



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON

21 MAY 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Army Directive 2021-17 (Lateral Appointment to Corporal and Eligibility for Basic Leaders Course)

1. References.

- a. Army Regulation (AR) 350-1 (Army Training and Leader Development), 10 December 2017
- b. AR 600-8-19 (Enlisted Promotions and Reductions), 16 May 2019
- c. AR 614-200 (Enlisted Assignments and Utilization Management), 25 January 2019

2. Purpose. This directive announces a change in policy in eligibility for lateral appointment to corporal (CPL) and Basic Leaders Course (BLC) attendance for enlisted Soldiers.

3. Applicability. The provisions of this directive apply to the Regular Army (RA) and U.S. Army Reserve (USAR).

4. Background. Corporals form the foundation of the noncommissioned officer (NCO) ranks. Established in 1775, the CPL rank is bestowed on Soldiers who serve as the leaders of the smallest U.S. Army units—principally, as team leaders. CPLs are charged with the care, training, education, and readiness of their team while also maintaining and enforcing Army standards. This directive establishes that the CPL rank will be worn only by Soldiers who are recommended for promotion by a unit board and who have graduated from the BLC. The CPL rank will visually signal that the Soldiers who wear it have transitioned from the junior enlisted ranks to become members of a professional NCO corps, the backbone of our Army. This effort reinforces “This Is My Squad” throughout our NCO corps and forms a key component to a comprehensive junior leader development program.

5. Policy.

- a. Not later than 30 June 2021 for RA and USAR Active Guard Reserve (AGR) and 30 September 2021 for USAR (less AGR):

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(1) Any CPL who has not been recommended for promotion by a unit promotion board and has not graduated from the BLC will be laterally appointed to specialist (SPC).

(2) All SPCs who are recommended for promotion by a unit promotion board and also have graduated from the BLC will be laterally appointed to the rank of CPL.

b. Effective 1 July 2021 for RA and USAR AGR and 1 October 2021 for USAR (less AGR):

(1) The CPL rank will be worn only by Soldiers who are both recommended for promotion by a unit promotion board and graduates of the BLC, regardless of the grade of position to which they are assigned.

(2) Mandatory list integration to sergeant (SGT) (RA and USAR AGR Soldiers).

(a) Paragraphs 1–9c(5) and 3–1c(3) of reference 1b, as they pertain to the integration of SPCs onto the SGT recommended list, are hereby rescinded.

(b) All references to mandatory list integration to the rank of SGT in reference 1b, tables 3-1 and 3-3, are hereby rescinded.

(3) Command list integration to SGT (USAR less AGR Soldiers).

(a) Paragraphs 1–9c(4), 3–1c(5), 3–23a, and 3–23c of reference 1b, as they pertain to integration of SPCs onto the SGT recommended list, are hereby rescinded.

(b) All references to command list integration to the rank of SGT in reference 1b, tables 3–2 and 3–4, are hereby rescinded.

c. Effective 1 June 2022 for RA and USAR AGR Soldiers and 1 October 2022 for USAR (less AGR) Soldiers, eligibility to attend the BLC requires that an SPC be first recommended for promotion to the rank of SGT. On graduation from the BLC, the SPC will be laterally appointed to and will wear the rank of CPL until promoted to SGT, or until removed from the promotion recommended list consistent with current policies (requiring lateral appointment to SPC).

6. Proponent. The Deputy Chiefs of Staff (DCSs), G-1 and G-3/5/7, are the proponents for this policy, with responsibilities for incorporating the provisions of this directive into AR 350–1, AR 600–8–19, and AR 614–200 within 2 years from the date of this directive. The DCS, G-1 will provide follow-on guidance in a Military Personnel message for RA and USAR AGR Soldiers to facilitate implementation. The U.S. Army Reserve Command will provide implementing instructions for USAR (less AGR) Soldiers.

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7. Duration. This directive is rescinded on publication of the revised regulations.



John E. Whitley
Acting

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