



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
1 000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

APR 23 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS

SUBJECT: Restoring Good Order and Discipline Through Balanced Accountability

- References:
- (a) Department of Defense Directive 1440.1, "The DoD Civilian Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program," May 21, 1987, certified current as of November 21, 2003
  - (b) Department of Defense Directive 1020.02E, "Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity in the DoD," June 8, 2015, as amended
  - (c) Department of Defense Instruction 1400.25, Volume 1614, "DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Investigation of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Complaints," November 5, 2015, as amended
  - (d) Department of Defense Instruction 1350.02, "DoD Military Equal Opportunity Program," September 4, 2020, as amended

To maintain a lethal and ready force, leaders must be empowered to make tough decisions, enforce standards, and restore good order and discipline through balanced accountability. Therefore, I am conducting a comprehensive review of the Department's Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) programs and processes, to include those in references (a) through (d), to ensure prompt and impartial investigations, fair treatment of all involved, and timely and appropriate resolution of allegations of discrimination.

In support of this effort, you will review your respective MEO and EEO programs, identify areas for reform, and provide plans to streamline the investigation process, timely address problematic behaviors, and mitigate undue mission impacts. Military Department reform plans must include, at a minimum, specific actions to ensure:

- Complaints that are unsubstantiated by actionable, credible evidence<sup>1</sup> are timely dismissed.
- Favorable personnel actions<sup>2</sup> involving the alleged offender are appropriately considered in circumstances where the preliminary or a subsequent investigation does not indicate that the complaint is likely to be substantiated.

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<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this memorandum, credible evidence is defined as "evidence of attributable or corroborated information, in any form, disclosed to or obtained by a responsible official that—considering the original source, the nature of the information, and the totality of the circumstances—is sufficient to raise a question of fact that would cause a reasonable responsible official under similar circumstances to inquire further. To be credible, the information must be based on more than mere speculation and not clearly contradicted by known and material facts. To be attributable, the responsible official must be able to authenticate the evidence or information. To be actionable, the original source(s) of information should be reasonably valid or verifiable.

<sup>2</sup> Favorable personnel actions include promotions, awards, reenlistment, reassignment, military or civilian schools and retirements.



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- Administrative and/or disciplinary actions against personnel who knowingly submit false complaints are appropriately considered, pursuant to applicable laws and regulations.<sup>3</sup>

Complete your review and prepare a plan, with specific actions, using the attached template. Submit your plan to me, through the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, no later than 45 days from the date of this memorandum. Within 7 days of the date of this memorandum, please provide a point of contact to the Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Mr. William G. Fitzhugh, at [william.g.fitzhugh.civ@mail.mil](mailto:william.g.fitzhugh.civ@mail.mil). Thank you for your support of this review.

Attachment:  
As stated

cc:  
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff  
Chiefs of the Military Services  
Chief of the National Guard Bureau

Handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'PBW' in a large, stylized font, with 'SD29' written below it in a smaller, more compact font.

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<sup>3</sup> A complaint containing information or allegations that the complainant knew to be false.

