

## **Military Service by Transgender Persons and Persons with Gender Dysphoria**

*Fact Sheet for: Applicants for Military Service*

### **Things to Know:**

- The new Department of Defense policy with respect to *Military Service by Transgender Persons and Persons with Gender Dysphoria* is effective April 12, 2019.
- All persons will continue to be treated with dignity and respect.
- The new policy is NOT a ban on the accession of transgender persons. In fact, it prohibits the denial of accession solely on the basis of gender identity and ensures equal application of military standards regardless of gender identity in order to maintain military effectiveness and lethality.
- All Service members, except those who are exempt, must adhere to the standards associated with their biological sex. The new policy does not require transgender Service members to conceal their gender identity.
- The new policy allows persons with a history of gender dysphoria to join the military if they can demonstrate a period of 36 months of stability in their biological sex. Persons who have a history of gender dysphoria and cannot meet the stability requirement or who have a history of sex reassignment or genital reconstruction surgery are disqualified without a waiver.
- Applicants who access on or after April 12, 2019 will be accessed or commissioned based on the new policy, provided they are medically qualified in all respects in accordance with DoDI 6130.03.
- Applicants who are accessed prior to April 12, 2019, and are medically qualified in their preferred gender are exempt from the new policy and subject to the standards of the 2016 policy.

FOR A COPY OF THE DIRECTIVE-TYPE MEMORANDUM 19-004, GO TO:  
[HTTPS://WWW.ESD.WHS.MIL/DD/](https://www.esd.whs.mil/DD/)

FOR ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS: CONSULT YOUR CHAIN OF COMMAND AND/OR YOUR  
SERVICE CENTRAL COORDINATION CELL

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This chart shows the differences between the Defense Department's 2016 transgender policy and the 2018 update to that policy.

## Service Members

### Transgender with No Diagnosis or History of Gender Dysphoria

Pre-2016	2016	2018
Generally disqualified	May serve in biological sex	May serve in biological sex

### Service Member with Diagnosis of Gender Dysphoria

Pre-2016	2016	2018
Generally disqualified	May serve in preferred gender, upon completing transition	Unless exempt, may serve in biological sex. If unable or unwilling to serve in biological sex, separation procedures may apply

## New Applicants

### Transgender with No Diagnosis or History of Gender Dysphoria

Pre-2016	2016	2018
Generally disqualified	May serve in biological sex	May serve in biological sex

### Applicant with Diagnosis or History of Gender Dysphoria

Pre-2016	2016	2018
Generally disqualified	Presumptively disqualified unless stable for 18 months in preferred gender or biological sex	Presumptively disqualified unless stable for 36 months and willing and able to serve in biological sex

### Applicant with History of Medical Transition Treatment\*

Pre-2016	2016	2018
Generally disqualified	Presumptively disqualified unless stable for 18 months in preferred gender or biological sex	Presumptively disqualified



### Gender Dysphoria

A marked incongruence between one's experienced/expressed gender and assigned gender. Associated with clinically significant distress and impairment of functioning.



### Biological Sex

A person's biological status as male or female, based on chromosomes, gonads, hormones, and genitals.



### Exempt Persons

Service members who joined the military in their preferred gender or were diagnosed with gender dysphoria before the 2018 policy took effect are exempt.



### Waivers

Military services may grant waivers on a case-by-case basis.



\* Medical Transition Treatment: Cross-sex hormone therapy, or sex reassignment

THIS GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION MAY NOT REPRESENT ALL CASES OR CIRCUMSTANCES.

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#### **Key Elements of the New Policy**

- Service in the Military Services should be open to all persons who can meet the high standards for military service and readiness without special accommodations.
- All persons must be treated with dignity and respect. No person, solely on the basis of his or her gender identity, will be:
  - Denied accession into the Military Services;
  - Involuntarily separated or discharged from the Military Services;
  - Denied enlistment or continuation of service in the Military Services; or
  - Subjected to adverse action or treatment.
- Except where a provision of policy has granted an exception, transgender persons must be subject to the same standards and requirements as all other persons.
  - When a standard, requirement, or policy depends on whether the individual is a male or female (e.g., medical fitness for duty; physical fitness and body fat standards; berthing, bathroom, and shower facilities; and uniform and grooming standards), all persons shall be subject to the standard, requirement, or policy associated with their biological sex.
  - Transgender and gender dysphoric persons may seek waivers or exceptions to these or any other standards, requirements, or policies on the same terms as any other person.
- Persons who are diagnosed with, or have a history of, gender dysphoria, or who have undergone gender transition, are generally disqualified from accession or retention in the Military Services unless they are willing and able to adhere to the standards associated with their biological sex.

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### **Medical Accession Standards**

Medical standards for accession into the military services help to ensure that those entering service are free of medical conditions or physical defects that may require excessive time lost from duty. Individuals who are not exempt in accordance with DTM 19-004 will be accessed or commissioned based on the following medical standards, provided they are medically qualified in all other respects in accordance with DoDI 6130.03:

1. A history or diagnosis of gender dysphoria will be disqualifying, unless:
  - (a) As certified by a licensed medical provider, the applicant can demonstrate 36 consecutive months of stability in his or her biological sex immediately preceding submission of the application without clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
  - (b) The applicant can demonstrate he or she has not transitioned from his or her biological sex, and a licensed medical provider has determined that gender transition is not necessary to protect the health of the individual.
  - (c) The applicant is willing and able to adhere to all applicable standards, including the standards associated with the applicant's biological sex.
2. A history of cross-sex hormone therapy or a history of sex reassignment or genital reconstruction surgery will be disqualifying.
3. Transgender persons without a history or diagnosis of gender dysphoria and without clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning as certified by a licensed medical provider and confirmed by a Military Entrance Processing Center Chief Medical Officer, and who are otherwise qualified for service, may serve, like all other Service members, in their biological sex.