

## **Procedures for PPP Streamlining Initiative Phase I Implementation**

The following operational guidance is provided to assist Human Resources Offices (HROs) in implementing revised PPP procedures for Military Spouse Preference (MSP) eligibles transitioning from a registration-based program via the Automated Stopper and Referral System (ASARS) to an application-based priority placement process via USAJOBS. The intent of these procedures is to support the Department's efforts in expanding employment opportunities for military spouses, while preserving the spirit and intent of the PPP. These procedures apply to current and future MSP eligibles who request to register in the PPP until the effective date of implementation as well as those who apply to a job announcement by selecting the PPP MSP eligibility on or after the implementation date, provided they meet all eligibility criteria.

### **1. Registration Procedures for MSP Eligible**

a. Prior to Phase 1 implementation on April 1, 2019, you will continue to register eligible Program S registrants and conduct file maintenance actions following current PPP policy and procedures. In addition, you must:

(1) Inform impacted Program S registrants of the impending PPP changes.

(2) Provide military spouses requesting Program S registration the following documents which explain the PPP MSP program changes and will be used when they apply to exercise their priority status through the application process:

(a) The MSP notification letter which will be sent to MSPs currently registered in ASARS that informs them of impending program changes;

(b) MSP Fact Sheet which outlines who is eligible for MSP, how to exercise MSP, and its applicability to DoD job vacancies;

(c) MSP Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), designed to help answer questions military spouses may have regarding how MSP will work in the future; and

(d) The MSP Self-Certification Checklist, which is required each time an MSP applies to a job opportunity announcement (JOA) when exercising his or her priority status through the application process beginning on April 1, 2019.

(3) Inform Program S registrants that they will continue to receive consideration via ASARS for positions they match against on or prior to April 1, 2019, until all requisitions are finalized, in accordance with current PPP policy.

b. As of April 1, 2019, when full implementation begins, if an MSP requests to register in Program S, you must:

(1) Inform the military spouse of the changes to the PPP and how to receive priority consideration via the application process, and

(2) Provide copies of the MSP Fact sheet, MSP FAQ sheet, and the MSP Self-Certification Checklist (explained above).

c. Though registration counseling will no longer be required as of the April 1, 2019, implementation date, HROs will continue to provide guidance to MSP eligible applicants on the process for how they will exercise their PPP MSP priority status, explain the application requirements and the definition of “best qualified” (BQ), and answer any questions applicable to MSP and the PPP.

d. HROs should ensure the MSP Self-Certification Checklist is available as handouts and on websites to ensure all MSP eligibles have access to the form.

## **2. Gaining Activity Procedures and Requirements**

a. The gaining HRO must work all Program S referrals received up to the April 1, 2019, Phase I implementation date in accordance with standard PPP procedures (i.e., notification to Program S referrals to apply to the JOA in order to receive MSP consideration). If the closing date of the corresponding JOA is prior to April 1, 2019, only those military spouses who were received as a Program S referral on the requisition and applied to the JOA will receive MSP consideration via the PPP.

b. All internal competitive JOAs with closing dates on or after April 1, 2019, must include the MSP PPP eligibility flag so that military spouses may exercise their priority status via the application process.

c. In situations where the closing date of the JOA is on or after April 1, 2019, there may be Program S matches received against the PPP requisition, as well as military spouses who have applied to the JOA under the MSP PPP eligibility. In these cases, the HRO must consider both the Program S referrals AND the military spouses who were not Program S referrals but applied to the JOA under the MSP PPP eligibility to exercise their priority status.

d. For audit purposes, HROs must ensure detailed records are available regarding the status of each military spouse who applies to the JOA to exercise his or her MSP PPP eligibility. Such records include, but are not limited to, the BQ determination, referral of the BQ spouse, and selection/non-selection of the BQ spouse.

## Procedures for PPP Streamlining Initiative Phase I Implementation

### Q&As

1. **Question:** What is the last date that an HRO can input a Program S registration in ASARS?

**Answer:** The last date that Program S registrations can be input in ASARS is Friday, March 29, 2019. Any Program S registrations submitted in ASARS as of March 29 will process in the nightly cycle and be included as referrals against requisitions for the last and final time on Monday, April 1. The capability to input Program S registrations will no longer be available as of the April 1 implementation date.

2. **Question:** Will applying for MSP through the application process change the spouse's referral status?

**Answer:** No. You will still consider the MSP applicant in the same manner as you did prior to implementation. The only change is the military spouse will no longer be required to register in ASARS and be limited to five series. He or she can use MSP for any position to which they apply using the MSP PPP eligibility flag as long as they meet the eligibility and qualifications requirements.

3. **Question:** Can a military spouse who is registered in Program S of the PPP also apply to a JOA to exercise his or her MSP PPP status without being a Program S referral?

**Answer:** If the closing date of the JOA is prior to the implementation date, referral through Program S is a requirement for MSP consideration. If the closing date of the JOA is on or after the implementation date, a military spouse will exercise his or her priority status by applying to the JOA using the MSP eligibility flag. However, remember that any Program S referral(s) received against a requisition must be worked to completion and therefore must be afforded MSP consideration.

4. **Question:** After the implementation, if a reconstruction is requested covering a time period prior to implementation and Program S referrals are identified, must they be considered, and if so, how?

**Answer:** Yes, if competitive procedures are/were applicable, Program S referrals must be worked whether received on a requisition or reconstruction, even after the implementation date. In these instances, a BQ determination must be made.

5. **Question:** Management has requested cancellation of an RPA that has no outstanding referral resumes on the requisition but has military spouses that applied to the JOA using the MSP PPP eligibility flag. The requisition can be cancelled but what should we do about the military spouses who applied to the JOA?

**Answer:** If management requests cancellation of an RPA prior to the closure of the JOA, CTP approval is not required and the military spouses do not have to be worked. However, if cancellation of the RPA is not requested until after closure of the JOA, CTP approval is required.

6. **Question:** A military spouse of a 100% disabled service member injured while on active duty applies to a JOA using the MSP PPP eligibility flag. Is this military spouse eligible for MSP?

**Answer:** No. A military spouse of a 100% disabled service member injured while on active duty or the un-remarried widow or widower of a deceased service member who was killed while performing active duty is eligible for noncompetitive appointment under EO 13473; however,

these military spouses are not entitled to MSP and are therefore ineligible for priority consideration via the application-based process of the PPP.

**\*\* DO NOT REPLY TO THIS MESSAGE; IT WAS SENT FROM AN AUTOMATED,  
UNMONITORED ACCOUNT \*\***

Subject: Implementation of the Priority Placement Program (PPP) Changes

This is to notify you of program changes that are being implemented to streamline the PPP and the way you exercise your priority placement eligibility.

You will continue to receive priority placement based on your military spouse preference (MSP) eligibility, but will do so under simplified procedures. You will no longer be required to report to a Human Resources Office upon relocation to the commuting area of your military sponsor's new duty station to register in the PPP or be restricted to five occupations due to system limitations imposed by the Automated Stopper and Referral System (ASARS). You will simply exercise your priority placement status as an MSP eligible by applying for position vacancies of your choice. Ultimately, this change standardizes MSP procedures, simplifies the employment process, and empowers military spouses to exercise MSP selectively.

To exercise your MSP eligibility under the streamlined process, simply complete and include the attached MILITARY SPOUSE PPP SELF-CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST, along with all other required documentation, when applying to vacancy announcements via USA Jobs for which interested and available.

Keep in mind that while the transition from ASARS to the application process affords greater flexibilities for military spouses, the overarching MSP policy as codified in title 10, United States Code 1784 has not changed. MSP entitlement is limited to the offer of only one permanent Federal position (including NAF and AAFES), regardless of whether preference was applied.

Your transition to the application process is effective April 1, 2019. As of this date, your Program S registration in ASARS will be deactivated. You will continue to receive priority placement and MSP for positions to which you were referred as a Program S match via ASARS prior to this date throughout the recruitment process for such positions. Beginning April 1, 2019, you will need to exercise your MSP eligibility solely through the application-based process. For additional information, you may visit the Office of the Military Community & Family Policy (MC& FP) public website at <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/> and the Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS) public website at <https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/EC/Advise>. These websites contain Military Spouse PPP FAQs, as well as a Military Spouse PPP Fact Sheet, and a copy of the Military Spouse PPP Self-Certification Checklist.

After visiting these websites and reviewing the attached information, if you still have questions, please contact any DoD Human Resources Office in the local commuting area.

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Military Spouse Preference (MSP) is a Department of Defense (DoD) program derived from title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.) 1784. Public Law 99-145, enacted in 1986 and codified at 10 U.S.C. 1784, requires the Secretary of Defense to prescribe regulations that provide employment preference to spouses of active duty military members of the United States (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. Since 1989, military spouses have been required to register in Program S of the Priority Placement Program (PPP) which uses automated referral procedures to exercise MSP for competitive service vacancies in the U.S.

The good news is registration in the PPP is no longer required for spouses. Additionally, under Section 573 of the FY2019 National Defense Authorization Act enacted on August 13, 2018, a temporary expansion of the noncompetitive appointing authority for military spouses includes all spouses of active duty military members, even in the absence of a PCS move. Essentially, this change amends Section 3330d of title 5, USC, by affording noncompetitive appointment eligibility to a non-relocating spouse of a member of the Armed Forces using Executive Order 13473. This temporary authority expires on August 13, 2023. See “How do I exercise MSP and Priority Status as a Military Spouse” below for more details.

## **WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR MILITARY SPOUSES?**

The most fundamental requirement is marriage to an active duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces. In addition:

- You must reside within the commuting area of your sponsor’s permanent duty station (PDS);
- You must provide proof of marriage to the active duty sponsor, proof of military member’s active duty status, and other documentation required by the vacancy announcement to which you are applying; and
- You must meet all pre-employment criteria and be eligible for immediate noncompetitive appointment to a position in the competitive service.

## **HOW DO I EXERCISE MSP AND PRIORITY STATUS AS A MILITARY SPOUSE?**

Program stakeholders for MSP should be aware that the hiring process for MSP eligibles has been restructured to enable military spouses to take charge and be the driver of their own careers. Stakeholders should also note that the hiring process has been simplified by changing it from registration and referral to application based. This change replaces the automated process and

eliminates the mandatory requirement to register in the PPP. It allows military spouses to independently exercise their preference for a greater variety of positions without contacting a Human Resources Office (HRO) or waiting to be notified about Job Opportunity Announcements (JOAs).

To receive MSP and exercise priority status through the application process, you must:

- Create a login.gov account to sign in to USAJOBS (first time users). Login.gov is a service that offers secure and private online access to government programs, such as Federal benefits, services, and applications.
- Use the same email address for login.gov and USAJOBS.
- Create a new password.
- Have a working phone number (mobile or landline); login.gov will send a unique security code each time you sign into your account.
- Create a USAJOBS profile using the same email address for login.gov.
- Create a new password for USAJOBS (first time users).
- Build or post a resume to the USAJOBS profile and upload essential documents, including a copy of your sponsor's PCS orders and the Military Spouse PPP Self-Certification Checklist which must be included with each job application.
- Apply to the JOA for which interested and available.
- MSP and priority status for permanent positions may be used only once for each PCS move and it only applies to positions in the commuting area of your sponsor's PDS. MSP and priority placement eligibility terminates if you:
  - Accept or decline permanent Federal<sup>1</sup> employment in the commuting area of your sponsor's PDS;
  - Lose your spousal status due to divorce, death of your sponsor, or your sponsor's retirement or separation from active duty; or
  - No longer meet the requirements for noncompetitive appointment eligibility.

## **DOES MSP AND PRIORITY PLACEMENT APPLY TO ALL DOD JOB VACANCIES?**

No. MSP and priority placement do not apply to positions covered by a mandatory mobility agreement; positions in the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System (DCIPS) and those in organizations that have as a primary function intelligence, counterintelligence, or national security; and positions filled through noncompetitive procedures.

## WHAT TYPES OF POSITIONS CAN I APPLY FOR?

The following guidelines will govern your JOA choices:

- You must meet all established Federal and DoD qualifications requirements.
- You may include any or all DoD installations/organizations within the commuting area of your sponsor's new PDS.
- You may apply for permanent as well as 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.

## WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

In all cases when you apply for DoD positions as an MSP eligible, you must follow all instructions as required by the JOA. This process is necessary in order for the HRO to determine if you rank among the best-qualified candidates for the position. The evaluation factors used to rank you are the same factors that apply to all of the competitive candidates. If you do not submit an application, you will not be considered for the position.

## WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

The MSP Program is too complex to adequately explain in such an abbreviated format. This fact sheet only provides an overview of the program's basic policies and procedures. For more details, you can find information on:

<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>

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/education-employment/for-spouses/managing-your-career/military-spouse-preference-in-employment?inheritRedirect=true&redirect=%2Feducation-employment>

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<sup>1</sup> Employment in NAF positions and positions in the military exchange services are considered Federal employment for the purpose of MSP.



**MILITARY SPOUSE PPP SELF-CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST**

**IMPORTANT: This form must be submitted with your application each time you apply to a Department of Defense (DoD) position on USAJOBS in order to receive Military Spouse Preference.**

Applicant's Name:

Military Sponsor's Name:

Date of Marriage to Military Sponsor:

Military Sponsor's Current Duty Station:

**INSTRUCTIONS** - Read items 1-12 and click on each "Choose an Item." Choose the option from the drop-down menu that best describes your status as a military spouse. Completion of each item is verification that you have read and understand that the information you provide is truthful and can be used to verify your eligibility as a military spouse preference applicant. A completed self-certification checklist must be submitted with each application and must be dated within last 30 days.

1. I                    US Citizen.
  
2.                    an            active duty military member of the U.S. Armed Forces (including the U.S. Coast Guard and full-time National Guard or Reserves) and my sponsor has been serving on active duty for more than 180 consecutive days.
  
3. My sponsor's Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders                    in conjunction with retirement or separation from active duty.
  
4.                    that preference only applies to positions within the commuting area of my sponsor's current permanent duty station.
  
5.                    that loss of spousal status due to divorce, death of my sponsor, or my sponsor's retirement or separation from active duty will result in terminating my eligibility for spouse preference.
  
6.                    that the acceptance or declination of a temporary position does not impact my priority placement status. "Temporary" positions include:
  - (1) Positions filled by temporary or term appointment, including Non-Appropriated Fund (NAF) time-limited appointments, regardless of duration or work schedule;
  
  - (2) Positions filled by permanent appointment with intermittent or seasonal work schedules; and

(3) NAF positions with a “flexible” work schedule, or any NAF position for which the employment category is identified as “flexible.”

7. that I am only eligible for preference for ONE job offer of a permanent position. A “permanent position” is defined as a Federal appropriated or non-appropriated position which has a fixed full-time or part-time work schedule.

8. that accepting or declining a permanent position will result in terminating my eligibility for military spouse preference at my current location.

9. received a job offer for a permanent position within the commuting area of my military sponsor’s current permanent duty station.

10. currently occupying a permanent appropriated or non-appropriated position at the current duty station.

11. on a telework agreement with my current federal job that allows me to work for them on a permanent basis after relocating to my military sponsor’s current duty station.

12. had on-the-job performance or conduct problems within the last 12 months.

**Certification Statement: I, \_\_\_\_\_ certify that I have read and understand the information contained in this self-certification checklist and that my responses are accurate and truthful.**

**Date:**

**Documents required to be submitted with each application** (Note: DoD agencies may require additional documentation. Please refer to the announcement to ensure all required documentation is submitted with your application. It is highly recommended that you save all documents to your USAJOBS account to facilitate applying to multiple positions.)

**Military Spouses without prior Federal work experience**

- Narrative resume
- PCS orders
- Marriage certificate or license
- Signed self-certification checklist
- Veterans preference documentation (e.g., DD-214, VA letter, Statement of Service), if applicable
- Transcripts, if applicable

**Military Spouses with prior Federal work experience**

- Narrative resume
- PCS orders
- Marriage certificate or license
- SF-50s (e.g., LWOP, highest grade held, overseas appointments, etc.)

- SF 75 Information
- Documentation of performance rating of record (dated within the last 12 months)
- Signed self-certification checklist
- Veterans preference documentation (e.g., DD-214, VA letter, Statement of Service), if applicable
- Transcripts, if applicable

**PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT:** Sections 1301, 3302, 3502 of Title 5, U.S. Code provide for the issuance of rules governing the competitive service and authorize solicitation of this information. Gaining and releasing activities use this information to place registrants, report actions and update data as well as refer names to potential employers or to provide information to you about potential employment. Furnishing the requested information is voluntary, but failure to provide it may result in missed opportunity for proper placement or reemployment under the respective placement assistance program.