1 3 AUG 2015

SUBJECT: Army Directive 2015-31 (Requirements for Noncommissioned Officer Promotions)

1. References:

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

    b. AR 601-280 (Army Retention Program), 31 January 2006, Including Rapid Action Revision Issued 15 September 2011.

2. This directive revises Army promotion policy for enlisted Soldiers in the Regular Army, Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States and U.S. Army Reserve. The development of an agile and adaptive noncommissioned officer (NCO) requires an investment in professional military education through a deliberate, continuous and progressive lifelong process that synthesizes the knowledge, skills, abilities and attributes the NCO gains through training, education and experiences in the institutional, operational and self-development domains. Education also provides learning experiences that are academically, intellectually and personally challenging. By linking structured self-development and the NCO Education System (NCOES) to subsequent promotion, we better prepare NCOs for the complexities of today's operational environment while reinforcing the benefits of a deliberate, continuous, sequential and progressive professional development strategy. To ensure that we develop and prepare our NCOs to fight and win in a complex world as adaptive, agile leaders and trusted professionals, I direct the following changes.

3. Enlisted Soldiers must graduate the appropriate formal military education course in NCOES before attaining eligibility for promotion pin-on, as described in this directive.

    a. Regular Army and U.S. Army Reserve Enlisted Soldiers

        (1) Semi-Centralized Promotions (Sergeant and Staff Sergeant). Beginning with the January 2016 promotion month, promotion pin-on to sergeant requires graduation of the Warrior Leader Course, and promotion pin-on to staff sergeant requires graduation of the Advanced Leader Course. Soldiers on the recommended list who are not graduates of the respective course will not be considered fully qualified for promotion pin-on regardless of their accumulated promotion points. These Soldiers will remain on the recommended list in a promotable status, but they will not be selected for promotion pin-on until they become fully qualified by completing the required course *and* a promotion requirement exists.
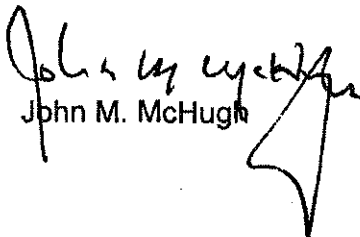
(2) Centralized Promotions (Sergeant First Class). Beginning with Soldiers selected for promotion by a fiscal year 2016 Regular Army or Army Reserve sergeant first class selection board, promotion pin-on to sergeant first class requires completion of the Senior Leader Course. Soldiers on the promotion selection list who are not graduates of the Senior Leader Course will not be considered fully qualified for promotion pin-on regardless of their sequence number. These Soldiers will remain on the recommended list in a promotable status, but they will not be selected for promotion pin-on until they become fully qualified by completing the required course *and* a promotion requirement exists.

b. Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States Enlisted Soldiers. Beginning with the fiscal year 2016 promotion cycle, enlisted Soldiers on a promotion list who have completed their structured self-development requirements will be selected and assigned to higher grade vacancies. Soldiers selected for higher grade vacancies without the NCOES requirement will have 24 months to complete the level of NCOES required for promotion pin-on or will be removed from the position. This period is extended to 36 months when the NCOES course consists of three or more phases. Promotion pin-on requires completion of the Warrior Leader Course for sergeants, Advanced Leader Course for staff sergeants and Senior Leader Course for sergeants first class.

c. Retention Control Point. For the Regular Army and Army Reserve (Active Guard Reserve) only, effective 1 October 2015, Soldiers selected for promotion to the rank of sergeant first class and master sergeant by a Headquarters, Department of the Army centralized board will no longer attain an extended retention control point (as provided for in table 3-1 of AR 601-280) until actual promotion pin-on to the higher rank.

4. The Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS), G-1 is the proponent for this policy. The DCS, G-1 will issue an Armywide message to inform the force of these changes, as well as implementing guidance to support them. The DCS, G-1 will also incorporate the provisions of this directive and the implementing guidance into the next revisions of AR 600-8-19 and AR 601-280.

5. This directive is rescinded upon publication of the revised regulations.

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