



**COMPARISON OF PAY AND BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY  
FOR ACTIVE-DUTY PERSONNEL AND NATIONAL  
GUARD AND RESERVE PERSONNEL ON  
ACTIVE DUTY**

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## **PREFACE**

This summary of military pay and benefits, compiled in February 2007, updates and supplements earlier charts, capturing legislative and regulatory changes that have occurred in the past two years. The summary includes legislation through the Department of Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007, Pub.L.No. 109–364, October 17, 2006. The focus of this table is the comparison among the pay and benefits of three statuses of military active duty: active National Guard duty, active duty in a reserve unit, and active duty in a unit of the regular military. U.S. Code Title 37, which authorizes most types of pay and benefits, assigns them directly or indirectly to “active duty” personnel; therefore, in most cases such pay and benefits are identical for the three statuses of active duty, and the recent tendency has been to eliminate rather than expand differences. However, the few remaining differences are worthy of attention. Descriptions of pay and benefits have been summarized for easy reference, with additional explanations provided in footnotes where necessary. U.S. Code sources are provided in the first column, with the pay/benefit title.

**PAY AND BENEFITS CATEGORIES**

Eligibility

Benefit and Statutory Authority	Description <sup>1</sup>	Active Component Service	Reserve Active Duty <sup>2</sup>	National Guard Active Duty <sup>3</sup>
Basic Pay 37 USC 201–11	Compensation for all members on active duty. <sup>4</sup>	Y	Y	Y
Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) 37 USC 403	Allowance to cover housing expenses of members eligible for basic pay, except those occupying government quarters <sup>5</sup> and those serving 30 or fewer days of active duty and not on a contingency operation. <sup>6</sup> The latter are eligible for Basic Allowance for Housing Type II (BAH RC/T, see below).	Y	Y <sup>7</sup>	Y <sup>8</sup>
Basic Allowance for Housing Reserve Component/ Transit, BAH RC/T (Basic Allowance for Housing Type II) 37 USC 403	Housing allowance for reserve <sup>9</sup> members called to active duty for 30 or fewer days not in support of a contingency operation; amount normally less than BAH.	N <sup>10</sup>	Y <sup>11</sup>	Y <sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Summary description of benefit or compensation.

<sup>2</sup> Performing active duty under 10 USC 12301, 12302, or 12304

<sup>3</sup> 10 USC 101(d)(5) defines full-time National Guard duty as “training or other duty, other than inactive duty, performed by a member of the Army National Guard of the United States or the Air National Guard of the United States in the member’s status as a member of the National Guard of a state or territory, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the District of Columbia under section 316, 502, 503, 504, or 505 of Title 32 for which the member is entitled to pay from the United States or for which the member has waived pay from the United States.”

<sup>4</sup> Full entitlement criteria are listed in 37 USC 204.

<sup>5</sup> Authority: 37 USC 403(e).

<sup>6</sup> Authority: 37 USC 403(g)(3).

<sup>7</sup> If ordered to active duty for more than 30 days, or to serve in support of a contingency operation.

<sup>8</sup> If ordered to active duty for more than 30 days, or to serve in support of a contingency operation.

<sup>9</sup> The term “reserve” here includes all reserve and National Guard categories.

<sup>10</sup> Eligible for normal BAH.

<sup>11</sup> If on active duty for 30 or fewer days and not in support of a contingency operation.

<sup>12</sup> If on active duty for 30 or fewer days and not in support of a contingency operation.

Benefit and Statutory Authority	Description <sup>1</sup>	Active Component Service	Reserve Active Duty <sup>2</sup>	National Guard Active Duty <sup>3</sup>
Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) 37 USC 403B	Allowance to compensate expenses of members assigned in high-cost areas of continental United States and certain dependents living in such areas. Amount determined by formula.	Y	Y <sup>13</sup>	Y <sup>14</sup>
Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS) 37 USC 402	Allowance for members entitled to basic pay, with exceptions prescribed by law.	Y	Y	Y
Supplemental Subsistence Allowance 37 USC 402a	Additional allowance for BAS-eligible members whose household income falls below a prescribed level.	Y	Y	Y
Personal money allowance 37 USC 414	Additional compensation for certain high-ranking officers and enlisted members; amount determined by rank.	Y	Y	N <sup>15</sup>
Initial Uniform allowance for officers 37 USC 415	Allowance provided at specified early stages of active duty.	Y	Y <sup>16</sup>	Y <sup>17</sup>
Additional uniform allowance for officers 37 USC 416	Allowance for reserve officers after serving more than 90 days of active duty.	N	Y <sup>18</sup>	Y <sup>19</sup>

<sup>13</sup> If on active duty for more than 140 days or in support of a contingency operation.

<sup>14</sup> If on active duty for more than 140 days or in support of a contingency operation.

<sup>15</sup> Although chiefs of the Army and Air National Guards and the National Guard Bureau qualify by rank, their service under Title 10 orders is not one of the categories specified in 37 USC 414.

<sup>16</sup> Upon completing 14 days of active duty.

<sup>17</sup> Upon completing 14 days of active duty.

<sup>18</sup> Provided previous clothing allowances during the past two years do not total \$400.

<sup>19</sup> Provided previous clothing allowances during the past two years do not total \$400.

Benefit and Statutory Authority	Description <sup>1</sup>	Active Component Service	Reserve Active Duty <sup>2</sup>	National Guard Active Duty <sup>3</sup>
Enlisted clothing allowance 37 USC 418	Allowance to enlisted members for clothing needed but not provided for duty, as determined by Secretary of Defense or Secretary of Homeland Security.	Y	Y	Y
Civilian clothing allowance 37 USC 419	Allowance for members assigned overseas whose duty requires civilian clothing for a substantial portion of duty time.	Y	Y	Y
Family separation allowance 37 USC 427	Allowance for members serving more than 30 days of active duty requiring domicile in a location separate from dependent(s).	Y	Y	Y
High-deployment allowance 37 USC 436	Allowance for members deployed for unusually long periods or called for multiple deployments in a short period.	Y <sup>20</sup>	Y <sup>21</sup>	Y <sup>22</sup>
Hazardous duty pay 37 USC 301	Special pay for member eligible for basic pay and engaged in types of duty specified in 37USC301 (13 types in 2007).	Y	Y	Y
Aviation career incentive pay 37 USC 301a	Special pay for members eligible for basic pay, for frequent performance of flying duty required by orders.	Y	Y	Y
Aviation career officer retention bonus 37 USC 301b	One-time bonus for agreement by specified officers to remain on aviation duty for at least one year.	Y	Y	Y

<sup>20</sup> For deployments of more than 190 consecutive days or consuming more than 400 of the previous 730 days.

<sup>21</sup> For multiple deployments of 30 or more days within one year or on contingency operations.

<sup>22</sup> For multiple deployments of 30 or more days within one year or on contingency operations.

Benefit and Statutory Authority	Description <sup>1</sup>	Active Component Service	Reserve Active Duty <sup>2</sup>	National Guard Active Duty <sup>3</sup>
Submarine duty pay 37 USC 301c	Special pay for qualified members of the naval service who are entitled to basic pay.	Y	Y	N <sup>23</sup>
Medical officer retention bonus 37 USC 301d	One-time bonus for qualified medical officers agreeing to remain on active duty for a minimum of two years after completion of existing active-duty commitment.	Y	Y	Y
Dental officer retention bonus 37 USC 301e	One-time bonus for dentists in specified categories agreeing to remain on active duty for a minimum of two years after completion of existing active-duty commitment.	Y	Y	Y
Medical officer special pay 37 USC 302	Four types of special pay for medical officers on active duty for at least one year: additional, certified, incentive, and variable. Require agreement to serve at least one year of additional active duty.	Y	Y	Y
Reserve medical officer special pay 37 USC 302(h)	Special pay for reserve medical officers called to active duty for less than one year.	N	Y	Y
Optometrist regular special pay 37 USC 302a(a)	Special pay for optometry officers.	Y	Y <sup>24</sup>	Y <sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> National Guard members do not perform naval service.

<sup>24</sup> If on active duty for one year or more.

<sup>25</sup> If on active duty for one year or more.

Benefit and Statutory Authority	Description <sup>1</sup>	Active Component Service	Reserve Active Duty <sup>2</sup>	National Guard Active Duty <sup>3</sup>
Optometrist retention special pay 37 USC 302a(b)	Special pay for optometry officers eligible for regular optometry special pay and agreeing to at least one additional year of active duty.	Y	Y	Y
Dental officer special pay 37 USC 301b	Four types of special pay for dental officers on active duty for at least one year: additional, certified, incentive, and variable. Requires agreement to serve at least one year of additional active duty.	Y	Y	Y
Reserve dental officer special pay 37 USC 302b(h)	Special pay for reserve dental officers called to active duty for less than one year.	N	Y	Y
Psychologist and non-physician health care provider special pay 37 USC 302c	Special pay for officers designated as psychologists, nurses, and physician's assistants.	Y	Y	Y
Nurse anesthetist special pay 37 USC 302e	Special pay for qualified nurse anesthetists serving on active duty for more than one year.	Y	Y	Y
Special pay for reserve, recalled, and retained health officers 37 USC 302f	Special pay for reserve physicians, non-physician health care providers, veterinarians, and nurse anesthetists serving on active duty for more than 30 days but less than one year.	N	Y <sup>26</sup>	Y <sup>27</sup>
Special pay for reserve health care providers in critically short wartime specialties 37 USC 302g	Special pay for reserve officers in designated categories who commit to one to three years of service in the Select Reserve.	N	Y	Y

<sup>26</sup> Eligibility does not require additional one-year commitment.

<sup>27</sup> Eligibility does not require additional one-year commitment.

Benefit and Statutory Authority	Description <sup>1</sup>	Active Component Service	Reserve Active Duty <sup>2</sup>	National Guard Active Duty <sup>3</sup>
Pharmacy officer special pay 37 USC 302i	Special pay for pharmacy officers on active duty for at least one year.	Y	Y	Y
Veterinarian special pay 37 USC 303	Special pay for veterinarian officers on active duty for at least one year.	Y	Y	Y
Diving duty pay 37 USC 304	Special pay for qualified members on assignments requiring diving as a primary duty.	Y	Y	Y
Hardship duty pay 37 USC 305	Special pay for members performing duty within or outside the United States designated by the Secretary of Defense as hardship duty.	Y	Y	Y
Career sea pay 37 USC 305a	Special pay for members performing sea duty.	Y	Y	N <sup>28</sup>
Special pay for service on weapons of mass destruction civil support team 37 USC 305b	Special pay for reserve members designated for such civil support teams.	N <sup>29</sup>	Y	Y
Special pay for officers in positions of unusual responsibility 37 USC 306	Special pay for officers in designated critical positions.	Y	Y	Y
Special duty assignment pay 37 USC 307	Special pay for enlisted members in designated high-skill positions.	Y	Y	Y
Assignment incentive pay 37 USC 307a	Special pay for members accepting assignment in designated critical positions.	Y	Y	Y

<sup>28</sup> National Guard members do not perform naval service.

<sup>29</sup> The language of 37 USC 305b limits such duty to reserve components.



Benefit and Statutory Authority	Description <sup>1</sup>	Active Component Service	Reserve Active Duty <sup>2</sup>	National Guard Active Duty <sup>3</sup>
Reenlistment bonus 37 USC 308	One-time payment to enlisted members with designated skills who have completed more than 17 months but less than 20 years of active duty and who reenlist for at least three years.	Y	Y <sup>30</sup>	Y <sup>31</sup>
Reenlistment bonus for Selected Reserve members 37 USC 308b	One-time payment to enlisted members of reserve components with less than 20 years active duty and qualified in a designated skill, who reenlist for at least three years.	N	Y	Y
Special pay for enlisted members in designated Selected Reserve units 37 USC 308d	Special pay for inactive duty for training in designated reserve units.	N	N	N
Hostile fire/imminent danger pay 37 USC 310	Special pay for duty under hostile fire or in imminent danger of coming under hostile fire.	Y	Y	Y
Special pay for nuclear-qualified officers and nuclear-trained enlisted members extending active duty 37 USC 312,312a	Special pay for qualified members in naval service reenlisting for at least two years (enlisted) or remaining on active duty for three to five years (officers) in designated nuclear-related specialties.	Y	Y	N <sup>32</sup>
Nuclear career annual incentive bonus 37 USC 312e	One-time payment to qualified naval officers in designated positions.	Y	Y	N <sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> If performing active reserve duty

<sup>31</sup> If performing active National Guard duty.

<sup>32</sup> National Guard members do not perform naval service.

<sup>33</sup> National Guard members do not perform naval service.

Benefit and Statutory Authority	Description <sup>1</sup>	Active Component Service	Reserve Active Duty <sup>2</sup>	National Guard Active Duty <sup>3</sup>
Overseas duty extension pay 37 USC 314	Special pay for members in designated specialties completing tours of duty in designated overseas locations and extending that tour by at least one year.	Y	Y	Y
Engineering and scientific career continuation pay 37 USC 315	Special pay for qualified officers extending active duty in designated assignments for at least one year.	Y	Y	Y
Foreign language proficiency pay 37 USC 316	Special pay for qualified members.	Y	Y	Y
Special pay for officers extending active duty in critical acquisition positions 37 USC 317	Special pay for qualified officers in Acquisition Corps who are nearing retirement but extend active duty for at least one year.	Y	Y	Y
Special pay for special warfare officers extending active duty 37 USC 318	Special pay for designated special warfare officers who have served from six to 14 years of active duty and extend active duty for at least one year.	Y	Y	Y
Surface warfare officer continuation pay 37 USC 319	Special pay for qualified naval officers who extend for at least one tour or duty, eligible for designated assignments.	Y	Y	N <sup>34</sup>
Incentive pay for career enlisted flyers 37 USC 320	Special pay for qualified enlisted members.	Y	Y	Y
Judge advocate continuation pay 37 USC 321	Special pay for officers serving as judge advocates who extend active duty for a specified period.	Y	Y	Y

<sup>34</sup> National Guard members do not perform naval service.

Benefit and Statutory Authority	Description <sup>1</sup>	Active Component Service	Reserve Active Duty <sup>2</sup>	National Guard Active Duty <sup>3</sup>
Career status bonus 37 USC 321	Elective one-time bonus for members entering service after August 1, 1986, with 15 years of active duty, who agree to serve until retirement-eligible at 20 years; linked to retirement computation option.	Y	Y	Y
Critical skills retention bonus 37 USC 322	One-time bonus to members with designated military skills or accepting assignment in a designated high-priority unit and agreeing to perform at least one year of additional active duty.	Y	Y	Y
Savings plan for education and other expenses 37 USC 325	Savings bond allotment for qualified members agreeing to perform at least six years of additional active duty in a critical specialty.	Y	Y	Y
Military occupational specialty conversion bonus 37 USC 326	One-time bonus to enlisted members changing their specialties to a critically short category and agreeing to remain in that category for at least three years.	Y	Y	Y
Leave 10 USC 701	Members performing active duty.	Y	Y	Y
Uniformed Service-members' Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) 38 USC 4301, <i>et seq.</i>	Legal protection for all individuals who are performing or have performed duty in an armed service.	Y	Y	Y
Service members' Civil Relief Act (SCRA) 50 USC App.501, <i>et seq.</i>	Legal protection for members on active duty.	Y	Y	Y

Benefit and Statutory Authority	Description <sup>1</sup>	Active Component Service	Reserve Active Duty <sup>2</sup>	National Guard Active Duty <sup>3</sup>
Medical and dental benefits under TRICARE 10 USC 1074, 1074a, 12602	Medical coverage for members on active duty for more than 30 days; all active-duty members eligible for treatment of duty-related illness, injury, or disease.	Y	Y	Y
Dependent medical and dental benefits under TRICARE 10 USC 1076, 12602	Medical coverage for dependents of members on active duty for more than 30 days.	Y	Y	Y
Transitional health care benefits 10 USC 1145(a)	Medical coverage for members in designated statuses of transit from active duty.	Y	Y	Y
Service members' group life insurance (SGLI) 38 USC 1965–1981	Life insurance coverage for members on active duty.	Y	Y	Y <sup>35</sup>
Space available travel DOD Regulation 4515.13–R	Worldwide travel eligibility for members on active duty.	Y	Y	Y
Commissary and post and exchange access 10 USC 1063	Identical access for all members and their dependents.	Y	Y	Y
Survivor Benefit Plan* 10 USC 1447–1460	Annuity paid to designated survivor(s) at death of retired member.	Y	Y	Y
Death Gratuity* 10 USC 1475–80	One-time payment to designated survivor(s) of a member who dies on active duty or traveling to or from active duty.	Y	Y	Y

<sup>35</sup> Full coverage while on active duty for more than 30 days; partial coverage if for 30 days or less.

Benefit and Statutory Authority	Description <sup>1</sup>	Active Component Service	Reserve Active Duty <sup>2</sup>	National Guard Active Duty <sup>3</sup>
Dependency and Indemnity Compensation* 38 USC 1301–23	Monthly benefit paid to eligible survivors of a member who dies on active duty or of a veteran whose death resulted from a service-related condition.	Y	Y	Y
Retired Pay* 10 USC, various sections	Payment for members over age 60 with a minimum of 20 qualifying years of service.	Y	Y <sup>36</sup>	Y <sup>37</sup>
Disability Pay* 10 USC 1201–21	Compensation for incapacity resulting from injury or illness suffered on active duty, following separation based on determination of unfitness for further duty. <sup>38</sup>	Y	Y	Y
Separation Pay* 10 USC 1174	Compensation to a member in honorable standing who is separated involuntarily or otherwise denied continuation of service after more than 6 but fewer than 20 years of service. <sup>39</sup>	Y	Y	Y
Disability Severance Pay* 10 USC 1212	One-time compensation to a member separated because of disability incurred on active duty. <sup>40</sup>	Y	Y	Y

\* Indicates a pay or benefit category added to original list February 2007.

<sup>36</sup> For active reserve and National Guard components, a year is valid if at least 50 points have been accumulated through active service, training, and membership.

<sup>37</sup> For active reserve and National Guard components, a year is valid if at least 50 points have been accumulated through active service, training, and membership.

<sup>38</sup> Members eligible for both retirement pay and disability pay must waive retirement pay in the amount of disability pay received. For most members, this prohibition of “concurrent pay” will be modified in a stepwise phase-in period culminating in 2009 or 2014, depending on degree of disability.

<sup>39</sup> Amount determined by length of service and pay rate when service ended.

<sup>40</sup> Amount determined by length of service and pay rate when service ended.