



SECRETARY OF WAR
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

SEP 30 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS
DEPARTMENT OF WAR AGENCY AND DOW FIELD ACTIVITY
DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Modern Workforce Management

My priority as Secretary of War is restoring the warrior ethos. This applies to every member of the Department, including our highly skilled civilian employees, who are oftentimes paid less than their private sector equivalents. These employees provide critical continuity in support of our Service members and act as force multipliers in defending this great Nation.

We recently surveyed our civilian workforce. We heard loud and clear that personnel policies must better reflect our high-performance culture. This requires reforming how we treat both top and bottom performers. Winning organizations optimize the workforce spectrum.

First, we need to incentivize and reward our top performers. Department employees are not in it for the money, but our best performers need to be appropriately recognized for their performance, including through meaningful monetary awards. Second, managers need more guidance on how to separate underperforming employees. Complex offboarding creates cultural drag that hurts morale across the Department and hinders our mission.

This cultural refresh will be led by the Under Secretary of War for Personnel and Readiness, whom I am directing to immediately issue specific guidance to address two complementary but distinct objectives: encourage workforce rewards and demystify the removal process. The Department of War attracts the highest performing workforce in the Government because we are mission focused. Collectively, we serve the volunteers who have committed to fight for their country, and we will ensure the Department's leaders have the most modern workforce optimization tools available to support our Service members.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "PBJ" followed by a stylized flourish.



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