

Transgender Service Member Policy Implementation Fact Sheet

The Secretary's announcement on open service by transgender individuals involves two key documents. The first is a Directive Type Memorandum (DTM) that outlines Department policy with respect to military service by transgender individuals. The second document is a Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) detailing the procedures by which a serving transgender Service member may transition gender. Both documents reflect the Department's finding that open service by transgender Service members, while being subject to the same standards and procedures as other members with regard to their medical fitness for duty, physical fitness, uniform and grooming, deployability, and retention, is consistent with military readiness.

Implementation Highlights

Today, the Department of Defense is ending the ban on transgender Americans serving in the United States military:

- This policy was crafted through a comprehensive and inclusive process that included the leadership of the Armed Services, medical and personnel experts across the Department, transgender Service members, outside medical experts, advocacy groups, and the RAND Corporation.
- Effective immediately, transgender Service members may serve openly, and they can no longer be discharged or otherwise separated from the military solely for being transgender individuals.
- These policies will be implemented in stages over the next 12 months—starting most immediately with addressing the needs of current Service members and their commanders, and followed by training for the entire force, and ultimately, beginning to admit transgender recruits.

Starting today:

- Otherwise qualified Service members can no longer be involuntarily separated, discharged, or denied reenlistment or continuation of service solely for being transgender individuals.

No later than 90 days from today (October 1, 2016):

- The Department will issue a training handbook for commanders, transgender Service members, and the force.
- The Department will issue medical guidance for providing transition related care to transgender Service members.
- The Military Health System will be required to provide transgender Service members with all medically necessary care related to gender transition, based on the guidance that is issued.

- Service members will be able to begin the process to officially change their gender in our personnel management systems.

Next, over the 9 months that follow (October 2016 – June 2017):

- Based on detailed guidance and training materials that will be issued, the Services will conduct training of the force—from commanders, to medical personnel, to the operating forces, and recruiters.

Not later than 1 year from now (July 1, 2017):

- When the training of the force is complete, the military Services will begin accessing transgender applicants who meet all standards—holding them to the same physical and mental fitness standards as everyone else who wants to join the military.
- The gender identity of an otherwise qualified individual will not bar them from joining the military, from admission to our Service Academies, or from participating in ROTC or any other accession program.
- Our initial accession policy will require an individual to have completed any medical treatment that their doctor has determined is necessary in connection with their gender transition, and to have been stable in their preferred gender for 18 months, as certified by their doctor, before they can enter the military.
- This standard will be reviewed no later than 24 months from July 1, 2016 to ensure it reflects what more we learn as this is implemented, as well as the most updated medical information.

Policy Highlights

- Service members with a diagnosis from a military medical provider indicating that gender transition is medically necessary will be provided medical care and treatment for the diagnosed medical condition, in the same manner as other medical care and treatment.
- Gender transition in the military begins when a Service member receives a diagnosis from a military medical provider indicating that gender transition is medically necessary, and concludes when the Service member's gender marker is changed in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) and the Service member serves and is recognized in the preferred gender.
- At that point, the Service member is responsible for meeting all applicable military standards in the preferred gender and will use berthing, bathroom, and shower facilities associated with their gender.
- Any discrimination against a Service member based on their gender identity is sex discrimination and may be addressed through the Department's equal opportunity channels.

