

MILPER Message Number: 17-021

Proponent: AHRC-EPF-M

Title
Enlisted Voluntary Early Separation Program

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<https://www.hrc.army.mil/Milper/17-021>

- A. AR 601-210 (Active and Reserve Components Enlistment Program), 31 Aug 16.
- B. AR 635-5-1 (Separation Program Designator (SPD) Codes), 10 Dec 07, (RAR 001, 4 Aug 11).
- C. AR 635-200 (Active Duty Enlisted Administrative Separations), 19 Dec 16.
- D. DODI 1332.14, 27 Jan 14, subject: Enlisted Administrative Separations.
- E. ASA (M&RA) Policy Memorandum, 17 Nov 14, subject: Enlisted Voluntary Early Separations Program.
- F. ALARACT Message 106/2016, 16 Dec 16, subject: Enlisted Voluntary Early Separation Program.
- G. MILPER Message 16-262, AHRC-EPF-R, subject: Regular Army Precision Retention, 15 Sep 16.
- H. Title 10 U.S. Code 1171, Regular Enlisted Members: Early Discharge.
- I. Title 10 U.S. Code 1174, Separation Pay upon Involuntary Discharge or Release from Active Duty.
- J. Title 37 U.S. Code 307, Special Pay: Special Duty Assignment Pay for Enlisted Members.
 1. This message will expire no later than one year from date of issue.
 2. The enlisted voluntary early separation program authorizes commanders exercising special court martial convening authority (SPCMCA) or higher to approve **voluntary early separation** prior to contractual expiration terms of service (ETS) for Regular Army enlisted Soldiers **in two categories**:
 - a. Soldiers approaching their contractual ETS, who have chosen not to reenlist or extend, may request voluntary early separation up to 180 days prior to contractual ETS for the **purpose of accepting employment**.
 - b. Soldiers **denied reenlistment** by Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), **under precision retention** in accordance with reference G above may request voluntary early separation up to 90 days prior to contractual ETS.
 3. **To be eligible** for early separation to accept employment, Soldiers must:
 - a. *Not be mission essential to their assigned organizations*, as determined by the SPCMCA.
 - b. *Provide a written statement* indicating the job offered, whether it is full time or part time, whether compensation is salaried or hourly, and the amount of compensation as verified by documentation from the employer. The statement must also reflect the start date for employment and fall within the 180 day period preceding the Soldier's contractual ETS. The statement should outline how early separation facilitates acceptance of the job offered and how a delay would cause a hardship.

c. The employment must be full-time and should meet the Soldier's income requirements to support expenses listed as part of an integrated 12 month post separation budget completed as part of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP). In instances where the projected income does not meet listed expenses, the Soldier must acknowledge this fact in the statement outlined above in paragraph 3b. The approval authority will take this into consideration when acting on the request for early separation.

d. The effective date of early separation for the purpose of accepting employment as outlined in paragraph 2a above will be no earlier than 10 days prior to the start date of employment. In exceptional cases, where the approval authority determines that the 10 day period is insufficient to meet the needs of the Soldier, Soldiers may be separated up to 30 days prior to the employment start date. Appropriate cases for this time extension include, but are not limited to, Soldiers who require additional time to relocate for employment.

e. Accrued leave will be used to the maximum extent possible as transition leave in conjunction with early separation.

4. Denied reenlistment by HQDA under precision retention in accordance with reference G above.

a. The U.S. Army Human Resources Command (HRC) will announce, via MILPER message, affected MOS/skill levels for precision retention. Final retention determinations will be made by HRC based upon Army requirements, eligibility for reenlistment, and eligibility for reclassification into a shortage or balanced skill. Soldiers denied reenlistment will be notified six months prior to contractual ETS and will receive the immediate reenlistment prohibition reason code of 9F (Denied retention by Secretary of the Army – force shaping/requirements).

b. The command career counselor will serve as the commander's subject matter expert for precision retention. Additional guidance for career counselors on precision retention processing will be published via a subsequent RETAIN message.

5. **The following Soldiers are ineligible** for voluntary early separation under this program:

a. Reserve component Soldiers.

b. Soldiers ordered to active duty due to failure to meet the requirements of their educational agreement.

c. Soldiers who will have less than 36 months of total service at the time of separation.

d. Soldiers who have an approved retirement code in the Total Army Personnel Database (TAPDB).

6. Processing guidance: Soldiers who meet the criteria outlined in paragraph 3 or 4 above will submit a DA Form 4187 through their chain of command requesting voluntary separation.

a. To align this program with transition service requirements, commanders should afford Soldiers the maximum amount of time to seek transition assistance through TAP. Regardless of circumstances, commanders must afford Soldiers a minimum total of 90 days for transition activities. Combining this program with other early release programs to allow separation prior to contractual ETS for periods earlier than those listed in paragraphs 2a and 2b above is not authorized.

b. Voluntary separations prior to contractual ETS under this program will be administered under the provisions of AR 635-200, chapter 16-7 (reference C) and are considered to be discharges under Title 10 U.S.C., section 1171 (reference H). Accordingly, commanders exercising SPCMCA or higher are authorized to approve separations under this program. The service of Soldiers separated under the provisions of this program will be characterized as honorable and, for the purposes of post-service benefits, early separation under this program is considered to be for the convenience of the government. Soldiers separated under this program will be considered to have fulfilled their term of enlistment. Provisions of AR 635-200, chapter 1, section VII (reference C) will govern whether Soldiers will be released from active duty with transfer to the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) or discharged.

c. In accordance with reference F, a Soldier voluntarily separated prior to contractual ETS under this program will not be required to repay any unearned portion of the Soldier's special pay or bonus that is otherwise recoupable under Title 37 U.S.C., section 307 (reference J); however, the Soldier will not be paid any remaining unpaid portion of the special pay or bonus.

d. Separation pay is not authorized for Soldiers separated under this program in accordance with Title 10 U.S.C., section 1174 (reference I).

e. Reason for separation to be entered on the DD Form 214 is "Reduction in Force," and separation program designator codes to be assigned are MCC for service member initiated release or transfer to another component, and KCC for service member initiated discharge (reference B). Reentry eligibility code is RE-1 (reference A).

7. Point of contact for this message is the Enlisted Retirements and Separations Section (AHRC-EPF-M), 502-613-6732 (DSN 983), usarmy.knox.hrc.mbx.epmd-retirement-separations@mail.mil.