

UNITED STATES MILITARY ENTRANCE PROCESSING COMMAND

Messenger

SHARING INFORMATION TO REACH A VISION

VOL. 38, NO. 1

Command's new

Strategic Plan

checks course



Messenger

Sharing information to reach a vision

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It's recess time as military members help Sunderland, Massachusetts, Elementary School observe Veterans Day. See Page 16 for details.

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U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command

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Commander

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Capt. Stuart C. Satterwhite

Every organization must, from time to time, assess its effectiveness, honestly evaluate itself and make adjustments to its processes. The senior staff recently completed a thorough re-evaluation of the USMEPCOM Strategic Plan and made appropriate course corrections to our mission and vision statements, and our goals. I want to give you a brief overview here. The entire document will soon be posted on SPEAR. I encourage all USMEPCOM personnel to take time to make sure they understand its intent, paying particular attention to the sections that impact their duties and responsibilities.

The changes to the Mission Statement were minor, involving editing out unnecessary words, the most telling being removing “eligibility.” After much spirited debate about whether USMEPCOM determined “eligibility for military service” or “qualification for military service,” we agreed that both words had ardent advocates and that neither fully described what we do. As a result, the Mission Statement was shortened to:

“USMEPCOM evaluates applicants by applying established DoD standards during processing for military service.”

The rationale is that our organization doesn’t determine eligibility or qualification. We

Commander’s Commentary

simply determine if applicants for enlistment meet Department of Defense and service standards.

The Vision Statement changes are more extensive. It is now a statement of how USMEPCOM views itself. The new Vision Statement is: “Department of Defense professionals committed to sustaining the All-Volunteer Force through state of the art enlistment screening of applicants seeking to serve in our Nation’s Armed Forces.”

The previous Vision Statement included a reference to screening for federal employment, which USMEPCOM does, but in very small numbers. It’s not our primary mission, so it was removed from our Vision Statement. You will also notice that “Department of Defense professionals” figures prominently. That is our vision of who we are. State of the art processing is what we work toward, and we will get there. We must adapt. We must change. We must evolve and get better each year going forward.

The Mission and Vision Statements provide the broad outlines of who we are and where we want to go. The Goals provide the route we will follow to get there. The goals and objectives are something each member of USMEPCOM can relate to, because they cover all facets of our mission. One or more of the goals and objectives will affect how every member of the command does his or her job and, ultimately, contributes to overall mission accomplishment.

The goals cover medical, testing, processing, human capital, and resource planning and management. I don’t want to delve into the all the objectives in-depth, but here is a brief synopsis of each goal.

Goal 1 (Medical): Improved flexibility, accuracy, consistency, and timeliness of medical determinations. Each physical is tailored to the applicant and his or her medical history. Providers base examinations on the applicant’s medical history, rather than the applicant’s self-

disclosures. Medical providers produce consistent examinations using standards and judgement from one applicant to the next. All providers throughout the command apply these standards uniformly, so applicants receive the same evaluation against DoD and service standard at any MEPS. Providers use electronic medical history to give more timely determinations as they pre-qualify applicants.

Goal 2 (Testing): Improved aptitude screening using distributed delivery options. Testing for the Career Exploration Program is computer based. The Pre-screen Internet-based Computer Adaptive Test (PICAT) is the default ASVAB option for assessing applicants before they arrive at the MEPS.

Goal 3 (Processing): Reduced processing visits and time required for USMEPCOM applicant processing operations. Leverage technology to screen applicants before the initial MEPS visit. Comprehensive medical history reduces return MEPS visits due to insufficient medical documentation. Expanded external checks enable identity management throughout processing. Expanded hometown shipping. Biometrically sign all forms that support applicant processing to enable paperless processing.

Goal 4 (Human Capital): Systems, processes, programs and work environments in place that support personal and organizational growth, development, empowerment and productivity. Personnel acquire knowledge, skills and abilities to enhance their professional contributions. The command develops organizational capability through evolving structures and competencies to meet planned, goal-driven business needs. Personnel are increasingly empowered to own their duties, take initiative and be accountable. Productivity increasingly timely and high-quality.

Goal 5 (Resource Planning and Management): Governance

(Please see Commentary Page 6)

Leading by example

Commander establishes standards aimed at the little things that matter

Story by Skip Wiseman
 Messenger Editor
 Photos by Amy Gregorski
 Visual Information Specialist

Capt. Stuart Satterwhite, USMEPCOM commander, is quite clear about why he chose to become a member of the organization.

"I was given the opportunity to come here, and it was a choice to come here," he said. "I could have stayed in Florida, but I believed in the mission, what we do and why we do it."

Satterwhite is currently dual-hatted, serving as commander of Western Sector in addition to his duties heading the command.

"To me, it's easy," he said, "because I have 65 commanders who are charged with executing our mission. I'm not doing their jobs. That job has been delegated to them. They have accountability as well."

Satterwhite was quick to establish his guiding principles to keep the command running smoothly under his leadership. They are delegation, accountability, professionalism, integrity, teamwork, respect, communication and procedural compliance.

"Professionalism is both a state of mind and a fact of life," he said. "You observe others and emulate the qualities you would like to be known for. Professionalism is about being a role model. It's about ethics. It's how you act and know your job."

"When I look at the folks in our MEPS, I want them to be professionals," Satterwhite said. "Professionalism is how they

carry things out. It's doing the right thing all the time. That's the foundation of how we do things."

Integrity is vital because, in many locations, the MEPS is the face of the Department of Defense in the community, Satterwhite said.

"There may be some recruiters, but we are the face of the military," he said. "The nation looks at our employees – military and civilian – and says 'You represent our nation's military.' We are scrutinized for what we do, how we behave.

"Do we do the right thing?" he asked. "How do we treat others? Is the standard higher for us? Yes, it is. Are there people in government who don't abide by the same code of dignity, respect and integrity? There are. That doesn't absolve us of doing the right thing."

Once integrity is compromised it is nearly impossible to reclaim it, Satterwhite said.



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It's about ethics. It's how you act and know your job.

—Capt. Stuart Satterwhite
 On professionalism

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“I’ve seen people give up their integrity,” he said. “It’s very difficult to get your integrity back with people who saw you lose it. You can try all you want, but people remember. That’s why you don’t go there to start with.”

While integrity is vital, teamwork is critical.

“We don’t succeed as individuals,” Satterwhite said. “We’ll never get there except by working as a team.”

He used the medical element as an example, saying that the medical staff has to function as a team to efficiently process applicants. He also pointed out that teamwork between sections is also essential.

“We’ve got processing, medical, testing, all the different sections,” Satterwhite said. “So we have three ‘stovepipes,’ but only one applicant. They’ve all got to work together to efficiently get the applicant through. If one leg isn’t working right, the other two start feeling it.”

“When all the sections come together, one section says ‘We’re a little slow today, so we’re going to make something up in one of the other elements,’” he said. “By teamwork, we can make something happen together. That develops unity and pride.”

Cross-training, both within and between sections, is an important part of teamwork.

“Does that mean that my control desk is going to go back and do ortho-neuro?” Satterwhite asked. “No. But they should understand what medical is doing.”

“Inside a section, there has to be a lot of cross-training, because we aren’t very deep,” he said. “We don’t have the luxury of having a backup to the backup, or even having a backup. Crosstraining comes into play when someone is sick or takes a vacation.”

Given the small size of most MEPS’ staffs and the need for people to be proficient in more than one task, effective two-way communication is crucial.

“A lot of times we find that people transmit, but the receiver is not quite hearing, so we have to adjust,” Satterwhite said. “If you are in a leadership role, you have to make sure people understand what you’re

trying to say. That may mean you have to deliver your message in two or three different fashions, so they see and understand what it is.

“As peers, people have to communicate what’s going on and what they’re doing that day so they understand and see what the challenges are and how they’re working together. We encounter some kind of challenge every day. By communicating, we can overcome them and improve.”

Any organization – especially one in the Defense Department – has standards to which it must adhere. That’s especially true of USMEPCOM, since it must not only follow DoD rules but also must meet the needs of each of the five military services so, they can do their jobs efficiently.

“We have standards to make sure that, when we process these young men and women, we are giving them the best opportunity to succeed as they go forward,” Satterwhite said. “Those are the DoD standards. My standard is you are going to go forward and do the best you can. I’m not looking to hold anyone to a different standard than I hold myself to.”

Satterwhite also acknowledges that people sometimes make mistakes while striving to meet standards.

“Mistakes happen every day,” he said. “As a supervisor and a leader you have to understand that. If you’re working to accomplish the mission and make a mistake, it’s made. I make



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***We don’t succeed as individuals.
We’ll never get there except
by working as a team.***

—Capt. Stuart Satterwhite
On teamwork

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mistakes every day. Now, what do we do with that mistake? Do we learn from it, or do we go back and repeat it?

“If we learn from it, that’s good,” Satterwhite said. “If we make a mistake and continue to repeat it, that’s not good. It’s not a zero-defect mentality. I want to allow people to feel they can do their jobs without fear of reprisal or repercussions, that their careers are not over if they make a mistake or a wrong choice. I want you to lean forward, make those decisions and move out. If we make a mistake, we’ll adjust course.”

In addition to publishing his guiding principles, Satterwhite was quick to involve himself and the headquarters staff in revising the command Mission and Vision Statements and Goals.

“The Mission Statement change is very minor,” Satterwhite said.

“People were hung up on whether it was eligibility or qualification. Eligibility is a small word. That’s not our focus, so let’s take that out and move on to the next piece.

“The Vision was a bigger piece, because federal service was included in it,” he said. “Our federal service piece is a small part of what we do. We still have the capability to do that, but it isn’t really our vision.

“When you look at the new Vision Statement, you’ll see Department of Defense professionals in there, because that is our vision of who we are, and we are looking at progressing to state of the art processing. Our Vision Statement has to look forward to where we want to go.

“Today,” Satterwhite said, “we may not be state-of-the art in all of our processing, our computer systems, whatever it might be, but we should be working toward that. USMEPCOM must adapt. We must change. We must evolve to get better each year going forward.”

One example of how the command is pursuing its vision is remote processing in Las Vegas.

“The services are already asking if they can have another one,” Satterwhite said. “When you tell a recruiter he or she has to be on the road for 10 hours, that’s a long time. What can happen in 10 hours? Maybe somebody gets in an accident. Maybe the recruiter could have been out finding another applicant.

“If you can make it closer, it allows recruiters to be more effective in their work, and we still offer young men and women the

opportunity to serve their nation. We should be able to do that.”

Satterwhite also said the command’s updated Goals will help it move forward in modernizing its processes, and they should be “something each person can relate to.”

“The strategic plan has to resonate with each employee,” he said. “They should be able to see themselves in this plan. Each employee should be able to say, ‘I can contribute to this, and I can be the one who moves this forward. That’s why we’re looking at the Goals. That’s why we’re looking at the Mission and Vision Statements. Those should be pieces everyone understands.”

Satterwhite said he’s detail-oriented, and he looks for people who pay attention to detail.

“I look at analytics,” he said. “I get into the numbers to see what’s



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We don’t have the luxury of a backup to the backup or even having a backup.

—Capt. Stuart Satterwhite
On the need for cross training

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Commentary

(Continued from Page 3)

systems in place to support resource planning, stewardship, and decision making. Engage in short- and long-range planning to document requirements for personnel, structure, programs, funding and control systems.

Requirements are evaluated and managed in a systematic governance process that evaluates, prioritizes and manages their fulfillment.

Again, I urge each member of the USMEPCOM team to read and understand the new USMEPCOM Strategic Plan. It lays out the long-range strategy that will enable the

command to meet the challenges and demands of a constantly changing world, while continuing to sustain the All-Volunteer Force.

Stuart C. Satterwhite
Captain, USN
Commanding

going on. When people send up things that aren't accurate, when the numbers don't add up, they aren't paying attention to details. If you're not paying attention to details, then what else are you missing?

"I'm looking for people who are looking at what the impacts are," Satterwhite said. "You have to think beyond today. What is the second or third order effect of your actions?"

Satterwhite said it is important for people to tell him what he needs to hear, not what they think he wants hear.

"I want somebody to come in and say, 'This is what I think, this is why I think it and this is why I'm making this recommendation,'" he said, adding that there is always time to make adjustments as needed.

"Sometimes we're pressed for time and need recommendations sooner rather than later," Satterwhite said. "We can always come back to things. In Iraq, I saw people making life and death decisions. We're working paperwork. These things are adjustable."

Satterwhite said he has seen many good people in his travels to MEPS, but has



“USMEPCOM must adapt. We must change. We must evolve to get better each year.

—Capt. Stuart Satterwhite
On the importance of strategic planning

“We're doing great. We're getting things done. We're making things happen.

—Capt. Stuart Satterwhite
On the state of the command

also seen some who could improve their commitment to teamwork.

"People think you're being critical," he said. Well, if you're at an 'A' because you're getting everything done, how can you get better? You can get that much better by working more closely together.

"We're doing great. We're getting things done.

We're making things happen. Nobody is getting turned away. But how did I do it and could I have done it a little better? Could I have worked with my teammate? Could I have helped somebody out? That working together, I think, will take us to the next level. That's where we need to go.

"USMEPCOM is a great place to work," Satterwhite said. "It is so important for our folks to feel a sense of value in what we do and why we do it. We're hitting on all cylinders, but still casting a critical eye toward how we can get better.

"It's an exciting time, and it should be fun," he said. "That doesn't mean there won't be some challenges. As we try to do different things, we're going to run into some things that aren't going to work, and we'll adjust course."

The EEO Complaint Process

By Danielle Lieber
 Messenger Associate Editor

Americans adhere to the ideal that all people deserve equality and respect. The Department of Defense strives to be a model of this principle. To that end, there are processes for any employee, or applicant for employment, who feels these rights have been violated.

One such process, established by Congress, is the Equal Employment Opportunity, or EEO, complaint process. USMEPCOM has its own EEO office, and the specialists there facilitate discrimination complaints based on the categories supported by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or EEOC. Merriam-Webster's online dictionary defines discrimination as, "the practice of unfairly treating a person or group of people differently from other people or groups of people." Complaints fall into EEO purview when discrimination is based on:

- Sexual Harassment
- Genetic Information
- Equal Pay/Compensation
- Disability
- Harassment



Photo by Darrin McDufford

Spencer Parker, USMEPCOM EEO specialist.

- National Origin
- Pregnancy
- Race/Color
- Religion
- Retaliation
- Sex
- Age

"A lot of times, people don't know where they want to file a complaint. They just know they have a concern. Depending on what they describe to us, we will determine what kind of assistance we provide," Spencer Parker, USMEPCOM EEO specialist, said.

Employees who want to file complaints should evaluate their concerns to ensure they fall into EEO's purview, Parker said.

This is not about bad manners in the workplace. "How has the perceived discriminatory action impacted your employment? It's not harm unless there is an employment action, such as a letter of reprimand, a suspension or a non-selection. A letter of counseling or a verbal counseling is not necessarily discriminatory... and the complainant has to be prepared to prove that discrimination occurred," Parker said.

It is also important for employees to know they cannot file complaints on behalf of others, and they cannot file complaints against their coworkers, since that doesn't affect their employment.

The process EEO is required to follow is time driven, and consists of both formal and informal processes. Anyone wishing to file a complaint must go through the informal process before he or she can file a formal complaint.

"In the beginning, we do the basic fact finding, and try to resolve at the earliest possible stage. When it becomes formal, it becomes more of an investigative process. So if we can address the issue in the informal stage, it gives management and employees more



Photo by Darrin McDufford

Geoffrey Garner, USMEPCOM EEO officer.

leeway to resolve. When it gets to the formal stage, we are bringing in investigators," Parker said.

According to Army Regulation 690-600, Equal Opportunity Discrimination Complaints, the complainant must contact an EEO official or counselor within 45 days of the action or practice alleged to be discriminatory, the effective date of a personnel action, or when the complainant became aware of the alleged discriminatory action or practice.

The informal, or pre-complaint, process begins after an individual contacts an EEO official. Next, he or she will be given the choice of mediation through the alternative dispute resolution, or ADR, process or facilitation via an EEO mediator.

"If the person chooses ADR, which is mediation, the goal is to resolve it at the earliest stage possible ... They have filed a complaint, it is just not a formal complaint. If we can resolve it at the mediation table, that's the best case scenario. They draft a negotiated settlement agreement. Whatever is in that agreement, it's a binding contract. If anything contained in that document is not upheld, it's a breach of contract," Andrea Walton, USMEPCOM EEO specialist, said.

For mediation, USMEPCOM uses an outside agency called the

Investigation and Resolution Division, or IRD. It is a division of the Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service. “They are really successful,” Walton said.

IRD can be used at any stage of the formal or informal EEO process. “They are responsible for investigating and conducting mediation for all DOD complaints,” Geoffrey Garner, USMEPCOM EEO officer, said.

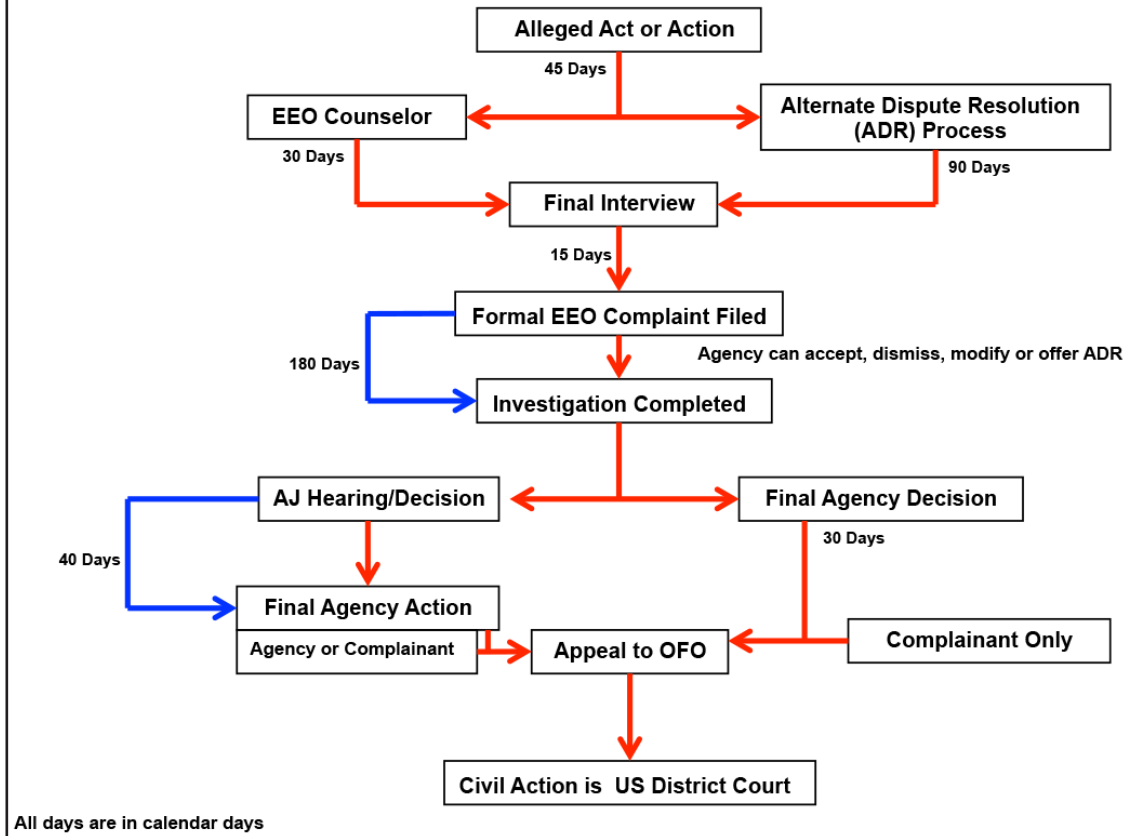
The other option is to have an EEO counselor facilitate a resolution. This is where a USMEPCOM EEO counselor acts as a go-between for the complainant and the management official. “We are neutral,” Walton said.

If a complaint cannot be resolved in the informal process, the EEO counselor

will issue the complainant a notice to file a formal complaint. “Every federal employee has 15 calendar days to file that formal complaint with the EEO office,” Garner said.

Employees who want to file a formal EEO complaint must understand the extent of that decision. “They are filing these complaints against the Secretary of the Army. That’s how big it is,” Parker said.

Overview of Complaint Process



Once the formal complaint is filed, the EEO officer decides whether to accept, dismiss or partially dismiss the complaint.

“If they state a claim and basis, I am accepting it for investigation, because that’s what the EEOC wants,” Garner said. “We have 180 calendar days from that point to complete the investigation. After the completion of the investigation, I will get a report of investigation.

I will issue the employee a post-investigative options notice. That basically tells them, ‘you have the option of requesting a hearing in front of an EEO administrative judge or for the Department of the Army to render a decision.’ They have 30 calendar days to let us know which direction they want to go. If they request a hearing in front of a judge, then I do a transmittal of the complaint filed to the judge and two copies to Headquarters Army. When it gets to the hearing, the administrative judge is not limited on time to render a decision.”

Garner emphasized that complaints can be mitigated by communication and understanding between the parties involved. The EEO office seeks to help employees and management alike avoid misunderstandings. See their tips for management and employees on how to help address concerns before they become complaints.

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How has the perceived discriminatory action impacted your employment?

— Spencer Parker
USMEPCOM EEO Specialist

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Equal Employment Opportunity Tips

Tips for All



- Pay attention to EEO training.
- Communicate with honesty and respect.
- Practice soft skills.
- Educate yourself on your rights and the Table of Penalties (available on PERMISS).
- Remember the mission.

Contact Daniel Jostes or Johnny Smith, J-1 Human Resources, for information about managing employees, work hours and leave policies.

If you are wrestling with a decision, call a Command labor attorney and discuss the issue.

Tips for all supervisors



- Make decisions transparent.
- Treat everyone fairly.
- Hold people accountable, employees and subordinate supervisors.
- Learn how to counsel someone.
- Pick up the phone. You have resources to advise you on what you should do.
- Err on the side of caution; a lot of situations are spontaneous.
- Take time out to talk to your employees honestly, and give them feedback.
- Be truthful in evaluations; this can protect you should a complaint arise later.
- Be proactive with employee concerns.
- Avoid the perception of being domineering or micromanaging.

Tips for employees



- Do your job.
- Understand that your supervisor has many employees that he or she is managing.
- Report to work on time.
- Ask for feedback from your supervisor.
- Understand leave policies, especially those related to disabilities.
- Disclose any limitations you may have, and request a reasonable accommodation if you need one.
- Be sensitive to your coworkers' situations. Everyone has his or her own life and things that happen that you may not know about.
- Abide by established policy.
- Do not gossip or spread rumors.

Tips for military supervisors of civilians



- Educate yourself on civilian processes; do not default to your military training.
- Manage rather than command civilian employees.
- Learn about civilian hours and leave policies.
- Stick to the processes already in place.
- Military and civilian cultures are different. A civilian may not know certain customs, such as standing when a commander enters the room. Be aware of these knowledge gaps, and understand that you cannot force civilians to follow military customs.
- Be aware that all management officials are treated the same in the EEO process.

What are your limitations?

By Danielle Lieber
Messenger Associate Editor

A disability is not always something you can see. It is not always permanent. It can be physical, mental or emotional. Disability doesn't care about race, gender or age. Everyone is affected by disability, whether it affects you, a loved one, a coworker, or the person for whom you hold the door open at a restaurant. It can be an all-consuming challenge for those who deal with it every day, but it doesn't stop them from contributing significantly to our mission. It doesn't stop them from working. It doesn't stop them from living.

As a person with a disability or that person's supervisor, it is important to step back from the cause and focus on the limitations the cause presents. By focusing on the limitations a disability or impairment presents, the employee and supervisor can concentrate on lessening the impact of those limitations.

Ensuring applicants for military service meet Department of Defense and service standards is USMEPCOM's mission, and every USMEPCOM employee is hired to accomplish some part of that mission. Sometimes, employees need accommodations to enable them to perform their duties. These accommodations vary from limitation to limitation and person to person. "You can never compare people with disabilities," Geoffrey Garner, EEO officer, said.

The EEO office may exist to process EEO complaints, but they also provide the service of reasonable accommodation to anyone with limitations.

"Seventy-four point four percent of our command are veterans, 36 percent of them are 30 percent or more disabled vets," Garner said. All of which is to say, many USMEPCOM employees could potentially request accommodations for their limitations.

To prevent misunderstandings between employees and supervisors before they arise, the EEO office encourages employees to disclose their limitations to their immediate supervisors as early as possible. Failure to disclose a limitation may lead to misunderstandings, and possibly personnel actions, if an employee's work suffers due to the limitation.

"I understand it may be scary. You may not want to tell your supervisor. But if that's going to prevent future issues, I say disclose. That is going to help you in the long run ... We are federal employees. You have rights," Andrea Walton, EEO specialist and disability program manager, said.

"There is a way to keep that information close hold. The supervisors can't discuss the employee's limitations with others," Garner said.

The EEO office also encourages those with disabilities to self-identify using SF-256, which can be updated at any time on MyBiz.

The process of reasonable accommodation is an interactive process between an employee and his or her supervisor. Contact Walton for more information about how to start that process.

"Supervisors should create an environment that says, 'if you are a person with a disability, if you need a reasonable accommodation, please let me know ahead of time, so we can get you any accommodations you need,'" Walton said.

Supervisors should not be afraid that accommodations will give employees a free pass to not do their work. "Still hold people accountable. Treat them like others. But if you are accommodating them, it is going to look slightly different," Walton said. Employees with accommodations may work differently than those who do not need them.

Dealing with a disability is a very personal matter, and everyone does it differently. "We can't make the employee reveal personal information to the supervisor. Supervisors, on the other hand, have to be extremely careful how they approach employees," Garner said.

"The supervisor has to be savvy enough to ask questions at the right time. Ultimately, the employee has to be their own advocate ... However, the employee does not have to say, 'I need an accommodation.' We want supervisors to be keen on their folks. Not to read into things, but be aware," Walton said. An employee may ask for a change in schedule or environment as a way of dealing with his or her limitations. Supervisors should recognize those situations and think of reasonable accommodation, Walton said.

"Focus on limitations. What are your limitations? Don't assume. Don't ask if someone needs help. They have voices. They can ask you if they need help," Walton said.

While all disabilities present challenges to the people who live with them, hidden disabilities—those that others cannot easily see or identify—present a unique set of challenges that may not affect people with obvious disabilities.



Photo by Darrin McDufford

**Andrea Walton, USMEPCOM
EEO specialist and disability
program manager.**

**Learn about disability etiquette
at**

www.cap.mil/NewsEvents/Training.aspx

(Please see Limitations Page 12)

(Limitations from Page 11)

Hidden disabilities can be more difficult because you can't see them, and they may be unpredictable. "A person may be fine one day and not on another," Walton said.

Supervisors should be sensitive to the unique challenges that people with disabilities face. "You need to remember that you are dealing with people," Walton said.

There is an assumption that hidden disabilities are all mental and emotional. That is not the case. Limitations caused by physical disabilities, such as back pain, are not always visible.

The most important point to remember when interacting with people with disabilities is to treat them as you would anyone else. However, like every culture, there is an etiquette to certain interactions. The Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program, found at cap.mil, has a series of videos on disability etiquette.

You may be presented with a situation in which you do not know how to act around someone with a disability, for instance, shaking hands. This person may have a prosthetic hand or hook, be in a wheelchair or be blind.

Just remember, a person with a disability wants to be treated like everyone else. If you are really at a loss for what to do, just ask. "How would you like me to shake your hand?" The disabled person should take that as a sign of respect.

"For an obvious disability that may be fine, but for a hidden disability it is totally different. They might not want to talk about it," Walton said.

Although the issue may seem like an obstacle, it has to be overcome to get the mission done. Every employee must perform the job he or she was hired to perform, and every supervisor must provide the tools that those employees need to perform their jobs.

For more information on disabilities and reasonable accommodation, visit cap.mil or askjan.org.

EO and how it's different

By Danielle Lieber, Messenger Associate Editor

As a joint command, USMEPCOM encompasses all of the benefits and challenges that accompany military members and civilians working together. Diversity of culture is one of the attributes that makes our country and our organization strong. However, when different cultures meet, misunderstandings can occur. For a civilian employee, a complaint of discrimination is filed through the Equal Employment Opportunity, or EEO, office. Military members go to Equal Opportunity, or EO.

Like EEO, EO has a complaint process, but the strategic advisors also provide other services.

"EEO is designed to resolve complaints, so they are reactive." Air Force Master Sgt. Cynthia Rijos, Eastern Sector equal opportunity strategic advisor, said. "Military EO is designed to be proactive. We get out there, and we train. We educate. Our job can be divided into three areas: the education piece, the complaint piece, and the DEOCS, or Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey, piece. They all roll together. The DEOCS and education are proactive pieces. The DEOCS gives us a snapshot of what the organization looks like as far as the human relations climate. From there, we decide what kind of training we need to provide to improve the climate or sustain the climate. If none of that works, we could run into the complaints."



Air Force Master Sgt. Cynthia Rijos, Eastern Sector equal opportunity strategic advisor.

The EO Complaint Process

There are six categories of discrimination complaints under EO purview. A military member can file a complaint of discrimination based on: race, color, religion, gender, national origin or sexual orientation.

The EO complaint process is separated into two avenues, formal and informal. The military member chooses whether he or she wants to file a complaint formally or informally. Unlike civilians, military members can file a complaint against anyone, even coworkers.

"It has more to do with the workplace, having that conducive work environment. Anything that distracts from that environment, in the EO purview, we could come into the picture," Rijos said.

"Informally, members will choose someone in their chain of command, preferably at the lowest level, who they want to resolve the complaints for them. Whether it is their supervisors, their first sergeants, or the commanders. Then, if they contact us first, I will ask them, 'do you want me to contact someone in your chain of command to help you resolve?'" Rijos said.

"We may also suggest to the member, 'have you tried the next person in the chain of command to address this?' The person may not feel comfortable addressing it with that individual. 'Have you tried somebody else in the chain of command other than that supervisor, or whoever?' They may say, 'I didn't even consider that. 'Well, try it out,'" Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Ray Anderson, Western Sector equal opportunity strategic advisor, said.

The formal process is more structured. The military member has 60 days after the incident to file a complaint with EO. He or she will fill out Department of the Army (DA) form 7279 and give it to his or her commander.

Next, the appropriate level commander will initiate an investigation. The investigator has 14 days to conduct the investigation. The investigator's report goes to the commander for action. Complainants can appeal decisions within seven days, which starts an entire appeals process.

Even though EO is designed for military personnel, the advisors encourage civilians to call them with questions or concerns. They may not process a complaint, but they will try to help people search for solutions.

"One of our biggest goals is always resolution of some sort. Because of the skills we have with mediation and team-building, we will always try to resolve their concerns using those skills even if it's not in our purview. If it means I have to ask them, 'can I call your supervisor and get you guys talking, open the lines of communication?' I will do that. Whatever it takes to get them working together better," Rijos said.

The DEOCS is a survey conducted annually to give leadership an analysis of the demographic makeup of the organization and employees' attitudes about the work environment. EO uses the results to determine which EO educational topics are most needed.

Education

The EO team conducts a lot of training at the MEPS. When they go to a MEPS, they explain their categories and the complaint process.

"After we are done with that, I always move into a session of team-building ... We do a lot of team-building. We are equipped with two great programs

to help with personality type assessment team-building. To me, that is a step above training. When we come in with these team-building exercises, it really gets them active and engaged," Rijos said.

The EO strategic advisors use personality type team-building most often. They use questionnaires to categorize personality types by color to help people become more self-aware as well as understand how their coworkers are different.

"The education piece, for military or civilians, message is the same either way. Our goal is to resolve and help no matter what your status is," Rijos said.

"Our job is to help people resolve potential problems at the lowest level through education and preventative maintenance of the human mind. We are both EO and EEO certified," Anderson said.

While military supervisors need to be sensitive to what makes civilian employees different, civilians also need to understand that military members come from a different culture as well.

There can be clashing when any two cultures meet, "The key is to talk about it," Rijos said. Respectful communication keeps everyone working in an environment that is conducive to teamwork.

If an military member or civilian employee needs advice about resolving workplace disagreements or how to clear up cultural misunderstandings, he or she can call the EO strategic advisors.

"We are here to help at every echelon," Anderson said. "It's not just the employees, sometimes the supervisors or commanders need help."

While their complaint processes are different, EEO and EO programs complement each other. They both work to resolve complaints to help everyone get past their differences and continue the mission.



Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Ray Anderson, Western Sector equal opportunity strategic advisor.

What's the news?

Contact Messenger staff to share

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6th
Battalion

Lansing MEPS



Lt. Cmdr. David Pavlik

Hometown: Pittsburgh. “The town was based on the steel industry until the 1970s.” His family moved to Akron, Ohio, when he was 13.

Fond childhood memories: “We used to spend a lot of time on the lake shore on Lake Erie, exploring, fishing, boating. It was pretty pleasant.”

What was your favorite toy when you were a kid? “I still have a lot of my Matchbox cars from when I was a kid. I even have some of my dad’s that survived all the moves and stuff.”

Education: Bachelor’s of business administration, California Maritime Academy Vallejo, California. He also earned a Coast Guard third mate unlimited tonnage license as part of his degree.

Why did you join the Navy? I think I always had an interest in military service. I talked to Marine recruiters about joining the Reserve while I was in high school. I processed at the Cleveland MEPS, but things just didn’t work out. I met people involved with the maritime program in college and got into it.

Previous assignment: Human resources action officer and Navy branch chief, United States Special Operations Command.

Favorite assignment: One was enlisted programs/operations officer, Navy Recruiting District San Diego. My afloat tour on USS John C. Stennis was very good. Being in command is pretty

cool, too, seven months into it.”

Future military career plans: That depends on what happens after here. I’d like to get back to the west coast and maybe someday have another command tour. I’d like to continue to enjoy myself and make a good impact somewhere.”

What do you do when you’re not a commander? Right now we’re trying to enjoy and explore Michigan. We try to get the most out of where we are.”

What’s your leadership style? “I try to let my people do their jobs. I like to be interested and know what’s going on, but I expect people to do what they need to do and ask for help when they need it. I trust them to do what they need to do. I try to give them room to maneuver.”

What do you like best about your job? “Any time you can be in the accessions business, you have an opportunity to make an impact. It’s very invigorating, refreshing. When you see it through their eyes, its exciting. You see it through the applicants and the families, the excitement, the fear. Some of them are leaving home for the first time.

What do you order when you eat out? “I try to get seafood, which is hard in Michigan. We try to eat healthy when we go out, but don’t always succeed. We got spoiled on seafood when we were in California.”

What’s your guilty pleasure? “California wines. I had some family and friends who lived in the Napa area. I got a taste for it and grew into it.”

Tell me something people would be surprised to know about you. “We took a try at gardening this year because we had the space. I became a gentleman bean farmer.”

It’s 2 o’clock Sunday afternoon. What are you doing? “During NASCAR season, I’m watching the race. Other times, I’m playing golf.”

What is the last book you read? “I’m reading a sports book called ‘You Can’t Make This Up’ by Al Michaels.”

What is your ideal vacation? “I’ve never been to Europe. I’d like to see the historic sites, military or not. I’d like to go to

Normandy, and maybe explore London. I also like driving trips in the United States. One of my favorites was driving cross country on permanent change of station moves. There’s so much to see.”

4th
Battalion

Albany MEPS



Maj. Allen C. Deleon

Hometown: Miami. “Warm weather, beaches and Mojitos.”

Fond childhood memories: “We went every once in a while down to the Keys to do some fishing. That was always a riot. It’s something else going over the water on the seven-mile-long bridge. I’ll tell you what.”

What was your favorite toy when you were a kid? “Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. It was team of brothers. I was always close to my brothers growing up. The turtles are a brotherhood, kicking butt against crime.”

Education: Bachelor of science degree in professional aeronautics, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, Florida.

Why did you join the Marine Corps? He was enlisted for six years as a Huey and Cobra and hydraulics technician. “In all honesty, I needed something to shake me up and get rid of my bad habits, get some discipline in my life. I needed a hard reset in my life personally. Marine Corps boot camp was the longest and I thought that would set me on the right path.”

Previous assignment: “I was stationed at Norfolk, Virginia, helping out the naval aviation reserves,

specifically in the maintenance and logistics side of the house.”

Favorite assignment: “When I was stationed with HMX-1 in Quantico, Virginia, the presidential airlift unit. I flew on the helicopter multiple times, but never with the president on board.”

Future military career plans: “For the past three years, I’ve been away from the operating forces. I looking forward to getting back to the flightline. I needed the decompression time but now that I’ve got it, I will be super ready to go back.”

What do you want to be when you grow up? “I want to be a ninja turtle. Seriously, I’m looking forward to enjoying my pension. I’m looking forward to being a farmer. I have three acres in Chesapeake, Virginia. Not getting rich off it but enjoying retirement. We have chickens, alpacas, goats and a Shetland pony with an attitude. My wife and family are still in Chesapeake. Right now, my wife is holding things down for me.”

What do you do when you’re not a commander? “The only hobbies I have are agriculture and that’s in Virginia. I do have a mini-garden in my apartment – tomatoes, green peppers, potatoes, things like that. I’m learning to be a better horticulturist.”

What’s your leadership style?

“I like to think I’m easy-going, non-judgmental. I like to observe a lot before making a decision. Before I was a man of action, get it done now, because that’s what the operations tempo demanded.”

What do you like best about your job? “I get to interact with non-uniformed people and get in touch with real, non-military people, how they act, how they dress, how they talk, the music they listen to. It will make me a better fit for society once I take my uniform off. I get to interact with applicants and their families – their parents and their brothers and sisters.”

What do you order when you eat out? “I love pizza. I’ve always been a pepperoni and cheese person, but now that I’m in New York, just a plain cheese pizza. Maybe because its New York-style pizza.”

What’s the best present you ever got? “I received a little plastic trophy about 4-5 inches tall that says ‘World’s Best Dad.’ My daughter gave it to me when she was about 7 (she’s 11 now). She didn’t have any money to spend on it. It means the world to me because she couldn’t really afford it.”

What’s your guilty pleasure? “Ice cream. I enjoy strawberry, but

I’m just a sucker for ice cream.”

Tell me something people would be surprised to know about you. “I like to doodle. I draw little funny characters for my kids. I like to get a laugh out of the kids or my wife.”

What is your favorite all-time movie? All the Rocky movies. It’s the classic underdog story. The regular average Joe trying to make it in the world and finally able to get to the top.

It’s 2 o’clock Sunday afternoon. What are you doing? “Trying to catch a football game on TV.”

What is the last book you read? “I’m reading World War Z, (an apocalyptic horror novel by Max Brooks) not so much because of the zombies, but to see what people do with the minimum, the basic necessities. It’s helped me think outside the box and consider the things we take for granted, like running water, electricity, the Internet.”

What is your ideal vacation? “Right now, my ideal vacation is to be in Virginia, at home in the living room with my wife and kids with my feet kicked up. Then when I get home, its being on a nice white beach somewhere with palm trees all around.”



Veterans’ stand down

Army Maj. Joven Kobrick, Sioux Falls MEPS commander, right, and Army Sgt. 1st Class Jean Hobach talk with a veteran during the Veterans’s Stand Down at the Sioux Falls Vet Center. The MEPS has helped sponsor the event for three years. More than 60 organizations come together to support veterans, most of whom are homeless. Support such as clothing, blankets, medical screening, flu shots, food, job opportunities, counseling and grooming are provided free for about 200 local military veterans. The veterans enjoy seeing the MEPS uniformed staff members and sharing stories of their service.

Springfield joins students for Veterans Day ceremony

The Springfield MEPS staff helped Sunderland, Massachusetts and Sunderland Elementary School observe Veterans Day.

A ceremony helped students understand the meaning and purpose of the holiday.

Because there is no school on the holiday itself, the ceremony is held a few days before so students can attend.

Last year's ceremony featured a guest speaker, patriotic songs and poems by the students, the flag being lowered to half-staff and a flag-folding demonstration by an Air Force Reserve color guard.

People from the MEPS also took part in classroom discussions, accompanied students to the playground during recess and joined them for lunch in the school cafeteria.



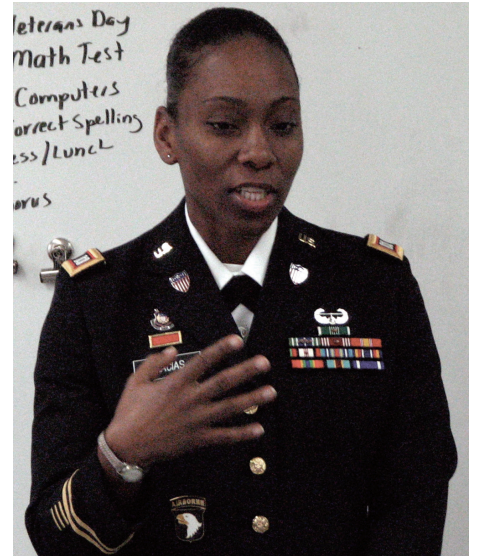
A soldier and student talk during lunch.



Students perform a song during the Sunderland Elementary School Veterans Day ceremonies.



Recess is fun no matter your age.



Army Capt. Denise K. Macias, Springfield MEPS operations officer, explains military life to students during a question and answer session.



Macias goes through the lunch line in the school cafeteria.



Playground time is a great way to blow off steam after lunch.

Army recruiting commander visits Lansing MEPS as part of Great Lakes Battalion tour

Maj. Gen. Jeffery Snow, commanding general of Army Recruiting Command, visited the Lansing MEPS Aug. 12.

The visit was part of his tour of the Army's Great Lakes Recruiting Battalion.

During the visit, Snow presented the Civilian Superior Service Award to Tamara Wallace, MEPS administrative support technician, for her 30 years of civil service.

Snow was joined by Lt. Col. John McDaniel, battalion commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Farrell Mulkey. The group toured the MEPS and saw how applicants are processed.

They also learned about Michigan's Freedom Center, which provides food and comfort for applicants and their families.



Dr. Mary Finn, Lansing MEPS chief medical officer discusses applicant processing with the general.



An applicant answers a question.



Jackie Evans, Lansing MEPS processing lead, explains Red Carpet Treatment to the general.



You are not forgotten

Above left: Army 1st Sgt. Gerald L. Brantley, Tampa MEPS senior enlisted advisor, and Navy Lt. Cmdr. Quintrell L. McCreary, stand by the ceremonial table set to honor prisoners of war and those missing in action. Left: Adrian Roberson, Tampa human resources assistant, and Brantley hold a POW-MIA flag. Above: Roberson hoists the American and POW-MIA flags up the MEPS flag pole.



If it walks like a duck ...

Members of the Miami Marlins Energy Team perform the duck walk with applicants during their visit to the Miami MEPS. The Energy Team members are the Marlins cheerleaders. The Marlins mascot, Billy the Marlin, also visited the MEPS as part of the team's community outreach. The visit was designed to boost the morale of applicants, the MEPS staff and service liaisons.

Phoenix enlists female submariner

**By Petty Officer 2nd Class Ronnie Gana
Phoenix MEPS Medical Technician**

As the Navy moves toward integrating women into submarine duty, there will be many firsts added to Navy history.

Reyna Kinzer is the first female Navy machinist's mate (submarines) to qualify and enlist through Phoenix MEPS.

Kinzer is a 17-year-old high school graduate from Red Mountain High School in Mesa, Arizona. She was born in Calcutta, India, and moved to Arizona as a child. She is scheduled to ship for basic training at Recruit Training Command in Great Lakes, Illinois in August.

Kinzer is just one of many female firsts for Navy submariners. She and many other female sailors will continue to pave the way for those who follow.



Photo by Chief Petty Officer Ross Taylor
**Navy Lt. Cmdr Kelly A. Maksem,
Phoenix MEPS commander, and Reyna
Kinzer.**



Next generation

Top: Army Maj. Gen. Michael Garrett, U.S. Central Command chief of staff, administers the oath of enlistment to Kyle Greca at the Tampa MEPS. Greca is the son of Army Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Greca, U.S. Central Command senior enlisted advisor. Bottom: Kyle Greca with Garrett and Christopher Greca. Kyle will attend basic training and Advanced Individual Training at the Army's Infantry School at Fort Benning Georgia.



Sign me up

Air Force Lt. Col. Jason D. Johnson, Cleveland MEPS commander, swears in Air Force applicants during an enlistment ceremony before a Lake Erie Crushers game. About 30 applicants enlisted. Johnson also addressed fans and supporters, described the symbolism of the event and expressed gratitude for the sacrifice the applicants were making.

Sioux Falls helps chaplain begin Reserve career

Over the last several years, Erich McCandless, a local pastor, has visited the Sioux Falls MEPS staff to offer counsel and guidance, increasing the organization's morale.

He recently received a direct commission as a chaplain in the Army Reserve.

Because of his strong ties with the MEPS and its leadership, McCandless invited Army Maj. Joven Kabrick, Sioux Falls MEPS commander, to perform the direct commission oath ceremony at an evening service so McCandless' congregation could witness the event.

Several MEPS staff members attended the service to witness the commissioning. It was an opportunity for the staff to thank McCandless for his and his congregation's support.

The MEPS staff received a warm welcome from the Empire Baptist Church members, and it was evident that Chaplain McCandless was delighted with the support he received throughout the evening.



Army Maj. Joven Kabrick, Sioux Falls MEPS commander, makes remarks during a commissioning ceremony for Pastor Erich McCandless



Army Maj. Joven Kabrick, Sioux Falls MEPS commander, administers the direct commission oath to Pastor Erich McCandless.

Correction

A Messenger story in the previous edition incorrectly identified the MEPS that interacted with a local school.

The community outreach event was sponsored by the El Paso MEPS rather than the Oklahoma City MEPS.

The Messenger staff regrets the error.



Army Capt. Cory R. Carter, Cleveland MEPS operations officer, meets Cleveland Browns quarterback Josh McCown.



The Cleveland MEPS staff shows its loyalty to the local team.

Cleveland staff meets the Browns

Cleveland MEPS military staff members and liaisons had the opportunity to mingle with coaches and players of the Cleveland Browns organization after morning practice.

The USO Northern Ohio worked in conjunction with the Browns to host a Military Appreciation Day at the Browns practice facility in Berea, Ohio.

Participants included Browns players and coaches, and all service liaisons and recruiting services in the Cleveland area.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



WORKING TO FORM A MORE PERFECT UNION:
HONORING WOMEN IN PUBLIC SERVICE AND GOVERNMENT



SCAN AND VIEW MOMENTS IN HISTORY



Designed by Seren Latham for the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute