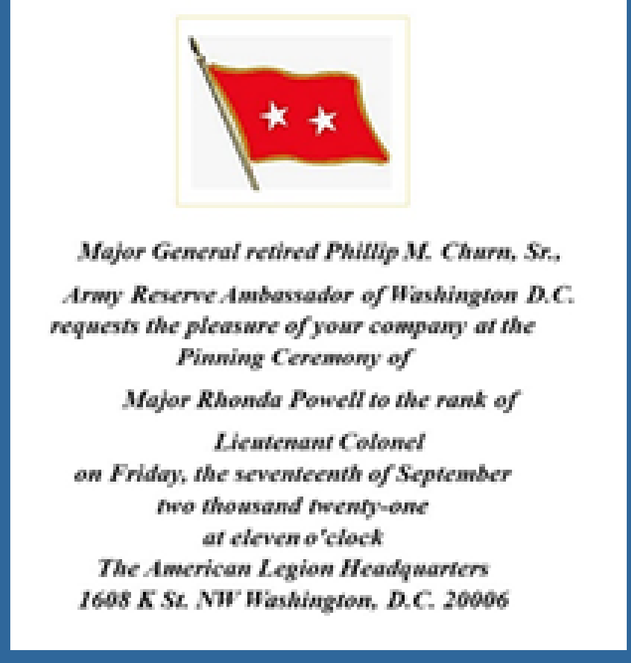
The National Security Division

WEEKLY REPORT

DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Major General retired Phillip M. Churn, Sr.,

Army Reserve Ambassador of Washington D.C.
requests the pleasure of your company at the
Pinning Ceremony of

Major Rhonda Powell to the rank of

Lieutenant Colonel
on Friday, the seventeenth of September
two thousand twenty-one
at eleven o'clock
The American Legion Headquarters
1608 K St. NW Washington, D.C. 20006

US MILITARY BRANCHES SET DEADLINE FOR MEMBERS TO BE VACCINATED AGAINST COVID-19

Four US military branches have set deadlines for when active-duty, reserve and National Guard service members must be vaccinated against Covid-19.The deadlines set by the services follow Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin's announcement at the end of August that all US military service members must be vaccinated after the Pfizer/BioNTech coronavirus vaccine received full authorization from the Food and Drug Administration.

The US Army will require all active-duty military members to he vaccinated by December 15, 2021, and all National Guard soldiers will be required to be vaccinated by June 30, 2022, the Army said in a statement released Tuesday.

The Army said soldiers who do not comply and do not have a request for exemption pending or approved could face "suspension and relief," could be removed from lists of potential promotions within the Army or could receive reprimands, which can be "career ending," the Army statement said. The punishment for not receiving a vaccine by the deadline varies by a soldier's rank in the Army.

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LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Conventional Armed Forces Committee

Army announces implementation of mandatory vaccines for Soldiers

WASHINGTON – The Army outlined its plan today to fully comply with the Secretary of Defense's order requiring all Service members to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. The Army began implementing the Secretary of Defense's order on August 24, following DoD and White House guidance. Before then, vaccines had been optional. "This is quite literally a matter of life and death for our Soldiers, their families and the communities in which we live," said Lt. Gen. R. Scott Dingle, the U.S. Army Surgeon General. "Case counts and deaths continue to be concerning as the Delta variant spreads, which makes protecting the force through mandatory vaccination a health and readiness priority for the total Army."

While soldiers who refuse the vaccine will first be counseled by their chain of command and medical providers, continued failure to comply could result in administrative or nonjudicial punishment – to include relief of duties or discharge. Soldiers have the ability to request an exemption from receiving the vaccine, if they have a legitimate medical, religious or administrative reason. Soldiers who are pending exemption requests will not be subject to adverse actions until the exemption is fully processed. Commanders, command sergeants major, first sergeants and officers in Command Select List (CSL) positions who refuse to be vaccinated - and are not pending an exemption request – face suspension and relief if they refuse to comply. Prior to any adverse action, each would be notified of the suspension and potential relief from their duties. They would then be counseled and provided the opportunity to be vaccinated before they would become subject to removal from their positions by a general officer. Officers and noncommissioned officers who have been selected and are waiting to assume CSL command, key billet or nominative sergeant major positions some of the most coveted assignments in the Army - will likewise be subject to removal from the list for those assignments should they refuse to be vaccinated without a pending or approved exemption.

Commanders will request a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand be initiated for any Soldier who refuses to be vaccinated and does not have a pending or approved exemption request. Such reprimands can be career ending. Active duty units are expected to be fully vaccinated by Dec. 15, 2021 and Reserve and National Guard units are expected to be fully vaccinated by June 30, 2022. Soldiers may request administrative or medical exemptions as outlined in Army Regulation 600-20 and AR 40-562, as well as the new Army Directive 2021-22 that provides supplementary guidance on exemption requests. Soldiers with previous COVID-19 infections are not automatically exempt from full vaccination and should consult their primary care managers. Soldiers pending exemption requests must continue to comply with all other applicable force health protection measures applicable to unvaccinated people. Soldiers who have completed an FDA Emergency Use Authorization or World Health Organization-authorized series of vaccinations are fully vaccinated. Soldiers are only considered fully vaccinated two weeks post completion of a two-dose series vaccine or two weeks post completion of a single dose vaccine. In addition to the COVID-19 vaccine mandate and following CDC and DoD guidance, Army commanders will continue to update health protection protocols consistent with the local conditions of the communities in which they serve. The health protection of our force is a top priority, and we will continue to ensure that our personnel have the most up-to-date information on appropriate safety measures to prevent potential spread of the virus. Soldiers with questions about the safety, effectiveness and possible side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine should discuss them with their health care provider.

For additional information, contact Lt. Col. Terence Kelley, U.S. Army Office of Public Affairs Office at 703-695-0378 or usarmy.pentagon.hqda-ocpa.mbx.mrd-press desk@mail.mil

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES...

Conventional Armed Forces Committee

• Research on H. Res. 587, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Congress disapproves of Department of Defense leadership pursuing adverse actions toward members of the armed forces of the United States who choose to not receive a covid-19 vaccine.

STAFF ACTIVITY

Foreign Relations

- Staff attended a hearing on the Evaluating the Withdrawal and U.S Policies on Monday, September 13, 2021. The hearing on Afghanistan was fixated on Secretary of State Blinken and his address to the House of Representatives Foreign Relations Committee on the unfolding situation in Afghanistan, and how we found ourselves in the emergency withdrawal from Kabul. The meeting took place on September 19, 2021, to outline the U.S. government's last 20 years in Afghanistan. The meeting occurred before the House committee of foreign affairs. Moreover, the reasoning on why the meeting occurred is due to the rising escalations in Afghanistan and the Taliban's current control over the country. All in all, the meeting provided insight into the current administration's reasoning for their haste withdrawal as they blame the unexpected fall of the Afghan government and the previous administration for creating the initial withdrawal date.
- On Tuesday, September 14, 2021 Part 2 hearing would be on the development (or lack thereof) in the last 20 years was spearheaded by Secretary of State Blinken in his address to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the history of America's efforts in Afghanistan. Specifically, in the last month as well had the emergency evacuations in an insurgency-led Afghanistan. The meeting occurred on September 14, 2021, at the Senate with the senate foreign relations committee. The reasoning as to why this meeting occurred was for members of the senate to question the Secretary of State on the ongoing in Afghanistan and the issues that have occurred as of late.

Conventional Armed Forces Committee

- On Wednesday, September 15, 2021 staff attended a hearing on the Vietnam War. the Vietnam War Government Briefings was conducted by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency to speak on the issue of missing servicemembers and recovery efforts. The meeting occurred on September 15, 2021, and was presented via zoom. The reasoning as to why this meeting occurred was for the Defense POW agency to speak on key topics such as that of partner institutions. Furthermore, these institutions are the grand driver of all recuperation efforts around the globe ranging from Vietnam to Norway as they are 80% less costly than programs run by the agency. It serves to show the effectiveness of these partners and the technology that would otherwise be too expensive to retain for our recuperation efforts.

Staff participated in the September Executive MSO/VSO roundtable hosted by LTG Ronald Place, Director, Defense Health Agency (DHA). Opening topics included DoD Support to Civilian Authorities to answer the call on national disasters (Haiti/IDA/Fires), the FEMA COVID mission and medical screening/support for Afghan evacuees. Other significant topics of note included the mandatory vaccination guidance for DoD servicemembers, as well as, proposed TRICARE fee hikes.

MANDATORY VACCINE

- Following the FDA approval of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine on 24 August, Secretary Austin published guidance mandating the COVID-19 vaccine for DoD Service members
- Mandatory vaccination will only use COVID-19 vaccines with full licensure
- Services to follow published guidance for Medical and Administrative exemptions
- COVID-19 vaccines may be administered with other vaccines (i.e. influenza vaccine)

TRICARE PROPOSED PLAN RATES

TRICARE Retired Reserve (TRR) Monthly Premiums:

- TRR Member - Only: $502.32
- TRR Member & Family: $1,206.59

TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) Monthly Premiums:

- TRS Member - Only: $46.70
- TRS Member & Family: $229.99

- Our intern Bryan Ruesca created a White Paper on the Repercussions of service members who reject the Covid-19 vaccination.
- In addition he did some research on American Samoa and the military resources we currently have on the island and the impact flame retardant foam has on military personnel.
- Our second intern William Woods submitted a White Paper of "The Afghan Vetting Process/ Placement in U.S/ How it affects base day to day operations/ Additional States and U.S Territories offering Asylum" as well.

DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY

FULFILLING OUR NATION'S PROMISE

September 1, 2021:

- Soldier Accounted For From World War II (Mason, S.)
- USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Bock, J.)

September 2, 2021:

- Marine Accounted For From World War II (Pellerito, A.)
- USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Connolly, K.)

September 7, 2021:

- USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Nightingale, J.)
- USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Graham, W.)

NATIONAL POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY

National POW/MIA Recognition Day was established in 1979 through a proclamation signed by President Jimmy Carter. Since then, each subsequent president has issued an annual proclamation commemorating the third Friday in September as National POW/MIA Recognition Day.

A national-level ceremony is held on every National POW/MIA Recognition Day. Traditionally held at the Pentagon, it features members from each branch of military service and participation from high-ranking officials.

In addition to the national-level ceremony, observances of National POW/MIA Recognition Day are held across the country on military installations, ships at sea, state capitols, schools and veterans' facilities.

No matter where they are held, these National POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremonies share the common purpose of honoring those who were held captive and returned, as well as those who remain missing.

Since 1999, the POW/MIA Accounting community has created a poster commemorating National POW/MIA Recognition Day. The 2021 edition of the poster continues to honor this tradition.

PROGRAMS

Military Surplus Equipment

- The American Legion has aligned with the U.S Army *TACOM* (Tank - automotive and Armaments Command) Army Donations Program. In doing so were are able to provide our members with ceremonial rifles and static displays to be used in parades, funerals, functions, and decommissioned military equipment displayed at the post.
- In the month of July, the National Security Division supplied...

Rifle - 13

Ammo - 1,240

Static Display - 1

Clips - 0

Departments - 5

Posts - 5

Tank-automotive & Armaments Command

ANNEX

MORE STORIES!

Temporary hike in BAH imminent for some troops, families caught in housing crunch

Military members and families affected by surging housing costs in 56 areas around the country may soon get relief through a temporary hike in their Basic Allowance for Housing. DoD officials had not officially confirmed the initiative to Military Times by publication time, but the start is imminent, according to a Pentagon source with knowledge of the discussions. The temporary BAH hike has been approved by DoD personnel officials and is scheduled to take effect Oct. 1, the source said.

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U.S. housing 20,000 Afghan evacuees in 5 states, with another 40,000 overseas

The U.S. government was housing nearly 20,000 Afghan refugees at military installations in five states as of Wednesday morning, while another 40,000 evacuees remained at bases overseas awaiting processing, according to internal federal data reviewed by CBS News. These figures, which have not been previously reported, provide more detail on the whereabouts of a portion of the approximately 124,000 people the Biden administration said it airlifted from Kabul in the past few weeks. Eight military sites in Virginia, Wisconsin, New Mexico, New Jersey and Indiana have been tasked with temporarily housing Afghan refugees, including those who aided the U.S. war effort and other at-risk evacuees. Collectively, the sites can house approximately 32,000 evacuees, but officials have been instructed to expand that capacity to 50,000 spots by September 15.

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