



DoD INSTRUCTION 1320.15

HONORARY PROMOTION PROCESSING PROCEDURES

Originating Component: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

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Approved by: Ashish S. Vazirani, Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Purpose: In accordance with the authority in DoD Directive 5124.02, this issuance establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and prescribes procedures for honorary promotions under Sections 1563 and 1563a of Title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.), and other statutes authorizing the honorary promotion of a specific individual.

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SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. APPLICABILITY.

a. This issuance applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (referred to collectively in this issuance as the “DoD Components”).

b. This issuance does not apply to:

(1) Posthumous commissions and warrants authorized by Sections 1521 and 1522 of Title 10, U.S.C.

(2) Record corrections made by a board for correction of military records under the authority of Section 1552 of Title 10, U.S.C.

1.2. POLICY.

a. All requests for honorary promotions to the grades of O-8 and below will be thoroughly reviewed to ensure that the DoD does not inadvertently dilute the prestige of a grade for personnel who earned it in competition with their contemporaries.

b. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) may approve honorary promotions to the grades of O-7 and O-8 under the authority in Section 1563 or 1563a of Title 10, U.S.C., and the Secretaries of the Military Departments may approve honorary promotions to any grade below the grade of O-7 under one of those authorities.

c. The Secretary of Defense is the approval authority for all other honorary promotion requests, which will be forwarded through the USD(P&R).

d. Honorary promotions to the grades of O-9 or O-10 will not be considered except in those cases where there is specific statutory authority for such a promotion.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. USD(P&R).

The USD(P&R):

- a. Approves or disapproves any request for honorary promotion to the grade of O-7 or O-8 and provides the notifications required by law and this issuance.
- b. Exercises responsibility and oversight of the honorary promotion process.
- c. Coordinates honorary promotion requests with the Secretaries of the Military Departments.
- d. Monitors compliance with this issuance.
- e. Ensures records and information established and created in accordance with this issuance are retained in accordance with DoD Instruction 5015.02 and DoD Component records management disposition schedules.

2.2. SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments:

- a. Establish controls to ensure that honorary promotions do not dilute the prestige of a grade for personnel who earned it in competition with their contemporaries.
- b. Approve or disapprove any request for an honorary promotion to a grade E-1 to E-9, W-1 to W-5, and O-1 to O-6.
- c. After making a determination on an honorary promotion within their approval authority, promptly notify the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the member of Congress who proposed the action, if applicable, and the former or retired Service member concerned, or their next of kin if they are deceased, as appropriate.
- d. Submit to the USD(P&R), through the CJCS, any request for honorary promotion to a grade above O-6, and include:
 - (1) The notification of the intent to support the requested honorary promotion required by Section 1563 of Title 10, U.S.C., if applicable.
 - (2) The proposed notifications required by Section 1563 or 1563a of Title 10, U.S.C.
 - (3) Documentation supporting the proposed honorary promotion.

e. Ensure records and information established and created in accordance with this issuance are retained in accordance with DoD Instruction 5015.02 and DoD Component records management disposition schedules.

2.3. CJCS.

The CJCS:

a. Reviews, provides a recommendation, and forwards to the USD(P&R) any request for an honorary promotion to a grade above O-6 received from a Secretary of a Military Department.

b. Ensures records and information established and created in accordance with this issuance are retained in accordance with DoD Instruction 5015.02 and DoD Component records management disposition schedules.

SECTION 3: PROCEDURES

3.1. HONORARY PROMOTIONS.

a. Authority.

(1) The USD(P&R), based on the recommendations of the Secretary of the Military Department concerned and the CJCS, may approve an honorary promotion of a former or retired Service member to the grade of O-7 or O-8.

(2) The Secretaries of the Military Departments may approve an honorary promotion of a former or retired Service member of their Military Department to any grade below the grade of O-7.

b. Restrictions.

An honorary promotion may not be made until 60 days after the date on which the approval authority submits a notice of the determination to make the promotion, including a detailed discussion of the rationale supporting the determination to the:

- (1) Senate Committee on Armed Services.
- (2) House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services.
- (3) Member of Congress who proposed the honorary promotion, if applicable.

c. Benefits Not to Be Construed as Accruing.

(1) An honorary promotion will not affect the pay, retired pay, or other benefits from the United States to which the former or retired Service member concerned is entitled or would have been entitled based upon the military service of such former or retired Service member.

(2) An honorary promotion will not affect any benefits to which any other person may become entitled based on the military service of the former or retired Service member concerned.

3.2. PROCESSING REQUIREMENTS FOR HONORARY PROMOTIONS TO A GRADE ABOVE THE GRADE OF O-6.

a. Requests for honorary promotion to a grade above the grade of O-6 will be reviewed by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned, who will make a determination as to the merits of approving the request.

b. If the Secretary of the Military Department concerned determines that the request should not be approved, they may respond to the requestor and, if required, the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives, without coordinating with the USD(P&R).

c. If the Secretary of the Military Department concerned believes that the request has merit, a request for approval, the proposed notifications to the requestor and the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and all supporting documents must be submitted to the USD(P&R) through the CJCS for consideration by the approval authority. No notifications outside DoD may be made before a final decision is made on the request for honorary promotion.

GLOSSARY

G.1. ACRONYMS.

ACRONYM	MEANING
CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Staff
U.S.C.	United States Code
USD(P&R)	Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

G.2. DEFINITIONS.

TERM	DEFINITION
beneficiary	Any individual receiving benefits from an officer's military service.
former Service member	An individual who is separated or no longer actively participating in a Military Service.
honorary promotion	A promotion (includes advancement on a retired list), whether posthumous or not, conferred in recognition of achievement or service without the usual prerequisites or obligations.
posthumous	Occurring after death.
retired Service member	An individual who is retired from a Military Service.

REFERENCES

DoD Directive 5124.02, “Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)),” June 23, 2008, as amended

DoD Instruction 5015.02, “DoD Records Management Program,” February 24, 2015, as amended

United States Code, Title 10