

PPP Military Spouse Preference (MSP) Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: What is MSP?

- To support military spouses in advancing their careers despite the frequent relocations required by military life, the DoD has expanded employment opportunities for military spouses. MSP applies when positions are filled using competition procedures and the spouse is determined to be among the best qualified. This program is derived from Title 10, U.S.C, Section 1784, “Employment Opportunities for Military Spouses,” and applies to spouses of active-duty military members of the U.S. Armed Forces (including the Coast Guard), who relocate to accompany their sponsor on a PCS move.

Q2: What are the eligibility requirements for MSP?

- 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 affords 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.

To be eligible for MSP, the spouse must: (1) be married to an active duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces; (2) reside within the commuting area of the military sponsor’s permanent duty station (PDS); (3) meet all pre-employment criteria and be immediately appointable under the applicable recruitment procedures; and (4) be determined to rank among the best qualified for the position.

Q3: What type of positions are applicable to PPP MSP?

- MSP applies to permanent and temporary/term positions at GS 15 and below (or equivalent pay positions in other pay systems) that are being filled under competitive procedures. There is no limit to the number of times you can exercise your MSP and priority placement for temporary and term positions.

Q4: Am I still required to register in Program S of the PPP to exercise my MSP eligibility?

- No. To exercise PPP MSP, you must apply to a specific job opportunity announcement (JOA) and ensure all required documents are uploaded. Note: HROs are available to assist you, if needed.

Q5: What circumstances would terminate MSP eligibility?

- Under current policy set forth in DoDI 1400.25, Volume 315, MSP terminates upon acceptance or declination of a job offer for a permanent position in the Federal service within the commuting area of the active duty sponsor’s permanent duty station, whether or not preference was applied. This includes NAF positions and Military Exchange Services positions. .

MSP eligibility terminates upon the loss of spousal status as a result of divorce, death of the sponsor, or sponsor’s retirement or separation from active duty. Preference will terminate if the MSP no longer meets the requirements for noncompetitive appointment eligibility.

Q6: What happens after an MSP eligible applies to a DoD vacancy?

- Once the JOA closes, the HRO will evaluate the applications and refer eligible and qualified applicants, including MSPs found “best qualified,” to the selecting official for consideration and selection.

Q7: What essential documents should a spouse have available during the hiring process for MSP?

- To facilitate a smooth hiring process, it is recommended that the following documents be available and used as applicable during an MSP recruitment: (1) narrative resume; (2) PCS orders; (3) marriage certificate or license; (4) Notification of Personnel Action (SF50) and Request for Preliminary Employment Data (SF75) documenting current or previous Federal appointment(s), if applicable; (5) an updated and signed Military Spouse PPP Self-Certification Checklist must be submitted with each job application; (6) Veteran’s Preference Documentation (e.g. DD-214, SF 15, VA Letter, Statement of Service), if applicable; and (7) college transcripts, if applicable.

Q8: Are there limits to the number of times an eligible spouse may exercise MSP?

- A spouse may exercise MSP at each qualifying permanent duty station until such time he/she accepts or declines a permanent position. MSP entitlement is limited to the offer of only one permanent Federal position (including NAF and Military Exchange Services), regardless of whether preference was applied.

Q9: Where can I find more information?

- You may find detailed information on MSP at the following resources:
 - <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>