

Military Spouse Preference (MSP) is a Department of Defense (DoD) program derived from title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.) 1784. Public Law 99-145, enacted in 1986 and codified at 10 U.S.C. 1784, requires the Secretary of Defense to prescribe regulations that provide employment preference to spouses of active duty military members of the United States (U.S.) Armed Forces (including the Coast Guard), who relocate to accompany their sponsor on a permanent change of station (PCS) move.

This program is intended to lessen the career interruption of spouses who relocate with their military sponsors. Since 1989, military spouses have been required to register in Program S of the Priority Placement Program (PPP) which uses automated referral procedures to exercise MSP for competitive service vacancies in the U.S.

The good news is registration in the PPP is no longer required for spouses. Additionally, under Section 573 of the FY2019 National Defense Authorization Act enacted on August 13, 2018, a temporary expansion of the noncompetitive appointing authority for military spouses includes all spouses of active duty military members, even in the absence of a PCS move. Essentially, this change amends Section 3330d of title 5, USC, by affording noncompetitive appointment eligibility to a non-relocating spouse of a member of the Armed Forces using Executive Order 13473. This temporary authority expires on August 13, 2023. See “How do I exercise MSP and Priority Status as a Military Spouse” below for more details.

WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR MILITARY SPOUSES?

The most fundamental requirement is marriage to an active duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces. In addition:

- You must reside within the commuting area of your sponsor’s permanent duty station (PDS);
- You must provide proof of marriage to the active duty sponsor, proof of military member’s active duty status, and other documentation required by the vacancy announcement to which you are applying; and
- You must meet all pre-employment criteria and be eligible for immediate noncompetitive appointment to a position in the competitive service.

HOW DO I EXERCISE MSP AND PRIORITY STATUS AS A MILITARY SPOUSE?

Program stakeholders for MSP should be aware that the hiring process for MSP eligibles has been restructured to enable military spouses to take charge and be the driver of their own careers. Stakeholders should also note that the hiring process has been simplified by changing it from registration and referral to application based. This change replaces the automated process and

eliminates the mandatory requirement to register in the PPP. It allows military spouses to independently exercise their preference for a greater variety of positions without contacting a Human Resources Office (HRO) or waiting to be notified about Job Opportunity Announcements (JOAs).

To receive MSP and exercise priority status through the application process, you must:

- Create a login.gov account to sign in to USAJOBS (first time users). Login.gov is a service that offers secure and private online access to government programs, such as Federal benefits, services, and applications.
- Use the same email address for login.gov and USAJOBS.
- Create a new password.
- Have a working phone number (mobile or landline); login.gov will send a unique security code each time you sign into your account.
- Create a USAJOBS profile using the same email address for login.gov.
- Create a new password for USAJOBS (first time users).
- Build or post a resume to the USAJOBS profile and upload essential documents, including a copy of your sponsor's PCS orders and the Military Spouse PPP Self-Certification Checklist which must be included with each job application.
- Apply to the JOA for which interested and available.
- MSP and priority status for permanent positions may be used only once for each PCS move and it only applies to positions in the commuting area of your sponsor's PDS. MSP and priority placement eligibility terminates if you:
 - Accept or decline permanent Federal¹ employment in the commuting area of your sponsor's PDS;
 - Lose your spousal status due to divorce, death of your sponsor, or your sponsor's retirement or separation from active duty; or
 - No longer meet the requirements for noncompetitive appointment eligibility.

DOES MSP AND PRIORITY PLACEMENT APPLY TO ALL DOD JOB VACANCIES?

No. MSP and priority placement do not apply to positions covered by a mandatory mobility agreement; positions in the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System (DCIPS) and those in organizations that have as a primary function intelligence, counterintelligence, or national security; and positions filled through noncompetitive procedures.

WHAT TYPES OF POSITIONS CAN I APPLY FOR?

The following guidelines will govern your JOA choices:

- You must meet all established Federal and DoD qualifications requirements.
- You may include any or all DoD installations/organizations within the commuting area of your sponsor's new PDS.
- You may apply for permanent as well as temporary/term positions (i.e., intermittent, seasonal or NAF "flexible" schedules). There is no limit to the number of times you can exercise your MSP and priority placement for temporary and term positions.

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

In all cases when you apply for DoD positions as an MSP eligible, you must follow all instructions as required by the JOA. This process is necessary in order for the HRO to determine if you rank among the best-qualified candidates for the position. The evaluation factors used to rank you are the same factors that apply to all of the competitive candidates. If you do not submit an application, you will not be considered for the position.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

The MSP Program is too complex to adequately explain in such an abbreviated format. This fact sheet only provides an overview of the program's basic policies and procedures. For more details, you can find information on:

<https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/EC/Advise>

<https://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/shams/>

<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/veterans-authorities/#url=Appointment-of-Military-Spouses>

<http://www.militaryonesource.mil/web/mos/spouse>

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/education-employment/for-spouses/managing-your-career/military-spouse-preference-in-employment?inheritRedirect=true&redirect=%2Feducation-employment>

¹ Employment in NAF positions and positions in the military exchange services are considered Federal employment for the purpose of MSP.

MILITARY SPOUSE PPP SELF-CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST

IMPORTANT: This form must be submitted with your application each time you apply to a Department of Defense (DoD) position on USAJOBS in order to receive Military Spouse Preference.

Applicant's Name:

Military Sponsor's Name:

Date of Marriage to Military Sponsor:

Military Sponsor's Current Duty Station:

INSTRUCTIONS - Read items 1-12 and click on each "Choose an Item." Choose the option from the drop-down menu that best describes your status as a military spouse. Completion of each item is verification that you have read and understand that the information you provide is truthful and can be used to verify your eligibility as a military spouse preference applicant. A completed self-certification checklist must be submitted with each application and must be dated within last 30 days.

1. Choose an Item that I am a US Citizen.
2. Choose an Item that I am an active duty military member of the U.S. Armed Forces (including the U.S. Coast Guard and full-time National Guard or Reserves) and my sponsor has been serving on active duty for more than 180 consecutive days.
3. My sponsor's Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders are in conjunction with retirement or separation from active duty. Choose an Item that I am in conjunction with retirement or separation from active duty.
4. Choose an Item that preference only applies to positions within the commuting area of my sponsor's current permanent duty station.
5. Choose an Item that loss of spousal status due to divorce, death of my sponsor, or my sponsor's retirement or separation from active duty will result in terminating my eligibility for spouse preference.
6. Choose an Item that the acceptance or declination of a temporary position does not impact my priority placement status. "Temporary" positions include:
 - (1) Positions filled by temporary or term appointment, including Non-Appropriated Fund (NAF) time-limited appointments, regardless of duration or work schedule;
 - (2) Positions filled by permanent appointment with intermittent or seasonal work schedules; and

(3) NAF positions with a “flexible” work schedule, or any NAF position for which the employment category is identified as “flexible.”

7. Choose an Item that I am only eligible for preference for ONE job offer of a permanent position. A “permanent position” is defined as a Federal appropriated or non-appropriated position which has a fixed full-time or part-time work schedule.

8. Choose an Item that accepting or declining a permanent position will result in terminating my eligibility for military spouse preference at my current location.

9. Choose an Item received a job offer for a permanent position within the commuting area of my military sponsor’s current permanent duty station.

10. Choose an Item currently occupying a permanent appropriated or non-appropriated position at the current duty station.

11. Choose an Item on a telework agreement with my current federal job that allows me to work for them on a permanent basis after relocating to my military sponsor’s current duty station.

12. Choose an Item had on-the-job performance or conduct problems within the last 12 months.

Certification Statement: I, _____ certify that I have read and understand the information contained in this self-certification checklist and that my responses are accurate and truthful.

Date:

Documents required to be submitted with each application (Note: DoD agencies may require additional documentation. Please refer to the announcement to ensure all required documentation is submitted with your application. It is highly recommended that you save all documents to your USAJOBS account to facilitate applying to multiple positions.)

Military Spouses without prior Federal work experience

- Narrative resume
- PCS orders
- Marriage certificate or license
- Signed self-certification checklist
- Veterans preference documentation (e.g., DD-214, VA letter, Statement of Service), if applicable
- Transcripts, if applicable

Military Spouses with prior Federal work experience

- Narrative resume
- PCS orders
- Marriage certificate or license
- SF-50s (e.g., LWOP, highest grade held, overseas appointments, etc.)

- SF 75 Information
- Documentation of performance rating of record (dated within the last 12 months)
- Signed self-certification checklist
- Veterans preference documentation (e.g., DD-214, VA letter, Statement of Service), if applicable
- Transcripts, if applicable

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT: Sections 1301, 3302, 3502 of Title 5, U.S. Code provide for the issuance of rules governing the competitive service and authorize solicitation of this information. Gaining and releasing activities use this information to place registrants, report actions and update data as well as refer names to potential employers or to provide information to you about potential employment. Furnishing the requested information is voluntary, but failure to provide it may result in missed opportunity for proper placement or reemployment under the respective placement assistance program.