SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON

29 AUG 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Army Transition Policy

1. This memorandum establishes policy and guidance and is intended to improve the breadth, quality and integration of transition services for our Total Army.

2. The Department of the Army has an obligation to better prepare our transitioning Soldiers, Family members, and Department of the Army (DA) Civilians for opportunities beyond their service to the Army. This is particularly important given their noble service following a decade of war. To better meet the needs of our transitioning personnel and their Families, we must recognize and act upon the fact that transition is a process that requires planning throughout the individual's lifecycle and is a critical component of lifelong learning and development.

3. Leaders at all levels will be involved to ensure Army transition services are current, meet the needs of today's and tomorrow's transitioning population and provide the personal support to our volunteer Army Family which enable a positive transition experience.

4. The Army Transition Policy will encompass transitions throughout the entire lifecycle of service (e.g. permanent change of station, promotions, schooling, and separation), and adjust and adapt to the needs of the force through the lens of lifelong learning. The transition process will be customer focused, easily understood, managed by commanders through performance metrics and supported by integrated information systems.

5. This policy applies to all Active Component (AC) and Reserve Component (RC) Soldiers, Family members, and DA Civilians as appropriate.

6. Implementation of this policy initiates the following actions:

a. Developing a capstone Army transition regulation.

b. Alignment and integration of education and employment services and functions under a single proponent.

c. Establishing the Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) as a commander's program. Ensuring that every Soldier, with few authorized exceptions, begins mandatory transitioning counseling and planning not later than 12 months prior to

departure from the Army. In some cases, Soldiers will need to begin pre-separation briefings and counseling prior to deployment.

d. Promoting lifelong learning and development opportunities throughout the Soldier lifecycle of service. This will include integration of best business practices, leveraging private industry for possible inclusion in our Professional Military Education, and integrating installation services and Information Technology (IT) supporting lifelong learning development.

e. Embedding transition into the institutional training curriculum and leader counseling doctrine.

f. Expanding and improving virtual services for career and education counseling before, during and after deployment as appropriate.

g. Standardizing the Army transition model enabling flexibility to ensure synchronization with the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) and other Human Resource (HR) lifecycle functions for both the Active and Reserve Components.

h. Establishing a standardized retention brief using an integrated approach, for capitalizing on the knowledge, capabilities, and experience resident in the Army today.

i. In accordance with law, regulation, and within current budgetary constraints, expand transition assistance to DA Civilians who are retiring from Federal employment or are involuntarily separated for reasons other than misconduct or performance.

j. In accordance with law, regulation, and within current budgetary constraints, facilitate military and industry partnerships that support the certification, credentialing and transfer of military skills and experience to the civilian community.

7. Pending publication of the capstone regulation, the requirements of the enclosure will immediately apply to all Active Component Soldiers with a Total Force goal.

8. The Army has a responsibility to the Nation to ensure we accomplish this important mission. We must identify opportunities for efficiencies, eliminate redundancies, and align and integrate transition policies/services within the Department of Defense and with other federal agency initiatives, while providing all Soldiers, Family members, and DA Civilians with the information and "tools" they need in order to experience a "successful" transition. Such actions greatly reduce stress levels, while better preparing

the individual for post-Army life, and significantly increase the likelihood that the individual will become an advocate for our Army.

9. The Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS), G-1 is the proponent for this policy.

JOHN M. McHUGH

Encl

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Responsibilities of Army Commanders for
Ensuring Effective Soldier Transitions

1. Ensure first term Soldiers receive counseling within 30 days of arrival to their first permanent duty station, and that as part of this process they create an Individual Development Plan (documented in writing, e.g., in Army Career Tracker, when fielded) containing the Soldier's Career (both military and civilian), Training and Educational Goals. First line supervisor's review of this plan will clearly delineate a Soldier's progress with respect to each of these major goals and will also detail the steps needed to be taken, along with a timeline, in order to attain each.

2. On an annual basis, along with an assessment of the Soldier's overall job performance and other competencies (i.e., common Soldier skills, physical fitness), the Individual Development Plan will be reviewed with the Soldier by a leader in the Soldier's chain of command and a career or education counselor. Progress on each stated goal will be documented with goals revised as necessary/appropriate.

3. When a Soldier makes the decision to transition from our Army and after the Soldier has been given a retention briefing and pre-separation counseling, the Soldier should be afforded sufficient time to participate in the appropriate programs and services offered by the Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP), Army Continuing Education System (ACES), Department of Labor, and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Participation must be synchronized with ARFORGEN and should occur no later than 12 months prior to separation.

4. Every transitioning Soldier should have in his/her possession prior to separation some product that demonstrates preparedness to transition. Every Soldier will have a resume and one of the following: acceptance letter from a college/training institution, an actual job offer, a current list of solid job opening leads that are well matched to the Soldier's current level of knowledge, skills and abilities, or a business plan if he/she plans to start a new business.