DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY TRAINING AND DOCTRINE COMMAND
950 JEFFERSON AVENUE
FORT EUSTIS, VIRGINIA 23604-5700

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

ATBO-BR

23 NOV 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: TRADOC Policy Letter 31, Command Retention Guidance Program

1. References:

a. AR 601-280 (Total Army Retention Program), 31 January 2006, Rapid Action Revision issued 15 September 2011.

b. Army Directive 2012-03 (Army Retention Initiatives), 02 February 2012.

c. Army Precision Retention (Commander's Training Packet), Oct 2014.

2. Policy.

a. All commanders and command sergeants major (CSMs) have both regulatory and inherent responsibility to retain quality Soldiers in our Army and attain their assigned retention mission. The Retention Program is a commander's program. Every commander by virtue of his/her position is the senior retention officer in his/her unit, and the CSM is the senior retention NCO. These responsibilities cannot be delegated except to the command career counselor. The most effective Retention Program has the aggressive and enthusiastic involvement of every leader within the organization.

(1) Success in retaining our Soldiers is derived from sustained and concerted efforts by all levels of leadership. Every leader must continue to conduct cyclical counseling of their Soldiers. Conducting successive counseling allows Soldiers to see their leadership has taken a personal interest in their careers. Commanders must conduct these required counselings IAW AR 601-280, appendix C.

(2) Immediate commanders will evaluate a Soldier under the "whole person" concept and eligibility IAW AR 601-280, chapter 3-7. The use of additional requirements or matrices other than what is listed in AR 601-280 is prohibited.

(3) Soldiers who are deemed not suitable for continued service must be identified early in their career. Without regard to a Soldier's ETS, commanders must identify and rehabilitate or separate those Soldiers who do not measure up to the Army's standards for retainability. Commanders must utilize available tools such as suspension of favorable actions (flag), non-judicial punishment, court martial, other administrative actions, Bar to Reenlistment, or process for separation.

b. Precision Retention. Precision retention is vital to the Army's ability to sustain unit readiness and force alignment while meeting congressionally mandated end-strength requirements.

c. The Reserve component (RC) transition is a crucial element of the Total Army Force. It is imperative our leaders encourage separating Soldiers to continue their service with the RC.

d. The Retention Team for each of the subordinate commands is responsible for ensuring commanders in their units are adhering to these standards and report to the TRADOC Retention Directorate those who are not in compliance.

(1) Commanders must work closely with their servicing career counselors regarding the implementation of the Commander's Retention Program.

(2) Career counselors and RC career counselors must work together and conduct follow-up counseling regarding the mandatory requirement for transition counseling. Commanders must allow the Soldier proper transition processing.

(3) Career counselors, their respective personnel sections, and leadership must coordinate appropriately concerning personnel actions that affect the Soldiers' retainability. Failure to coordinate concerning these issues will adversely impact both the chain of command and the Soldiers concerned.

(4) Each member of the Retention Team must conduct training on the changes in retention processes as often as needed, down to the lowest level. They also must conduct mandatory special assistance visits/inspections and report results to the TRADOC Retention Directorate.

3. This policy letter is effective until superseded or rescinded.

DAVID G. PERKINS
General, U.S. Army
Commanding

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