

## Proposed Construct

### Category\*

### Duty Type

Category I  
Contingency  
duty



Active Duty  
Title 10

Active Duty  
Title 14

Full Time Nat'l Guard Duty  
Title 32

Category II  
Training and  
support



Active Duty  
Title 10

Full Time Nat'l Guard Duty  
Title 32

Category III  
Reserve  
component  
duty



Reserve Component Duty  
Title 10

Reserve Component Duty  
Title 32

Category IV  
Remote  
assignments



Remote Assignments  
Title 10

Remote Assignments  
Title 32

## Category Definitions

**Category I** is active duty and full-time National Guard duty for which a member may be ordered to duty without consent, typically in support of contingency operations.

**Category II** is active duty and full-time National Guard duty, training, administrative, voluntary operational duty, including Active Guard Reserve (AGR).

**Category III** is what is known today as Inactive Duty. This category retains the same criteria and restrictions that apply to today's Inactive Duty, which will be renamed Reserve Component Duty (RC Duty).

**Category IV** is work or study authorized by the Secretary concerned that may be performed at any time and any location when the member is not under direct military supervision.

*These categories correspond with benefit groups A, B, C, & D respectively.*

## Key Contacts

**Project Lead:**

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# Duty Status Reform



**Modernizing the Total Force  
for the Future**

**Winter 2026**

## Background

The Department of War (DOW) is focused on developing a path forward that mitigates the challenges within the current Reserve Component Duty construct, including pay and benefit inequities, disruption in pay and benefits, and complex budget execution activities. Section 513 of the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) mandated the Department draft legislation that aligns 29 authorities into four categories. DOW can align benefits across four categories to provide consistency, clarity and continuity to our National Guard and Reserve Service members and their families.

## DSR Benefits



**Improves Readiness & Flexibility:**  
Faster, more accurate personnel tracking for timely deployment/response with correct pay



**Addresses Pay & Benefit Inequities:**  
Similar pay & benefits for similar work across the Total Force



**Mitigates Pay Disruptions:**  
Four categories & contiguous service reduces disruptions in pay and benefits when RC Members transition between orders



**Reforms Duty Authorities:**  
Aligns the 29 authorities to four categories



**Creates a Category for Remote Work:**  
Services have discretion to provide points and/or pay for approved activities

## Frequently Asked Questions

**What characteristics of the current Duty Status construct have previous studies identified as needing review?**

Previous studies identified several areas where the current construct can be improved, nested in six major areas:

1. Accessibility
2. Complexity
3. Inequities in Pay and Benefits
4. Disruptions to Pay and Benefits
5. Programming and Budgeting
6. Inactive Duty

**How does the Department's reform proposal improve accessibility?**

The construct provides the Services and commanders with greater flexibility when employing Reserve Component resources. The streamlining of authorities allows for the seamless transition of duty purposes while on the same order, in turn ensuring continuity of pay and benefits.

**How does the Department's reform proposal reduce complexity?**

The reform reduces complexity by keeping members on fewer orders for the entire duty period, as long as the duty stays within the same category. This prevents breaks in service and disruptions to pay or benefits, while still tracking the purpose of duty without requiring new orders. It also standardizes pay and benefits across the Total Force for all members serving in the same duty category, ensuring fairness and consistency.

**How does the Department's reform proposal mitigate inequities in pay and benefits?**

The proposed structure aligns pay and benefits to four categories. This alignment ensures all members performing duty under each category will receive the same pay (commensurate with pay grade and years of service) and benefits, provided they meet eligibility requirements.

**How does the Department's reform proposal mitigate disruptions to pay and benefits?**

The proposed system aligns a duty status authority to a category. Under the current construct, each time the purpose changes, or when service shifts between voluntary and involuntary, new orders must be issued. This often disrupts pay and benefits, which may be terminated or delayed during the transition. Because eligibility for certain pays and benefits depends on the type of orders, a service member may lose access to them even while continuing to perform duty for the same mission or requirement.

**If past studies identified Inactive Duty Status as a challenge, why does the Department's reform proposal retain "Inactive Duty" under the new name of "Reserve Component Duty"?**

The Department conducted an in-depth assessment of Inactive Duty, known as RC Duty under Duty Status Reform, and determined it provided much needed flexibility, particularly for partial-day duty periods or short duty periods, and the ability to quickly adapt to training or other requirements, such as providing honors at the funeral of a veteran.

**Why is it necessary to separate the authority to order a member to duty from the purpose of the duty?**

Separating authority from purpose allows members to stay on the same orders even when the mission changes. This ensures pay and benefits match the duty performed, not the issuing authority. It eliminates inequities between members doing the same work and prevents disruptions caused by switching orders, creating a fairer and more stable system.

**How is the reduced age for early retirement under 10 USC 12731 affected by the DSR effort?**

The Department's reform preserves Congress's original intent from 2008 by continuing the benefit for Service members serving under Category I duty authority, which covers deployed and operational missions, including contingency operations. Beginning at implementation, only Category I duty will earn credit toward reduced retirement age. Category II duty will no longer qualify, but members will keep any credit already accrued before the change.