



IG Newsletter

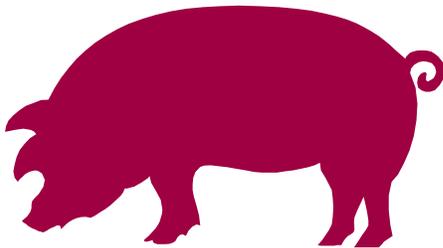
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I entered the Army as a SPC under the Army Civilian Acquired Skills Program (ACASP). The Company Commander approved promotion to SGT, why does my 1SG say the orders are invalid?

By SFC WARD A. MILLER

The commander with the authority to promote a soldier to sergeant is the first LTC in the chain of command. AR 601-201 para 7.11a states, "Promotion to the accelerated grade and award of the MOS authorized by the enlistment agreement (ACASP) will be made with approval of the unit commander." In this case, the unit commander is the first LTC in the chain of command, not the company commander. Also, remember that soldiers entering the Army under ACASP generally have specific training requirements, the unit is responsible to ensure that these specific requirements are met.



I am on the Overweight Program is being chaptered for failure to lose enough weight. Can the commander conduct an Administrative Reduction Board (ARB) to reduce him to SPC instead?

By MRS NANCY H. MANTOOTH

The short answer is yes. AR 600-8-19 does not prohibit overweight as a reason for an ARB. It would be up to the board members to decide if, in this particular case, overweight equates to inefficient. In any case, the soldier should make his Trial Defense Attorney at SJA his "new best friend".

Does the commander have the authority to order a soldier to take a diagnostic PT test during the recovery period of a temporary profile, and can the commander flag the soldier if he/she fails the diagnostic test?

By SFC MARTHA E. McCLELAND

Yes, providing the diagnostic test does not violate the soldier's profile. No, IAW AR 600-8-2, 1.13.c, soldiers may be flagged for failure to pass the record APFT or failure to take the record APFT within the required period. They cannot be flagged for failing a diagnostic test.

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The Secretary of the Army has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business as required by law of the Department. The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or of the command, but wherever possible, are supported by referenced Army regulations, policies, or procedures.

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On 1 October 2000, I was promoted to SGT/E5, but I have not yet been to PLDC. Is this a conditional promotion? How long can I keep my rank?

By SFC JAMES P. JACKS

It is not a conditional promotion; it should have been a promotion with a waiver. Under AR 600-8-19, May 2000, conditional promotions only apply to SSG, SFC, and SGM. The process of conditional promotions to SGT doesn't go into effect until 1 May 2001 (per MILPER msg 01-108). After then, the following statement will be included in all SGT/E5 conditional promotion orders, "Soldier has not met the NCOES requirement and is promoted conditionally. If the soldier does not attend and successfully complete PLDC as scheduled, not to exceed 12 months from the effective date of this order, the soldier will be administratively reduced and will be required to reappear before a promotion board to regain promotable status." As to how long a soldier can keep his/her rank, it depends. According to AR 600-8-19, soldiers must complete resident PLDC prior to their board appearance for SSG, however, when MILPER msg 01-108 goes into effect they could be subject to an administrative reduction board. So, the moral of the story is "go to PLDC". The MILPER message can be found at <http://perscomnd04.army.mil/MILPERmsgs.nsf>

I have a soldier who is on ordinary leave, is 6 months pregnant, in Alaska, and is having medical problems. Her civilian doctor in Alaska told her that she should not travel. What can I do?

By SFC WARD A. MILLER

Tell her to send the unit all the documentation that she received from the civilian doctor, also get the doctor's phone number and address. Once the commander has the phone number and patient documentation, send copies to the Patient Administration Division at BJACH. PAD will make a military determination of the civilian doctor's findings. They will also call the civilian doctor if more research is needed or questions arise. Based on what the military doctors say, the soldier can stay in Alaska, or be ordered to come back.

Mistakes Leaders Make

By LTC JAMES M. KANZENBACH

Leaders at the Squad, Platoon, and Company level are making common mistakes in carrying out their responsibilities. Most of these mistakes are not intentional and occur due to an oversight or a lack of regulatory knowledge. Listed below are five mistakes leaders make most often at Ft Polk:

1. Taking corrective action that is not relative to the deficiency. (Does cutting grass with scissors *really* teach a soldier to get to work on time?)
2. Taking action without researching regulations. (Use the SJA and IG to help you.)
3. Requiring soldiers to perform remedial training when they fail to attain unit standards that exceed Army standards (Remedial training without corrective counseling equals punishment.)
4. Exceeding inherent powers of command and violating common sense. (When dealing with a soldier challenge, take a moment to think of the impact of your actions.)
5. Initiating elimination actions without following regulatory procedures (Don't clog up the medical/SJA system with chapters that won't fly.)

Leaders who practice, "Research, Think, Then Act", will avoid the mistakes above. Additionally, leaders need to remember that we train to "Army Standards." It's OK to motivate soldiers with tough jobs and high standards. However, when unit standards exceed Army standards, we should reward soldiers who meet the higher standard and not punish soldiers for failing to achieve the higher standard.

I am a first term soldier, due to ETS, am I authorized permissive TDY (PTDY)?

By SFC RICHARD GREGG

No. IAW MILPER msg 99-198, paragraph 5A, soldiers that are ETSing are not authorized PTDY. What type of out-processing a soldier is doing (retirement, PCS, ETS, etc.), will determine if he/she is authorized any permissive TDY days. There are many variables to consider when determining whether or not a soldier is authorized PTDY. Seek assistance from the out-processing center. Remember, permissive TDY is an "AUTHORIZATION NOT AN ENTITLEMENT". The commander can disapprove or restrict PTDY based on mission/operational requirements or disciplinary reasons.

Can I request separate rations because of my religious faith?

By SFC RICHARD GREGG

Yes. The Army places a high value on the rights of its soldiers to observe their respective faiths. Some faith groups have religious tenets, which prohibit the eating of specific foods, or prescribe a certain manner in which food is prepared. A soldier with a conflict between the diet provided by the Army and that required by their religious practice may request an exception to policy for separate rations through their immediate commander.

The commander may approve the request either informally or formally (in writing), or disapprove it within 10 working days of receipt. If a commander approves a request informally the issue is closed, except the unit will assist the soldier with submission of the DA Form 4187 for separate rations. If the commander approves the request formally, the commander will provide the soldier with written notice of the accommodation. The accommodation will remain in effect unless revoked in writing.

If the commander disapproves the request, he/she must respond in writing to the soldier and provide the soldier the opportunity to appeal the disapproval. This appeal will be done by means of a memorandum from the soldier, through each level of command (to specifically include MACOM) to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, ATTN: DAPE-HR-L, Washington DC 20310-0300.

If you have any additional questions or comments regarding this matter, reference AR 600 20, para 5-6 or seek assistance from your unit chaplain's office.

I am pregnant and I requested separation from the Army under the provisions of AR 635-200, Chap 8. Does the commander have the authority to deny? Can I change my mind after requesting the chapter?

By SFC MARTHA E. McCLELAND

No, the company/troop level commander does not have the authority to deny the request; he may recommend disapproval, but must forward the action to the Brigade or Regimental commander for approval/disapproval.

Yes, IAW AR 635-200, paragraph 8.8.h., an enlisted woman who requests separation in writing may subsequently request withdrawal of the separation request.

The Overweight Program: To Flag or not to Flag?

By LTC JAMES M. KANZENBACH

AR 600-9 requires unit commanders to enroll soldiers who are overweight and over fat in the Army Weight Control Program - as long as there is not a medical reason for the soldier being overweight. Some commanders are flagging soldiers before sending them for a medical evaluation. This is IAW the regulation, but it may pose a problem.

If the soldier has a medical reason for being overweight, he or she has been flagged without good reason. You must now generate additional paperwork to lift the flag.

Why do double the paperwork? Send the soldier to the health care professionals before initiating the flag. This is also IAW the regulation and gives the soldier benefit of the doubt. The weight control program is a commander's program. How you run it is up to you as long as you don't violate the provisions of AR 600-9.

When do I have to buy the new PT uniform? My commander wants us to have one now.

By MRS NANCY H. MANTOOTH

According to DA msg 051837Z JUL 00, the mandatory purchase date for the new PT uniform is 1 Oct 03. Commanders cannot require soldiers to have the uniform before then. Formations may include both uniforms until the required date.

I have a soldier who does not meet Ht/Wt standards, but meets body fat standards. Can he still be put on the Overweight Program for appearance?

By SFC JAMES P. JACKS

No. Soldiers who exceed the screening table weight, but do not exceed the allowable percent body fat standards will not be enrolled in the Army Weight Control Program. Soldiers whose appearance suggests their body fat is excessive should be advised to seek health care personnel for a proper dietary program, or the unit Master Fitness Trainer for assistance in establishing a physical training program. Soldiers are not to be enrolled in the AWCP for "appearance" only.

I think that I am flagged, but no one has counseled me?

By MAJ MICHAEL W. SIMPSON

In the past several months we have had a number of soldiers come into the office and announce that they "think" that they are flagged. AR 600-8-2, Table 2-1, gives the actions required for initiating a flag. Step 8 says that the unit will inform the soldier of the action. Although, the regulation does not *require* written counseling, we highly recommend that if you flag a soldier, he/she be counseled in writing. The commander doesn't necessarily have to counsel the soldier; any NCO or officer in the chain of command can do this. The counseling statement should state why he was flagged; the date that it was initiated and the conditions the soldier must overcome to have the flag lifted. A written counseling statement will, therefore, eliminate any confusion and reinforce the chain of command's commitment to enforcing standards.

So, if you have a soldier pending some type of adverse action then a red light ought to come on. You should ask yourself, "Who counseled this soldier?"

Why weren't my dependents automatically renewed on DEERS when I re-enlisted?

By SFC MATT WEEGENS

When a soldier re-enlists he/she is given a copy of the re-enlistment contract. The soldier needs to take that contract to the ID cards/DEERS section at In/Out Processing to get new family member ID cards and update DEERS at the same time. Updates are not automatic, it is the SOLDIER'S responsibility to make sure dependents are updated in DEERS, not the commands. The Re-up personnel will send copies of the contract to Finance and 5th PSB so that the soldier's military records can be updated. Needless to say, the soldier needs to make sure that he retains a copy of all re-enlistment paperwork.

I have been an E2 for over a year and I have no negative counseling or negative actions pending, why am I not being promoted?

By SFC MATT WEEGENS

Well, based on the facts given above, one of the first things that come to mind is, are you on the Unit Enlistment Advancement Report? The report is printed out by the S1 and given to each individual company or troop. It is the responsibility of each unit commander/ISG to scrub the report to ensure that it is thorough and accurate. They need to ensure that each and every soldier is listed on the report and that they are listed in the proper category. If they have a soldier that is not listed then they need to pencil that soldier into the proper category with ALL pertinent information and ensure that the S1 knows there are inconsistencies. The unit also needs to ensure they write yes/no on whether to promote or not. Without that being written in the soldier will not be promoted even if the commander wants the soldier promoted.

Soldiers with High School Seniors can request stabilization from PCS movement during child's senior year

By LTC Kanzenbach

New procedures, outlined in MILPER MSG 01-135 provide soldiers an opportunity to stabilize from PCS movement for the entire year their child is a senior in High School. Soldier must initiate the action by initiating a DA 4187 through their unit commander to the 5th PSB (or other servicing PSB/MPD). Soldiers assigned overseas may require a Foreign Service tour extension and consequently incur additional service requirement.

Soldiers at Ft Polk, even those currently with assignment instructions may be eligible for deletion from orders to maintain stability here during the 2001-2002 school year. This provision applies to officers and enlisted soldiers, but requirements and requests differ slightly. And as always, exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis by our friends at PERSCOM.

Refer to the MILPER MSG 01-135 at: <http://perscomnd04.army.mil/MILPERmsgs.nsf> or consult with your PAC for further information.