



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER AND FORT POLK  
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MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) and Fort Polk Policy 3 - Retention Awards and Incentive Policy

1. References.

- a. Army Regulation (AR) 601-280, (Army Retention Program)
- b. Department of the Army Pamphlet 601-280, (Army Retention Program Procedures)
- c. Sections 520c and 2261 of title 10, United States Code
- d. Department of the Army, Office of the Assistant Secretary, Manpower and Reserve Affairs memorandum, Presentation of Recognition Items for Recruitment and Retention Purposes, dated 15 July 2009.

2. Purpose. The purpose of this memorandum is to outline the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) and Fort Polk Retention Program.

3. Objective. To ensure leaders and Soldiers are aware of key aspects within the retention program. Only Soldiers demonstrating potential for future development and maintaining a record of acceptable performance will be afforded the privilege of reenlisting. Other Soldiers will be separated under appropriate administrative procedures or barred from continued service.

4. Responsibilities. Retention is a command responsibility. Every Officer and Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) have the responsibility of rendering energetic and enthusiastic involvement to the commander's retention program. Commanders will execute the duties and responsibilities as retention officers in accordance with (IAW) AR 601-280, para 2-6. Career Counselors are responsible for managing the commander's retention program IAW AR 601-280, para 2-6p and 2-6q.

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The Command Senior Career Counselor is the principal talent manager for all subordinate Career Counselors and will exercise duties IAW AR 601-280, para 2-6o.

5. Mission. The JRTC and Fort Polk Retention Mission is to reenlist the greatest number of eligible Soldiers consistent with the needs of the Army or transfer into the Reserve Component (RC). Commanders, Career Counselors, and Retention NCOs must work closely together to accomplish this mission.

6. General. The success of each unit retention program depends on maximum command involvement. Retention incentive and awards policies are designed to enhance the commander's ability to accomplish Army retention and transition mission objectives. All commanders will develop, implement, and maintain independent Army retention incentive awards programs.

7. Incentive/Awards Policy. To ensure a vibrant retention program, it is important to recognize Soldiers who reenlist and units that accomplish their mission. All units will establish their own incentive and award programs to honor Soldiers reenlisting and those who elect to transfer into the RC. A copy of the retention incentive and awards program will be posted on all unit retention bulletin boards. Soldiers who reenlist and units that accomplish their retention mission objectives will be recognized IAW the Contingency Operations and Retention Budget enclosures.

8. Continued Education Incentive. Units are encouraged to develop and implement an education incentive offered to Soldiers on a case-by-case basis.

9. Training and Inspections. Inspections are an integral part of ensuring accuracy and efficiency. At a minimum, semi-annual staff assistance visits (SAVs) will be conducted for all unit retention programs. Quarterly training will be conducted by the JRTC Retention Office for all subordinate Career Counselors and Retention NCOs to ensure retention personnel are fully trained in all aspects of their duties, current policies, and procedures IAW enclosure 4.

10. Contingency Operations. Preparation for contingency operations is vital to the success of the JRTC and Fort Polk's retention mission. All units will ensure the retention program is supported during continuous operations in austere environments IAW enclosure 5.

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11. Retention Budget. It is imperative that the Army Retention Program is sufficiently resourced and publicized throughout the command. The JRTC and Fort Polk Retention Office will allocate QPSG funds to support subordinate retention programs. Units will ensure supplemental funds are allocated to implement, sustain, and accomplish Army Retention Program missions and requirements. These include, but are not limited to, recognition items, retention publicity items (RPIs), awards, travel funds to attend training events or visit geographically dispersed units, supplies, or other materials to support the Army Retention Program IAW enclosure 6.

12. Conclusion. Success in the Army Retention Program enhances personnel readiness, which is a command responsibility. Successful retention programs are a direct indicator of the quality of leadership exhibited by commanders, officers, and NCOs. Department of the Army (DA) policy is that only those Soldiers who have maintained a record of acceptable performance will be offered the privilege of reenlisting within the RA or transferring or enlisting into the RC. Commands must design, implement, and maintain an aggressive local retention program that support the Army policy.

13. Proponent. The JRTC and Fort Polk Retention Office, SGM Jason G. Pickett, JRTC Command Career Counselor, at (337) 531-7387 or email at [jason.g.pickett2.mil@army.mil](mailto:jason.g.pickett2.mil@army.mil).

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## Enclosure 1 - Organization of Appointments

### 1. Retention Organization and Career Counselor Utilization.

a. Retention is a Commander's program that follows specific guidance, directives, and policies set by HQDA, as a result commanders, by virtue of their position, are the retention officers for their respective commands. The program requires active involvement, support, and interest at all levels of command. The Command Sergeant Major (CSM), as the senior enlisted Soldier in the command, is by virtue of his or her position the retention NCO for their command. Career Counselors report directly to the CSM.

b. The Command Career Counselor will have the primary staff responsibility for the retention program. They will be a member of the Special Staff and devote full time to the retention program. Furthermore, the Command Career Counselor has full authority for manning, utilization, and professional development of all PMOS 79S within the command. The Command Career Counselor can assign/reassign as needed in coordination with the G-1. The Command Career Counselor retains authority to recommend relief/reclassification of all assigned 79S when it is deemed necessary IAW AR 601-280. The rating scheme for the Command Career Counselor is as follows:

1. Rater: Command Sergeant Major, JRTC and Fort Polk
2. Senior Rater: Commanding General, JRTC and Fort Polk

c. The Senior Retention Operations NCO will have primary staff responsibility for the retention program. They will be a member of the Special Staff and devote full time to the retention program. The rating scheme for the Senior Retention Operations NCO is as follows:

1. Rater: Command Career Counselor, JRTC and Fort Polk
2. Senior Rater: Command Sergeant Major, JRTC and Fort Polk

d. The Operations NCO will have primary staff responsibility for the retention program. They will be a member of the Special Staff, and they will be devoted full time to the retention program. The rating scheme for the Operations NCO is as follows:

1. Rater: Senior Retention Operations NCO, JRTC and Fort Polk
2. Senior Rater: Command Career Counselor, JRTC and Fort Polk

e. The Senior Career Counselor will have primary staff responsibility for the retention program. They will be a member of the Special Staff and devote full time to the retention program. The rating scheme for the Senior Career Counselor is as follows:

1. Rater: Brigade CSM
2. Senior Rater: Brigade Commander



f. The Career Counselor will have primary staff responsibility for the retention program and be a member of the Battalion Special Staff and devote full time to the retention program. Career Counselors are expected to devote maximum time, effort, and energy to meet Army personnel readiness missions and end-strength requirements. Accordingly, they will not be used, attached, or assigned tasks, functions, and/ or duties, other than those authorized in direct support of the Army Retention Program. Furthermore, they will not be assigned any additional or roster type duties that are not in direct support of the Army Retention Program. These include, but are not limited to, duties as: Sergeant of the Guard, Charge of Quarters, Staff Duty NCO, Equal Opportunity NCO, or Training NCO. The rating scheme for the Career Counselor and the Battalion/Squadron Retention NCO is as follows:

1. Rater: Battalion CSM
2. Senior Rater: Battalion Commander

2. If the Battalion is not assigned a Career Counselor by Table of Distribution and Allowance, the Commander will assign a qualified NCO as the Battalion full-time Retention NCO, IAW AR 601-280. The Retention NCO will be free of any additional duties that may detract from the unit's retention mission and perform all duties as a Career Counselor. Soldiers assigned these duties will meet the same qualifications as those required for Career Counselors IAW DA Pam 601-280. Soldiers selected should have at least 12 months of retainability in the unit.

3. Commanders of companies, batteries, detachments, and similar size commands will appoint a part-time additional duty Retention NCO in writing. Soldiers assigned as an additional duty Retention NCO will meet the same qualifications as those required for Career Counselors IAW DA Pam 601-280. When possible, Soldiers having previous successful experience in retention should be assigned as the additional duty Retention NCO. First Sergeants, Platoon Sergeants, PMOS 79S Career Counselors, and Battalion full-time Retention NCOs will not be assigned additional duties as the Retention NCOs at company or similar levels of command. Commanders will evaluate the performance of each additional duty Retention NCO to determine whether the Soldier should continue to be retained on such duty.

## Enclosure 2 - Retention Awards Program

1. The JRTC and Fort Polk Retention Awards Program is designed to recognize units displaying excellence in their retention programs and superior achievement in attaining assigned objectives that support the goals of the Army Retention Program. The success of the JRTC and Fort Polk Retention Program depends on effective leadership, vigorous command involvement, and aggressive programs at organizational levels. Success is indicative of the quality of leadership exhibited by Officers and NCOs. Mission success is measured by 100 percent achievement of the commander's objectives in Active Army, RC, and Special Mission categories. In addition to this program, subordinate commanders at each level will develop and implement an independent Retention Awards Program. The awards listed below will be presented at the Commanding General's Annual Retention Awards ceremony.

a. Commanding General's "Retention Excellence" Award. Units within JRTC (1st Battalion (ABN), 509th Infantry Regiment, Operations Group, and 1st Battalion, 5th Aviation Regiment) who achieve 100 percent of their annual mission in all categories shall receive a trophy or plaque to be displayed in their headquarters. Additionally, a Certificate of Achievement will be presented to all Career Counselors (AC and RC) who accomplish their annual retention missions.

b. Commanding General's "Top Producer" Award. To compete for the "Top Producer" award, the Career Counselor's assigned unit must achieve mission success in all categories. The Career Counselor of the unit with the highest overall percentage of mission accomplishment, averaged by the AC and RC missions, will be recognized as the "Top Producer" and awarded an ARCOM. The unit will receive a trophy or plaque to be displayed in their headquarters.

2. Responsibilities. The JRTC and Fort Polk Command Career Counselor provides overall supervision for the retention awards program. The Installation Retention Office will:

- a. Select the award recipients utilizing the parameters above.
- b. Ensure the awards are processed and prepared for timely presentation.
- c. Coordinate awards ceremony and presentation.



### Enclosure 3 - Retention Incentives Program

1. Incentive awards programs enhance commanders' abilities to accomplish assigned retention and transition missions. All commanders will develop, implement, and maintain independent incentive awards programs. Unit level incentive programs will be announced in memorandum format and distributed throughout the command, maintained by each career counselor, to include those detailed in an additional or full-time duty capacity and displayed on unit retention bulletin boards.

2. It is incumbent on all leaders to keep good Soldiers in the Army. The ability to do this requires everyday involvement with Soldiers coupled with knowledge to properly inform them of their options. Everyone in the chain of command is responsible, because retention is a commander's program. Reenlistment will be the subject for each counseling session, beginning with the Soldier's arrival to the unit. All leaders are challenged to create a professionally rewarding experience for Soldiers in assigned positions.

3. To provide tangible recognition for Soldiers reenlisting, the following incentive awards will be given to each re-enlistee, to include those Soldiers enlisting or transferring to the Army National Guard (ARNG) or U.S. Army Reserve (USAR). In addition, Soldiers accepted to Special Programs, which include Green to Gold, Warrant Officer Training, U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School (USMAPS), or Officer Candidate School (OCS), will be given these same incentives.

a. One (1) four-day pass including two full duty days, to be taken within 90 days after reenlistment for Soldiers who reenlist for two, three, or four years.

b. Two (2) four-day passes including two full duty days, to be taken within 180 days after reenlistment for Soldiers who reenlist for five or more years.

c. The day of reenlistment is a non-duty day and used for processing of personnel actions related to reenlistment.

d. All Soldiers who reenlist will be allowed 30 days off the duty roster from the date of reenlistment.

4. Reenlistees receiving an incentive award but not able to take advantage due to deployment, field training exercises, or other mission essential reasons are to be afforded the opportunity to take the incentive award at the Company Commander's discretion. Subordinate Commanders will establish an incentive awards program for their unit. This program should add to or mirror the Commanding General's and Brigades Incentive Programs.

#### Enclosure 4 - Training and Inspections

1. Inspections. Inspections of the unit's retention program will be conducted on a semi-annual basis. The Installation Retention Office inspects the Brigade Retention Programs IAW FORSCOM inspection checklists. The Career Counselors that cannot attend inspections due to special circumstances must contact the Command Career Counselor to schedule a makeup inspection. The Senior Career Counselor will inspect all battalion Retention Programs.

2. Training. All PMOS 79S Career Counselors assigned to JRTC (1st Battalion (ABN), 509th Infantry Regiment, Operations Group, and 1st Battalion, 5th Aviation Regiment) will conduct training as delegated by the Command Career Counselor. At a minimum, JRTC will conduct Quarterly Retention Training. The Command Career Counselor may direct more frequent training to address changes in retention policies, procedures, or performance of retention teams. The Installation Retention Office will publish and maintain a record of all training sessions. All Career Counselors and full-time Retention NCOs are required to attend. Career Counselors and full-time Retention NCOs that cannot attend training due to special circumstances must contact the JRTC and Fort Polk Retention Office to schedule a makeup.



## Enclosure 5 - Contingency Operations

1. Within all FORSCOM elements, retention will continue through all deployments, contingency operations, and all phases of mobilization unless specifically terminated by HQDA.
2. Within JRTC and Fort Johnson, the Commanding General and Command Sergeant Major along with Command Career Counselor will deploy in support of the units of JRTC.
3. Career Counselors will deploy with their unit. It is the responsibility of the respective Retention Office to implement a deployment plan, which consists of all items necessary for conducting retention operations while deployed with little or no advanced warning.
4. The Career Counselor or Retention NCO, will at a minimum, put together the required items necessary to sustain their unit for 120-day deployment IAW addendum A.
5. Responsibilities.
  - a. Upon notification of deployment, or within 15 working days after the deployment in the case of a no-notice deployment, the Retention NCO or servicing Career Counselor, will ensure all deployed Soldiers personnel records are screened to determine eligibility and all Soldiers are prepared on the RETAIN System.
  - b. The rear detachment Career Counselor will continue to support those units and Soldiers not deployed. Additionally, every Soldier unable to meet the retention commitments previously reenlisted for stabilization, retraining, or reassignment will be identified.
  - c. All Career Counselors and Retention NCOs slated for deployment will coordinate with the Senior Career Counselor for RETAIN LOCIDs and automated equipment while deployed.
  - d. During deployment the Career Counselor or Retention NCO will remain under the direct control of the Commander and Command Sergeant Major. The Retention NCO will be utilized for retention actions only, unless retention actions have been terminated by HQDA. If retention is terminated by HQDA, the Commander or CSM will use the Retention NCO as needed to benefit the unit. Upon reinstatement of retention actions, the Retention NCO will resume retention duties.

e. Upon arrival in the theater of operation, the Career Counselor or Retention NCO will establish and maintain communications with the Senior Retention. Additionally, they must establish telephonic or electronic communications with the rear support cell in CONUS and obtain the required transportation within their area of responsibility.

f. At no time will a Career Counselor (PMOS 79S) be utilized for any purpose not directly related to the retention mission unless retention actions are terminated by HQDA. This includes EOC NCO, Driver, TOC/TAC NCO, or any other task not related with retention. Career Counselors are part of the Installation or Commanders Special Staff and will be utilized as such.

6. The ability to adapt to any situation during deployment will ensure that the retention process does not stop. Our Soldiers deserve nothing less than total commitment during deployment and during their future in the Army.

7. Items required to support retention during deployment.

a. At a minimum, 1 vehicle with a driver will be available for the use of the deployed Career Counselors or Retention NCOs to support retention actions. If a driver cannot be provided, the deploying unit will ensure that the Career Counselor or Retention NCO is certified and qualified as the specific vehicle driver or has access to transportation.

b. The deploying unit will ensure that the Retention Cell has a dedicated phone line for theater and worldwide access, x2 LAN lines with dedicated IP Address, adequate office space, access to copy machines and are co-located with the Special Staff section.

c. The deploying unit S1 will provide a correct manifest of all deploying Soldiers assigned or attached NLT 15 working days prior to debarking. Additionally, the Career Counselor and Retention NCO will be manifested as part of the Commanders Special Staff or as part of the Installation support element.

d. All retention containers will be accounted for and shipped with the parent HHC for each Career Counselor and Retention NCO.

e. Computer equipment / electronic equipment.

(1) One Laptop, with internal modem capabilities with the following programs installed: current MS Windows program (or authorized operating system), email capabilities, Army RETAIN, and EDAS software.

(2) Printers-LaserJet and Color

(3) All connector cables, 110 and 220 extension cords, transformer if needed in theater of operation, extra fuses, and power savers.

(4) Scanner

(5) Complete retention packets on all Soldiers 24 months out.

(6) Copy paper

(7) Miscellaneous. office supplies

(8) Two large black Tuff Boxes with wheels

(9) U.S. Flag (3)

(10) Certificate Binder (min. 300)

(11) Discharge Certificates (min. 300)

(12) Oath of Retention Certificates (min. 300)

2. All items will be in a 120-day supply and maintained in garrison before alerted for deployment.

## Enclosure 6 - Retention Budget

1. Funds provided for the retention program can be expended for travel, recognition, publicity, and promotional activities that are directly related to the Army Retention Program. Funds can be expended for furnishings of unit retention facilities, training materials, supplies, leased vehicle, and rental or purchase of office equipment/machines solely for the use of retention personnel. Additional purchases include plaques, trophies, and similar items for use in the Commander's Retention Awards Program. Retention funds are intended to enhance the Commander's Retention Program.
2. IAW references 1c and 1d, JRTC and Fort Polk budgeting officials will ensure a budget is issued prior to the beginning of each fiscal year. The cost of each recognition item will not exceed \$49.99 per item. Recognition items are designed to recognize or commemorate service in the Army and may be presented to Soldiers, Family Members, and other individuals who provide support that substantially facilitates service in the Armed Forces.
3. The JRTC and Fort Polk Retention Office will allocate QPSG funds to support subordinate retention programs (1st Battalion (ABN), 509th Infantry Regiment, Operations Group, and 1st Battalion, 5th Aviation Regiment). Units will ensure supplemental funds are allocated to implement, sustain, and accomplish Army Retention Program missions and requirements. Each unit will ensure the allocation of supplemental funds separate from those issued by the JRTC and Fort Polk Retention Office.
4. The Army Retention Program will be supported by promotional materials. In addition to those items provided by the Army, each command should develop additional ideas to publicize retention opportunities. Each budgeting official will ensure there is a separate budget for program advertisement. This includes, but not limited to posters, bulletin boards, printing supplies, banners, or advertising software. This will ensure the program is properly advertised throughout the unit area and installation.