



Update to the Total Force: Informing Active and Reserve Marines, Sailors, and Civilians on Manpower Policy reform and talent management efforts.

A NEW APPROACH TO AVIATOR RETENTION

The Marine Corps continues to face a shortage in Naval Aviators, causing elevated stress on Marines, commands, and mission readiness. In response, the newly published FY25-FY26 USMC Aviation Bonus (AvB), MARADMIN 355/25 addresses current force management challenges while encouraging targeted aviators to remain in service.

Ref: [MARADMIN 355/25](#)



An evolution in policy, the newly created bonus marks a departure from past programs. Instead of exclusively relying on annual payments, the FY26-FY26 program provides optional partial lump sum payments as a means of providing a stronger immediate financial incentive, in addition to (reduced) annual payments.

Specifically, M&RA re-constituted the AvB structure to offer significant up-front benefits for first-time AvB signers

- **72-month contract:** Eligible aviators can receive a \$100,000 lump sum up front, with the balance distributed in annual increments.
- **48-month contract:** First-time signers can receive a \$50,000 lump sum up front.

This flexible approach also customizes bonus amounts by airframe and contract duration. Pilots in particularly critical communities (KC-130, TACAIR, V-22) are now eligible for the largest incentives, reflecting personnel inventories and forecasted shortages.

ARE YOU PREPARING TO RETIRE?

By: Christine Melendez

Big changes are coming to the federal retirement process — and if you're planning to retire soon, it's time to get familiar with the new system.

What's Changing?

Effective July 14, 2025, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will no longer accept retirement applications via mail or the Government Retirement & Benefit (GRB) Platform. Instead, all applications must be submitted through OPM's new Online Retirement Application (ORA) website.

This shift is part of the Presidential Memorandum issued January 20, 2025, titled...

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(continued from page 1) "Implementing the President's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) Initiative for a Modernized, Efficient, and Expedient Retirement Process."

According to OPM: "Legacy systems, with outdated technology and cumbersome procedures, have delayed retirements and frustrated employees who have dedicated their careers to public service. By harnessing modern technology and inter-agency collaboration, OPM has been working to deliver a retirement process that is fast, user-friendly, and responsive to the needs of our employees."



Mr. Eugene Adams, Deputy Director, Material Support Branch, G-4, Marine Corps Installation Command, receives a gift during his retirement ceremony at The Clubs at Quantico, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, Adams dedicated a total of 45 years of service to the Department of Defense as a Marine and a civilian employee. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Harleigh Faulk)

What You Need to Know

- The Retirement Dashboard in GRB is now disabled for employees.
- The Civilian Benefits Center (CBC) will still process applications submitted via GRB before July 14, 2025.
- If you're participating in OPM's or Department of Defense's (DoD's) Deferred Resignation Program (DRP) offerings (including under Voluntary Early Retirement Authority) and missed the July 14 deadline, you must now use ORA.
- Disability retirement applications should not be submitted via ORA.

How To Access ORA

To submit your retirement application through ORA:

1. Request an ORA account within 6 months of your intended retirement date. Early requests will be closed without action.
2. Submit a CANYON ticket via the "Online Retirement Application (ORA): Account Request" button: [HERE](#)
3. Include the following: ORA Account Request for [Your Name]; retirement date; DoD ID number (on the back of your CAC); personal email address (OPM requires this for post-retirement communication)
4. Once you receive confirmation that your ORA account has been created, you will login with the Login.gov account associated with the personal email address that you provided in your CANYON ticket.

Note: Creating an ORA account does not mean you can immediately submit your application. Your eligibility must first be reviewed and confirmed by CBC, which may take time.

5. ORA access requires a Login.gov account. If you don't have one, you must create one. Do so by visiting <https://login.gov>. Use a valid email address, set a password (at least 12 characters), complete identity verification and two-factor authentication. Once your Login.gov account is set up, return to the ORA portal to proceed.

Depending on your situation, you may also need to upload:

- Marriage certificate
- Military service records (e.g., DD214s)
- Divorce decree(s)
- Court orders

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MARINE CORPS EXPANDS EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ADVISOR FORCE

PATRICK SPACE FORCE BASE, FL – Fifteen newly-minted Equal Opportunity Advisors graduated from the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) on September 5th, 2025, poised to return to the Fleet Marine Force as Equal Opportunity Advisors (EOAs). The graduation ceremony marked the culmination of 55 hours of online PME and a 5-week training course.



Fifteen newly-minted EOAs graduated from the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) on September 5th, 2025 at Patrick Space Force Base, Florida

GySgt Twobulls, E.G	MCB Camp Blaz - Santa Rita, Guam
GySgt Waxter, R	Marine Corps LOGCOM - Albany, GA
GySgt Stewart, J	HQ Mag 31 2d MAW - Beaufort, SC
GySgt Hollister, S	MACG-38 3rd MAW - San Diego, CA
GySgt Minter, R	HQ CLR 1 1st MLG Camp Pendleton, CA
SSgt Douglas, A.T	HQ MAG 26 2D MAW – Jacksonville, NC
SSgt Dougherty,	7th Marine Reg – Twentynine Palms, CA
SSgt White Jr, A.W	MCAS Miramar - San Diego, CA
GySgt Burkhart, J	HQ MARFORCOM – Norfolk, VA
GySgt Burke	12th Marine Corps District - San Diego, CA
SSgt Lollar	4th MAW- MAG 41- Fort Worth, TX
GySgt Gravette	4th MAW - New Orleans, LA
GySgt Thomas	Force HQ Group – New Orleans, LA
GySgt Moreno	4th MLG - New Orleans, LA
Ms. Jeniffer Scott	MCI – West - Camp Pendleton, CA

DEOMI is the Department of Defense’s center of excellence to “Advance an agile and ready force that values and thrives on their contributions and foster cultures of excellence through learning, research, and integrated knowledge management to optimize total force readiness.” The institute develops and delivers specialized courses to military personnel from all branches, civilian employees, and international partners.

Upon completion of the DEOMI course, these Marines now serve as EOAs – critical advisors within their units.

EOAs are neutral third-party subject matter experts who assist commanders in resolving

Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) issues and complaints. They advise on policy compliance, identify MEO trends, provide conflict resolution for informal complaints, deliver training, and support case management. By addressing potential issues before they escalate, EOAs help maintain trust, cohesion, and respect within the ranks, directly contributing to a unit’s combat and mission readiness.

These graduates will now return to the fleet ready to implement the principles learned at DEOMI and serve as champions of Equal Opportunity throughout the Fleet Marine Force.

ARE YOU PREPARING TO RETIRE?

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What You Can Still Do in GRB

- While retirement applications can’t be submitted through GRB anymore, you can still:
- Generate retirement estimates
- Manage Federal Employee Health Benefits, Federal Employees’ Group Life Insurance, and Thrift Savings Plan elections
- View benefit program resources
- Access your Total Compensation Statement
- Submit Military and Civilian Service Deposit applications
- Submit Designation of Beneficiary forms

Need Help?

OPM has created a helpful ORA video guide: Watch [HERE](#)

Additional resources:

- ORA Help Center: <https://retire.opm.gov/help>
- Login.gov Support: <https://login.gov/help>

Questions?

Contact the Benefits Line at 888-320-2917 (TTY: 866-359-5277)

Email: navybenefits@us.navy.mil

Customer Service Representatives are available 7:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays).

UNDERSTANDING WORKPLACE HARASSMENT: WHAT EVERY EMPLOYEE SHOULD KNOW

What Is Workplace Harassment?

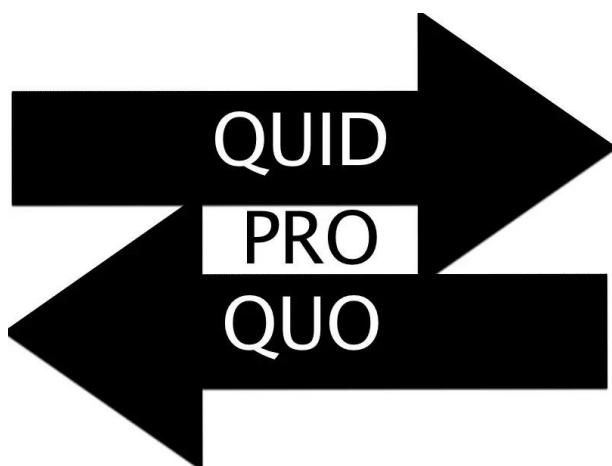
Workplace harassment is unwelcome conduct based on a person's protected characteristics, such as:

- *Race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy)*
- *National origin, age (40+), disability, or genetic information*

Harassment becomes unlawful when enduring it becomes a condition of continued employment, or the behavior is severe or pervasive enough to create a hostile, intimidating, or abusive work environment

Types of Harassment

- *Hostile Work Environment: Repeated or severe behavior that creates an offensive or threatening workplace.*



- *Quid Pro Quo: When a supervisor demands sexual favors in exchange for job benefits.*
- *Retaliatory Harassment: Punishing someone for reporting harassment or participating in an investigation.*

Legal Protection & Employer Responsibility

Employers are automatically liable if a supervisor's harassment results in a tangible job consequence such as a demotion or firing. Even if no tangible action occurred, the employer may still be liable unless they took steps to prevent and correct harassment, and the employee unreasonably failed to report it.

The EEOC requires agencies to:

- Clearly define harassment
- Provide multiple ways to report it
- Ensure prompt, thorough, and impartial investigations
- Protect against retaliation
- Take immediate and appropriate corrective action
- Conduct regular training

What Should You Do?

1. Report it promptly using internal anti-harassment channels (not just EEO).
2. Use available resources—you can report outside your chain of command.
3. Know your rights—you are protected from retaliation.
4. Document everything—dates, times, witnesses, and specific behaviors.

If you're unsure whether behavior counts as harassment, ask yourself: "Would a reasonable person in my shoes find this intimidating, hostile, or abusive?"



For more information, please reference the EEO webpage at the following link. [EEO FAQs](#)

EASING THE LOAD: UNDERSTANDING THE BASIC NEEDS ALLOWANCE

Marines and their families face unique challenges, to include the occasional struggle to provide for their dependents. Did you know that a monthly Basic Needs Allowance (BNA) provides additional support for qualified military families?



Who is Qualified for This Program?

Ref: [MARADMIN 369/25](#)

To be eligible, Marines must meet four initial requirements:

1. Be on active duty — this includes members of the Reserves on active-duty orders.
2. Complete initial entry training.
3. Have at least one dependent listed in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) and the Marine Corps Total Force System (MCTFS).
4. Have a gross household income from the preceding calendar year and an annualized gross income for the current year that, when combined, falls below 200% of the preceding year Federal Poverty Guideline for their assigned duty station and household size.

Finance pre-screen process:

- Check gross household income from the preceding calendar year by adding up each box 1, "Wages, Tips, and other compensation" on the W2s issued to your household, as well as non-taxable entitlements provided by the Marine Corps
- Check annualized gross income for the current year by pulling your recent LES/pay stub and multiplying your monthly "taxable income" by 12, then add the annual total of non-taxable entitlements provided by the Marine Corps
- Compare the combined value to the preceding year Federal Poverty Guideline (x2 for 200%), which you can find on the Health and Human Services site, <https://www.hhs.gov>.

Important Considerations

- BNA is taxable.
- BNA counts as income and may affect eligibility for federal means-tested programs.

To discuss impacts, contact a personal financial manager via:

<https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/search?program-service=30/view-by=ALL>

**How to
apply
for BNA?**



Scan here



MP LEADERSHIP

Director, Colonel Lauren S. Edwards
Deputy Director, SES Michael R. Melillo
CSEL, SgtMaj Dennis R. Turner

MP SMB: [SMB MP Division@usmc.mil](mailto:SMB_MP_Division@usmc.mil)

MPA: Mr. Jonathan D. Raymond MPO: Col Meghan Kennerly
MPC: Ms. Mylechia Smalls MPP: Col Ryan Scott
EEO: Dr. Ronnie Holmes MPE: Col Bryce Carter