

## Military Spouse Preference (MSP) Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is MSP?

- MSP is a statutory program administered by the DoD. MSP applies to DoD positions being filled in the U.S., in overseas locations, and in U.S. possessions and territories. This program is derived from Title 10 U.S.C. 1784, “Employment Opportunities for Military Spouses,” and applies to spouses of active duty military members of the 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.

Q: What are the eligibility requirements for MSP?

- To be eligible for MSP when applying for DoD positions on a specific PCS move, the spouse must: (1) have married the military sponsor prior to the sponsor’s reporting date as indicated on the orders authorizing PCS, or amended orders authorizing the spouse to travel as a dependent<sup>1</sup>; (2) meet all pre-employment criteria and be immediately appointable under the applicable recruitment procedures; and (3) meet basic qualifications and be determined to be among the best qualified for the position.

When positions are filled using competitive procedures in any location, MSP shall be applied reciprocally across DoD Components for spouses of active duty military members when those spouses apply for: (1) appropriated fund positions in the excepted and competitive services at GS-15 and below, or equivalent positions in other pay systems; (2) nonappropriated fund (NAF) personnel system positions in all employment categories at NF-3 and below and equivalent positions, and for positions paid at hourly rates.

Q: What type of positions are applicable to MSP?

- MSP applies to permanent and 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.

Q: What types of temporary positions are applicable to MSP?

- MSP applies to positions filled by temporary or term appointment, including NAF time-limited appointments, regardless of duration or work schedule; positions filled by permanent appointment with intermittent or seasonal work schedules; and NAF positions with a “flexible” work schedule, or any NAF position for which the employment category is identified as “flexible.”

Q: Am I still required to register in Program S of the PPP to exercise my MSP eligibility?

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<sup>1</sup> If you are claiming appointment eligibility under Executive Order 13473, which is codified at part 315.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, the marriage must have occurred before the date of your sponsor’s orders.

- No. To exercise MSP, you must apply to a specific job opportunity announcement (JOA) and ensure all required documents are uploaded. Note: HROs are available to assist you if needed.

Q: What circumstances would terminate MSP eligibility?

- Under current policy set forth in DoDI 1400.25, Volume 315, MSP terminates upon acceptance or declination of a job offer for a permanent position in the Federal service within the commuting area of the sponsor's new permanent duty station, whether or not preference was applied. This includes NAF positions (e.g., NAF morale, welfare, and recreation positions).

MSP eligibility terminates upon the loss of spousal status as a result of divorce, death of the sponsor, or sponsor's retirement or separation from active duty. Preference will terminate if the MSP no longer meets the requirements for noncompetitive appointment eligibility.

Q: What happens after an MSP eligible applies to a DoD vacancy?

- Once the JOA closes, the HRO will evaluate the applications and refer eligible and qualified applicants, including MSPs found "best qualified," to the selecting official for consideration and selection.

Q: What essential documents should a spouse have available during the hiring process for MSP?

- To facilitate a smooth hiring process, it is recommended that the following documents be available and used as applicable during an MSP recruitment: (1) narrative resume; (2) PCS orders; (3) marriage certificate or license; (4) Notification of Personnel Action (SF50) and Request for Preliminary Employment Data (SF75) documenting current or previous Federal appointment(s), if applicable; (5) signed Military Spouse PPP Self-Certification Checklist; (6) Veteran's Preference Documentation (e.g. DD-214, SF 15, VA Letter, Statement of Service), if applicable; and (7) college transcripts, if applicable.

Q: Are there limits to the number of times an eligible spouse may exercise MSP?

- A spouse may exercise MSP per qualifying PCS until such time he/she accepts or declines a permanent position. MSP entitlement is limited to the offer of only one permanent Federal position (including NAF and AAFES), regardless of whether preference was applied.

Q: Where can I find more information?

- You may find detailed information on MSP at the following resources:
  - <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>