NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
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ARNG-HRH

MEMORANDUM FOR The Adjutants General of all States, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Commanding General of the District of Columbia

SUBJECT: Implementation of the Army National Guard Select, Train, Educate, and Promote (STEP) Career Management Model for the Enlisted Force (PPOM 15-032)

1. References.

a. Army Regulation (AR) 600-8-19, (Enlisted Promotions and Reductions), 2 February 2015.

b. Army Directive 2015-31, (Requirements for Noncommissioned Officer Promotions), 13 August 2015.

c. National Guard Regulation 600-200, (Enlisted Personnel Management), 31 July 2009.

d. AR 350-1, (Army Training and Leader Development), 19 August 2014.

e. All Army Activity (ALARACT) Message 143/2015, subject: Noncommissioned Officer Promotion Requirements, 20 August 2015.

f. Change 2 to ALARACT 126/2014, subject: Transition of Advanced Leader Course (ALC) Common Core to Structured Self Development (SSD) Level 2, 21 April 2015.

2. Purpose. This policy memorandum announces the new changes to the ARNG Professional Military Education (PME) requirement and the SSD under the STEP methodology for the ARNG enlisted Soldiers as outlined in references 1a and 1b. These changes are effective 1 January 2016. Promotion lists approved before 1 January 2016 are exempt from the requirements outlined in this policy until the next annual promotion board cycle. Requests for modifications or exceptions to this policy to delay implementation will not be considered.

3. Background:

a. The ARNG remains committed to the professional development of the noncommissioned officer (NCO) corps, specifically the assurance that Soldiers obtain institutional knowledge by completing formal military educational requirements

commensurate to the Soldier's assigned duty position and level of responsibility before promotion. Over the past decade, ARNG Soldiers received an unprecedented amount of combat experience; however, ARNG leaders must possess the requisite formal institutional professional development training and associated skills, in addition to combat experience, to meet future challenges to the ARNG.

b. The ARNG is, and remains, a vacancy-based promotion system. Commanders must comply with the vacancy fill procedures outlined in reference 1c, paragraph 4-10, before selecting a Soldier from the promotion list. As vacancies occur, the first Soldier on that particular Career Progression MOS (CPMOS) list who is eligible and available will be offered the position. If the Soldier has attained the new PME requirements, he or she will be promoted to the next grade upon his or her assignment. If he or she has not, they will remain assigned in the new position and will be promoted upon completion of the new PME requirement as outlined in paragraph 6 in the above-mentioned reference.

4. The NCO Professional Development System (NCOPDS) Definition: The NCOPDS is an organizing framework aimed at developing the next generation of competent and committed NCOs of character as trusted Army professionals. These are Army professionals who thrive in chaos, adapt, and win in a complex world. Noncommissioned officers develop as leaders over time through deliberate progressive and sequential processes incorporating training, education, and experience across the three learning domains throughout the Soldier's life cycle.

5. New NCO Professional Development Requirements Guidance for Promotion Board Consideration.

a. All Soldiers who meet the new time-in-grade (TIMIG) and time-in-service (TIS) requirements, the new SSD requirements, and the PME qualification of their current grade (see Figure 1); and who hold a qualifying CPMOS, will be eligible for promotion board consideration–unless the proper authority has denied board consideration in writing (as outlined in reference 1a, para 7-33). Soldiers with multiple PME requirements are not eligible for board consideration until they become PME-qualified in their current grades, in accordance with this policy memorandum. The Soldier's Pay Entry Basic Date is the computation point for determining TIS, regardless of status (i.e., Traditional, Dual-Status Technician, or AGR).

Consideration For	TIMIG	TIS	CES	SSD	PME
Sergeant	12 months	NA	NA	SSD 1	NA
Staff Sergeant	18 Months	NA	NA	SSD 2	* BLC (WLC)
Sergeant First Class	36 Months	9 years	6 years	SSD 3	**ALC
Master Sergeant	36 Months	13 years	8 years	SSD 4	***SLC
Sergeant Major	36 Months	16 years	10 years	NA	NA

Figure 1: Promotion Board Consideration–TIMIG, TIS, Continuous Enlisted Service (CES), SSD, PME Requirement

* BLC is defined as "Basic Leader Course".
* WLC is defined as "Warrior Leader Course.
** ALC is defined as Advance Leader Course"
*** SLC is defined as "Senior Leader Course."

b. Structured Self Development Requirements. As shown in enclosure 1, the ARNG STEP requirements are deliberate, continuous, sequential, and progressive. Effective 1 January 2016, all ARNG Soldiers must meet the below SSD requirements for promotion board consideration as outlined in reference 1a, paragraph 1-28:

(1) Specialists/Corporals must complete SSD level 1 to attain eligibility for promotion board consideration to sergeant.

(2) Sergeants must complete SSD level 2 to attain eligibility for promotion board consideration to staff sergeant. The exception is Soldiers who completed any of the 10 legacy courses outlined in reference 1e; they are not required to complete SSD level 2.

(3) Staff sergeants must complete SSD level 3 to attain eligibility for promotion board consideration to sergeant first class.

(4) Sergeants first class must complete SSD level 4 to attain eligibility for promotion board consideration to master sergeant.

(5) Master sergeants/First sergeants must complete SSD level 4 as a prerequisite to enroll into United States Army Sergeants Major Course (USASMC). Master sergeants/First sergeants do not require SSD level 4 to attain eligibility for promotion board consideration to sergeant major.

6. New PME Promotion Eligibility Criteria for (Pin-on) Promotion.

a. New PME requirements. These changes to the PME requirements modify the guidance outlined in the current reference 1a, chapters 1 and 7. The changes are effective for promotion boards conducted on or after 1 January 2016. Soldiers must meet the following PME requirements in order to be eligible for (pin-on) promotion:

(1) Specialists and corporals must complete the Basic Leader Course (BLC), formerly the Warrior Leader Course (WLC), for promotion to sergeant.

(2) Sergeants must complete all phases of the ALC for promotion to staff sergeant.

(3) Staff sergeants must complete all phases of the Senior Leader Course (SLC) for promotion to sergeant first class.

(4) Sergeant first class promotions to master sergeant require no additional PME training, provided Soldiers previously completed SSD level 4 and SLC.

(5) Master sergeants must have Army Training Requirements and Resources System confirmation of enrollment in USASMC for promotion to sergeant major.

b. Required timelines for PME completion. Soldiers selected and assigned into a higher grade position without the required PME level must complete the requirement as outlined in Figure 2. Specialists assigned to a sergeant position will be laterally appointed to corporal. The timeline for both ALC and SLC may be extended for 12 months per phase after the second phase, as shown in Figure 2. Extension waivers for ALC and SLC will be approved as shown in Figure 2. Soldiers will not be at a disadvantage when the State quota source manager validates the PME course as non-available, or in rare cases, when funding is unavailable. In these two cases, waivers are not required. Failure to complete the PME requirement (through fault of the Soldier) will result in reassignment into a qualified vacancy in the current grade.

Ranks Selected For	PME	Time to Complete	PME Waiver Extension Authority	Remarks
Sergeant	BLC	24 Months	NA	Lateral to CPL
Staff Sergeant	ALC	*24 Months	** 06 CDR	N/A
Sergeant First Class	SLC	24 Months *	** First GO	N/A
Master Sergeant	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sergeant Major	**USASMC	N/A	N/A	*** Conditional promotion to SGM

Figure 2: PME and Timeline Requirements after Selection or Assignment for Promotion

* Plus an additional 12 months per phase after the second phase.
** PME waiver authority may authorize an additional 12 months extension.
***ATRRS confirmation of enrollment.

7. PME Training Requirement. Commanders will ensure that Soldiers selected and assigned to a higher grade position, without the required PME for promotion, are enrolled within 120 days (provided PME course is available) of assignment in the required course, to meet the timelines of Figure 2. In addition, the State will update the Soldier's Assignment Consideration Code with "U5" (unit of action assignment) to include the date of assignment in the Standard Installation/Division Personnel System to track and manage successful completion of the required PME. Commanders must also counsel Soldiers that they are required to complete PME within the required timeframe.

8. Command Initiated Removal from Position. Soldiers who decline or refuse, fail to apply or enroll, fail to be accepted, fail to attend (no show), or fail to graduate due to an act, omission, or failure of standards (fault of the Soldier) after notification of the training requirements necessary for promotion, will be counseled and reassigned to the first available vacancy commensurate with their current grade and MOS. Commanders must follow the notification procedures outlined in reference 1a, paragraph 7-45f before submitting the request through command channels to the promotion authority for final action. The next higher promotion authority will serve as the appeal authority. In cases, where the promotion authority is the Adjutants General, the appeal authority rests with

the DARNG. Soldiers who were removed from their higher grade position will not be eligible for promotion board consideration until the next scheduled annual board.

9. Recommended Priority of NCO PME Course Funding:

a. Soldiers who received a conditional battlefield promotion.

b. Soldiers selected and assigned to a higher grade position without the required PME course.

c. All other categories.

d. Soldiers who previously failed to show for a scheduled PME course will not be re-scheduled unless approved by the first general officer in the chain of command.

10. PME Deferment Policy. Commanders must monitor those Soldiers enrolled in PME courses, and consider deferments only in the most extreme hardship cases. Soldiers unable to attend their initial scheduled PME course must request a deferment through their chain of command from the first general officer. The Adjutant General must approve a second deferment for the same PME course. All deferment requests must include alternate dates for the required course. A deferment is required when a Soldier is unable to report to their original scheduled PME course. States are authorized to substitute personnel into PME courses when the originally scheduled Soldier is unable to attend.

11. PME Deferment for Mobilized Soldiers. Soldiers selected and assigned into a higher grade position without the new required PME level must complete the requirement within the prescribed timeline, as shown in Figure 2. For Soldiers mobilized after assignment, their timeline in Figure 2 will stop and restart 90 days post the date they were released from active duty (not applicable for conditional promotion to sergeant major).

12. Reduction. Soldiers promoted under the previous PME requirements remain fully eligible to retain their grade. States will not, under any circumstances, subject those Soldiers to reduction for failure to meet the new PME requirements. The only reductions authorized are those outlined in reference 1a, paragraph 10-16c for those NCOs conditionally promoted to sergeant major pending successful completion of the United States Army Sergeants Major Course.

13. Annual Promotion Memorandum of Instruction (MOI). States that previously fielded an annual MOI for promotion boards scheduled after 1 January 2016 must amend those MOIs to reflect the changes outlined in this policy memorandum.

14. The changes outlined in this policy memorandum will be integrated into a future edition of AR 600-8-19.

15. The points of contact are COL Glen D. Chancellor, Division Chief, Personnel Policy Division, at DSN 327-5905, 703-607-5904 or glen.d.chancellor.mil@mail.mil., and COL Shawn C. Reger, Division Chief, Training Division, at DSN 327-7311, 703-607-7311, or shawn.c.reger.mil@mail.mil.

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