

Fall In

Warrant officers wanted

The U.S. Army is looking for highly motivated Soldiers, Marines, sailors and airmen to fill its warrant officer ranks.

Positions are open in all 45 specialties if you qualify. Soldiers with less than 12 years active federal service are encouraged to apply. For more information, contact the Warrant Officer Recruiting Team at <http://www.usarec.army.mil/warrant> or DSN 536-0484/0458.

PCS notices via AKO

The Human Resources Command will use the Internet to maintain up-to-date information on Soldiers and help them manage their careers.

In March, HRC began notifying Soldiers of their next duty assignments within 90 days of departure, by e-mailing the information to their Army Knowledge Online e-mail addresses. Other Web-based initiatives include:

- Sending e-mails acknowledging receipt when Soldiers update assignment preferences on the Assignment Satisfaction Key (ASK).
- E-mail reminders will also be sent out to get Soldiers to update their contact information 90 days after arriving at their new duty stations. Then Soldiers will be reminded to update their assignment

preferences on ASK after being stationed stateside for 24 months, 18 months for those overseas.

Commanders will still find out about Soldier assignments through traditional means, but the HRC-GRAM, formerly known as the PERSGRAM will be phased out. Soldiers will be able to find out about assignments through e-mail notification or by calling an Interactive Voice Response System at 1-800-FYI-EPMD. In the future, HRC also plans to expand its Web initiatives and get away from using Department of the Army Form 4187, *Personnel Action Request*.

Force stabilization initiatives

The Department of the Army recently announced Force Stabilization and its two manning initiatives for designated installations that will fundamentally change how the Army assigns Soldiers to its warfighting forces.

Beginning in July, the Army will begin implementing the new stabilization initiative, two complementary manning strategies designed to stabilize the force and provide

Soldiers and families increased predictability in its Continental United States-based force.

Under the new stabilization strategy, Soldiers will remain at their initial installations for six to seven years. Soldiers can expect to be stationed at one installation through squad leader (or equivalent) positions. Leaders will attend leader development schools such as the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course in a temporary travel status and return to their stabilized family at their home station.

During the stabilization period, the Soldier remains stabilized with his/her family at one installation. The Soldier and his/her unit will deploy to meet Army requirements, redeploy to home station and refit the unit based on normal attrition.

Once an NCO becomes qualified as a squad leader or equivalent, assignment to other duties including drill sergeant, recruiter and other career-enhancing positions is more likely. Under the stabilization, some Soldiers may not be able

to remain in their current organization based on unit structure and professional development needs.

These Soldiers will be reassigned on the installation if possible, or fill other requirements if no vacancies exist at their installations.

The Army will continue to rotate Soldiers to Korea for one-year tours. After completion of their tours, they will return to their stabilization installation where their family remained.

Under Unit Focused Stability, Soldiers will arrive, train and fight together.

It sets the conditions for the Army to build better and more deployable combat units. Soldiers assigned under Unit Focused Stability will serve in a unit for the duration of the unit's operational cycle of approximately 36 months.

During this time, they can expect to complete an operational deployment or rotation of six to 12 months.

For additional information about Force Stabilization visit the Web site at: <https://www.stabilization.army.mil>.



Flag-patch direction explained

While U.S. Federal Code calls for the canton to always be positioned to an observer's left, Army regulations call for the flag "to be worn so that to observers, it looks as if the flag is flying against a breeze," said Human Resources Command Public Affairs Officer, Lt. Col. Stanley Heath. The rule dates back to the Army's early history, when both mounted cavalry and infantry units would designate a standard bearer, who carried the Colors into battle. As he charged, his forward momentum caused the flag to stream back. Since the Stars and Stripes are mounted with the canton closest to the pole, that section stayed to the right, while the stripes flew to the left.



Fall In

Leavenworth hosts German award competition

The 326th Area Support Group (ASG), U.S. Army Reserve, will sponsor the 2004 German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency. The event begins May 20 at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., and ends May 23.

The event is designed to test a Soldier's endurance and military skills through a series of tough qualification standards set for German soldiers. Some of the activities include individual marksmanship, athletic ability, first-aid and swimming.

The final event will be the road march, May 23. Based on age and gender, the length of

the road march can be up to 30 kilometers (18.7 miles).

The event is open to all U.S. Army Soldiers. Based on performance, Soldiers can earn a gold, silver or bronze badge that is authorized for wear with the U.S. Army Class "A" and Army Blue uniform. The badge is not authorized for wear with the Class "B" or mess uniforms.



There are different categories of events based on the Soldier's ability, age and gender.

For additional information and a complete list of requirements, contact Maj. Dwayne Dunlap at (913)-334-4230, ext. 107 or 1-800-226-4219, ext. 107 or at wayne.dunlap2@usarc-emh2.army.mil.

Did you know?

Changes to NCOERs

According to Military Personnel message 04-105, accomplishments at NCO Education System courses, other schools generating Department of the Army Form 1059 (*Academic Evaluation Report*) or performance occurring during non-rated periods will not be annotated on the NCO Evaluation Report. For more information, call (703) 325-8009 or (317) 510-3696.

Sgt. major board

The next centralized board for promotion to the ranks of command sergeant major and sergeant major, as well as selection for attendance to the Sergeant Major Course, is scheduled to take place June 3 through 24. Results are scheduled to be released in late August.

The next centralized board for promotion to master sergeant is scheduled to take place Oct. 5 through 29. Results are scheduled for release in late January 2005.

Changes to retention control point for staff sgt.

According to Military Personnel message 04-109, the retention control point (RCP) for staff sergeants is changed from 20 to 22 years. This change is necessary to retain NCO experience and support the recently approved end strength increase. The end strength increase was not approved as a permanent change, therefore, this change affects those staff sergeants

who have an Expiration Term of Service (ETS) on or before Sept. 30, 2005 except for Soldiers in MOS 14R, 14S and 42L which are considered overstrength.

Soldiers whose records do not indicate that he or she has an approved retirement and whose current ETS is on or before Sept. 30, 2005 will have their ETS dates adjusted to their new RCP by HRC. New ETS should be visible on local database within 10 days from date of this message.

Soldiers who have an approved retirement before Sept. 30, 2005, but had not updated their Assignment Eligibility and Availability Code, should contact their career counselors to change their ETS back to the approved retirement dates.

Soldiers who have approved retirement dates may request that the retirement request be withdrawn, which can be approved by the local retirement authority as an exception to the policy outlined in AR 635-200, Chapter 12-15.

Commanders who determine that selected Soldiers should not be retained will forward recommendations to the first colonel in the chain of command. If recommendation is to deny a Soldier continued service to the new RCP, the first colonel commander will forward the recommendation to HRC (AHRC-EPR) under the provisions of Para 1-8e AR 601-280. upon approval, HRC will readjust Soldiers ETS.

For information call Ronald Canada at (703) 325-6807 or DSN 221-6807.

Promotion changes for stop-lossed NCOs

With the implementation of Stop Loss, the Army will authorize promotion consideration as an exception to policy for Soldiers who would normally be ineligible for further consideration due to their retention control point.

The Army is implementing this for each of the centralized boards for the duration of the Stop Loss beginning with the master sergeant board that was held in February 2004.

This exception to policy applies to promotion consideration only and impacts only those Soldiers who are assigned to the units affected by the Stop Loss order (OIF2/OEF5).

Fall In

Soldiers can now view ERBs online

Soldiers can now review their personnel information on the Web in a one-page Enlisted Records Brief. The ERBs went online in December.

MyERB is now on the U.S. Army Human Resources Command homepage at <https://www.hrc.army.mil>. Click on the "Active" link at the bottom right. The MyERB link is in the left chimney.

The Web-based solution enables active-duty Soldiers to prepare for promotions by reviewing their records summary via the Internet. Army Reserve Soldiers can review some of their personnel information via the My2Xcitizen portal. Both the HRC and Reserve portals require Army Knowledge Online accounts and passwords. The ERB contains personnel information used to manage professional development, assignments and promotions such as assignment history, civilian and military education, awards and decorations, special skills and individual qualifications.

The ERB will eventually incorporate enlisted official photographs from the Department of the Army Photo Management Information System.

Fisher House explains rules for free airline tickets

Through the Operation Hero Miles program, the Fisher House Foundation hopes to give away free airline tickets to reunite Soldiers hospitalized during Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom with their family members. The tickets, donated by Anheuser-Busch, are available to Soldiers undergoing treatment as either an in- or outpatient at military hospitals as a result of service in Iraq, Afghanistan or surrounding areas. There are two categories of eligible recipients

for the free airline tickets:

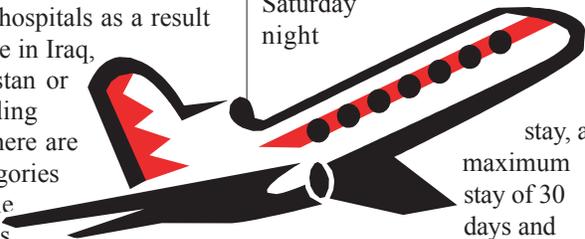
- Qualifying Soldiers may receive a free round-trip airline ticket from the medical center to their home and return if they are not eligible

for government-funded airfare.

- Qualifying Soldiers may receive free round-trip tickets to enable their family or close friends to visit them while they are being treated at the medical center.

Currently, all donated tickets are for flights marketed or operated by American Airlines, American Eagle and American Connection.

The flights carry restrictions, including 14-day advance purchase, a Saturday night



stay, a maximum stay of 30 days and blackout dates. Tickets are for travel in economy class, and seats may be limited.

No changes can be made after the ticketing departure date, and changes made

before the departure date are subject to a \$100 service charge.

The foundation cannot assist with local travel, overnight accommodations, meals or other expenses. Requests for tickets must originate with the Soldier.

Requests should be sent by fax to the Fisher House Foundation (301) 294-8562. The request form may be obtained at the foundation's Web site, <http://www.fisherhouse.org>.

Fisher House Foundation is accepting airline tickets or vouchers from donors.

The foundation cannot accept frequent-flier miles.

Individuals and organizations wishing to donate miles can do so through the program's Web site <http://www.heromiles.org>.

Anthrax, smallpox vaccines safe

The military's anthrax and smallpox immunizations are safe to administer to Soldiers, a senior military medical officer said.

Concerns about the safety of the vaccines have been checked, with findings



provided to federal health officials and civilian physicians. Soldiers are medically screened before receiving the vaccines. Very few serious effects have been attributed to the administration of the vaccines.

New combat disability Web site

A new Web site designed to assist disabled military retirees apply for Combat-Related Special Compensation went online recently.

The U.S. Army CSRC Web site, located at www.csrc.army.mil, provides program guidelines used to determine eligibility for combat-related disability benefits and application procedures for the program.

CSRC allows eligible disabled military retirees to collect payments for both their military service and their service-related disabilities.

Automatic qualifiers include any military retiree with at least 20 years of service who is rated 10 percent disabled by injuries related to the award of a Purple Heart. Payments are retroactive to June 1 for those whose disability occurred before that date. Those who are approved will begin receiving payments about 60 days after approval. Payments are deposited concurrently with standard military pay.

CSRC eligibility includes disabled military retirees with 10 to 100 percent VA disability rating and Reservists and National Guard retirees eligible at age 60 who receive retired pay.



Fall In

R&R program funds more travel

Soldiers coming home on rest and recuperation leave will now have their travel expenses covered to the airport closest to their destination.

Until now, servicemembers and DoD civilians participating in the R&R program received free transportation

from Kuwait City, Kuwait, to Rhein Main Air Base in Germany, Baltimore-Washington International Airport (BWI), Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport or Atlanta International Airport.

From there, they had to cover any remaining airline travel expenses.

Now, the program will cover the cost of travel from BWI to a commercial airport closest to their leave destination. Soldiers make travel arrangements and receive airline tickets to their final R&R destination at the travel office in Kuwait.

Those who paid for airline tickets between Dec. 19 and

Jan. 1 can get the cost reimbursed on the travel voucher they submit upon their return to Kuwait from R&R leave.

To be eligible for the R&R program, a Soldier must have served at

least three months but no more than 11 months in theater in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom.



Reserves Civilian Employment Information Program announced

Implementation of a mandatory Reserve component Civilian Employer Information database began March 31, culminating a yearlong effort to establish a Department of Defense-wide system to capture and understand who employs the 1.2 million members of the seven reserve components.

Soldiers of the Army National Guard, airmen of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, sailors of the Navy Individual Ready Reserve, and Coast Guard reservists can begin entering their employer data on a new Defense Manpower Data Center Web site, at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/Guard-ReservePortal>. Army Reserve Soldiers will enter their employer data at <https://www.hrc.army.mil>. Navy selected reservists will enter their employer data at <https://nsips.nmci.navy.mil>. Marine reservists will enter their employer data at <https://www.mol.usmc.mil/>.

The goal is to populate and maintain an employer database with 95 percent accuracy of the Selected Reserve and 75 percent accuracy of the Individual Ready Reserve.

For further information, contact Lt. Col. Bob S. Stone, bob.stone@osd.mil, (703) 693-8617.

Junior Soldiers get 'COOL' options for promotion points

Junior Soldiers in a handful of job specialties have another option to gain promotion points through Credentialing Opportunities Online (COOL), a program which offers civilian vocational certifications for military experience.



As of Jan. 11, skill-based certifications from civilian sources are worth 10 points each. Ten career fields are currently participating in the initiative: Adjutant General, Air Defense Artillery, Aviation, Engineer, Ordnance, Quartermaster, Signal, Transportation, Army Medical Department and Public Affairs.

Promotable specialists and sergeants can add up to 50 points in technical certificates. The points will remain valid as long as the certificate is valid. The certificates can be added as a promotion action when a Soldier has at least 20 points to add. The COOL Web site serves as the home station to get information on the credentialing for points initiative.

In the future there will be a link to Army Regulation 600-8-19, *Enlisted Promotions and Reductions* to provide more information on promotion policy on the COOL Web site at <https://www.cool.army.mil>.

Exchange task force launches Web site

The group charged with putting together a detailed plan to integrate the three military exchange services into one organization has launched a Web site, www.unifiedexchange.org. The Unified Exchange Task Force, formed in May, is using the new site to inform exchange beneficiaries on what is happening to their benefits. According to a news release, the site will provide continuous updates about the task force's work on the proposed military-exchange integration. Web site visitors will be able to access progress reports, presentations and other data. Soldiers and retirees

will be able to track proposed changes in the way exchanges do business and the potential impact on them. The site will offer a list of frequently asked questions, and visitors can also submit questions and comments. If Congress decides to approve any exchange merger, it would still be "some years" down the road before the actual move, said officials.

