REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

- Copy of your current resume from the <http://www.public.navy.mil/donhr> website.
- Copy of sponsor's orders.
- Copy of Marriage License (Only applicable for Executive Order 13473 eligibles)
- \*Copy of Leave Without Pay (LWOP) Notification of Personnel Action (SF-50) or your last SF-50, along with the LWOP SF-52 or memo granting LWOP. The document granting LWOP must have detailed information concerning the LWOP.
- \*Copy of last performance appraisal.
- \*Copy of SF-75 (Request for Preliminary Employment Data) or equivalent (i.e., computer printout of employee data from your former personnel office).

*\* Documents NOT REQUIRED for Executive Order 13473 Eligibles*

6. Mail the Military Spouse Information Sheet, Activity Referral Sheet, copy of your resume, and required documents to the Military Spouse Coordinator at:

Human Resources Service Center East  
Code 51 PPP Team  
Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Bldg. 17  
Portsmouth, VA 23709-5000

**DO NOT FAX OR EMAIL THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

### *Job Opportunities*

All spouses should also apply for HRSC-East Merit Promotion Vacancy Announcements to expand their opportunities for job placement. These vacancies can be found on <http://www.public.navy.mil/donhr> under "Employment (Access Chart Now)" **NOTE: SUBMITTING A RESUME FOR A MERIT PROMOTION VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT DOES NOT ALSO REGISTER YOU IN THE MILITARY SPOUSE PREFERENCE PROGRAM. IN ORDER TO BE REGISTERED, YOU MUST SUBMIT THE REQUIRED FORMS TO THE MILITARY SPOUSE COORDINATOR.**

***For assistance:***

If you have any questions, please contact the following individuals:

If your last name begins with	Contact Phone	Contact Email
A-L	(757)396-7599 DSN 386-7599	<a href="mailto:MSPPEAST">MSPPEAST</a>
M-Z	(757)396-7567 DSN 386-7567	<a href="mailto:MSPPEAST2">MSPPEAST2</a>

## **DoD MILITARY SPOUSE PREFERENCE PROGRAM PROGRAM “S” FACT SHEET<sup>1</sup>**

**General:** The Military Spouse Preference Program applies to spouses of active duty military members of the U.S. Armed Forces, including the U.S. Coast Guard and full-time national Guard, who desire priority consideration for competitive service positions at DoD activities in the U.S. and its territories and possessions. Chapter 14 of the PPP Operations Manual contains specific information on registration in this program.

**Eligibility:** Spouses of active duty military members of the U.S. Armed Forces, including the U.S. Coast Guard and full time National Guard, may register 30 days prior to the sponsor’s reporting date, for competitive service positions at DoD activities in the U.S. and its territories and possessions provided the spouse accompanies the military sponsor who is:

- Assigned by a PCS move from overseas to U.S., or to a different commuting area within the U.S., including the U.S. territories or possessions;
- Relocating to a new and permanent duty station after completing basic and advanced individual training.
- Permanently assigned to the same duty station where initial entry training was received;
- Assigned by PCS to a service school regardless of the duration of training;
- A former military member who re-enlists and is placed in a permanent assignment; or
- Reassigned on an unaccompanied tour by PCS with orders specifying the sequential assignment. The spouse may register for activities in the commuting area of the sequential assignment at any time during the sponsor’s unaccompanied tour.

(NOTE: Military spouses are ineligible for Program “S” when the sponsor relocates in conjunction with retirement or separation.)

**Registration:** Registration may be accomplished at the losing A-coded activity up to 30 days prior to the sponsor's reporting date or, upon relocation, at any A-coded activity in the commuting area of the sponsor's new duty station. If not currently employed by DoD, an eligible spouse may register at an A-coded activity in the gaining area or, if registration is desired in advance, at any A-coded activity in the losing area. Spouses are not eligible if their sponsor relocates in conjunction with retirement or separation. Military spouse preference applies to temporary employment when it is expected to last one year or longer.

**Skills:** May register for up to 5 skills provided they are well qualified.

**High Grade:** Spouses may register at a grade no higher than that previously held on a permanent basis or if the spouse’s only Federal service was overseas under time-limited appointment, he/she may register for the highest grade held, if they have appointment eligibility under Executive Order (E.O.) 12721. Spouses who are not current Federal employees who have E.O. 12721 and reinstatement eligibility may register under either option, whichever is more beneficial.

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<sup>1</sup> Fact Sheet is for information only. This Fact Sheet does not establish, revise, replace or supplement policy or procedures contained in Defense Civilian Personnel Manual Chapter 1800 or the PPP Operations Manual.

**Low Grade:** May register for any grade for which qualified and available.

**Priority:** “3”

**Separation Date:** No date is entered on the registration. The computer enters the date of one year from the date of registration or file maintenance.

**Release Date:** No date is entered on the registration. The computer enters the date of one year from the date of registration or file maintenance. (NOTE: Both the spouse and the registering activity are notified that the “S” program registration will be terminated 12 months after initial registration or the last extension/file maintenance action. Any file maintenance or extension submitted by the registering activity and processed in Dayton extends the registration for one year. If automatically terminated, the spouse may re-register if otherwise eligible.)

**Area of Referral:** Employee may register for any location in the commuting area of the sponsor’s new duty location.

**Registering Activity Change:** To change the registering activity of an active Program “S” registration, a new registration must be submitted (all registration elements must be completed and resubmitted).

**Offer Response Time:** Registrants in the continental U.S. (CONUS) must accept or decline offers from CONUS activities within 2 calendar days and registrants outside CONUS must respond within 3 calendar days.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Priority Placement Program (PPP)

**Q. What is the Priority Placement Program (PPP)?**

A. The PPP is an automated mandatory placement program used to match eligible well-qualified employees, most of whom are subject to displacement, with vacant positions throughout DoD. It enables DoD to maintain a relatively stable work force during base realignment and closure, reduction-in-force, contracting out, etc., and minimizes the adverse effect of these actions on employees. The PPP has long been the most effective program of its kind in the Federal government.

**Q. I have heard that DoD activities are required to clear all of their vacant positions through the PPP. Are there any exceptions to this requirement?**

A. Yes. The PPP Operations Manual, Chapter 4, Section C, lists a number of standard exceptions that can be applied by DoD activities. For example, an employee who is subject to involuntary separation due to job abolishment may be reassigned to a vacant position within the same activity as an exception to the PPP. In addition to these standard exceptions, activities may seek case-by-case approval for exceptions that are in keeping with the spirit and intent of the PPP.

**Q. What is the impact of the PPP on DoD staffing programs? With so many employees registered for mandatory placement, it seems that managers would have few opportunities to make selections from merit promotion lists or other traditional recruitment sources.**

A. There is a widespread misconception that the PPP has a significant impact on the DoD staffing process. Recent surveys have revealed that PPP placements account for less than three percent of all positions filled. This is a very conservative figure since placement actions that are normally exempt from the PPP were not counted.

**Q. What can a registrant do to increase his/her chances for success in the PPP?**

A. The single most important determinant of success is mobility. Registrants who are willing to relocate are placed more often than those who register only for their current commuting area. Except for those in hard-to-find jobs, most employees who register on a broad geographic basis eventually receive offers. Registering for lower grades also increases the probability of an offer.

**Q. Are managers permitted to interview PPP registrants?**

A. No. With the exception of military spouses referred under competitive procedures (see PPP Operations Manual, Chapter 14, Section F1a), managers may not interview PPP registrants. The purpose of interviews is to enable the manager to select the best qualified candidate, while the intent of the PPP is simply to insure that a well qualified candidate is placed. Interviews are not only beyond the scope of the PPP, they would also significantly delay the placement process, adversely affecting both registrants and activities. Additionally, the number of referrals and the geographic dispersion of PPP registrants render interviews impractical.

**Q. If an activity receives ten Priority 1 resumes, what criteria must be applied in order to determine which registrant receives the job offer?**

A. The PPP does not impose ranking factors within individual Priority groups (in this case, Priority 1). As long as offers are made in Priority order (e.g., priority 1 registrants before priority 2 and 3 registrants and priority 2 before priority 3), activities may normally select any well-qualified registrant. Exceptions to this general rule are listed in the PPP Operations Manual, Chapter 4, Section D6a.

**Q. If the position that is offered to a PPP registrant requires shift work, is the offer considered valid?**

A. Yes. However, CARE Program Coordinators can approve exceptions on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions have been approved in cases involving compelling circumstances that are beyond the registrants' control.

**Q. If a GS employee receives an offer at his/her current grade in a geographic area with a lower locality rate, is the offer valid? What about a WG employee who receives an offer at his/her current grade in an area with lower wage rates?**

A. Yes, the offer is valid in both cases.

**Q. An employee was involuntarily demoted due to performance problems. The employee's performance has improved significantly and the supervisor now wishes to repromote the employee to the former position, which has recently been vacated. Can the employee be promoted as an exception to the PPP?**

A. No. Repromotions are subject to the PPP except under the specific circumstances outlined in the PPP Operations Manual, Chapter 4, Section C2a(2). This repromotion is not an authorized exception.

**Q. My activity gives priority merit promotion consideration to employees who are receiving grade retention benefits. Does this offset the need to register employees in the DoD Retained Grade Placement Program (Program R)?**

- A. No. DoD employees must be registered in Program R while serving under grade retention, even if they receive consideration for noncompetitive repromotion under an activity's merit promotion program. Unlike Program R, such programs do not provide referral to other activities in the commuting area, nor do they necessarily obligate selecting officials to make job offers to well qualified candidates.
- Q. May a military spouse register in the Military Spouse Preference Program (Program S) for referral to activities in the commuting area of the sponsor's new duty station, and remain at the current duty station until an offer is received?**
- A. No. A military spouse is eligible to register in Program S only when accompanying the sponsor to the new permanent duty station. Except for the 30-day period preceding the sponsor's reporting date (see PPP Operations Manual, Chapter 14, Section D1), spouses are not eligible to register prior to relocation.
- Q. In conjunction with a reduction-in-force, an activity is separating all temporary employees. Is there an outplacement program for employees who are on non-permanent appointments?**
- A. Yes. Temporary employees may register in the Defense Outplacement Referral System (DORS) for as long as they remain on the DoD rolls. This program provides courtesy referral to DoD activities, other Federal agencies, and private sector employers. However, selection of a DORS registrant is not mandatory.