



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

MAY 15 2023

The Honorable Pat Fallon
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Fallon:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

Section 373 of title 37, U.S. Code, requires a Service member to repay to the United States any unearned portion of a bonus, incentive pay, or similar benefit if the member fails to satisfy a service or eligibility requirement. Service members who were administratively separated for refusing to be vaccinated against COVID-19 would be subject to this repayment requirement if, at the time of discharge, they had not completed a period of required service for which they had received a bonus. As a matter of policy, the Department believes that such repayment is appropriate. However, in accordance with 37 U.S.C. § 373, the Secretaries of the Military Departments have the authority on a case-by-case basis to grant an exception to such repayment if the Secretary of the Military Department concerned determines that the imposition of the repayment would be contrary to a personnel policy or management objective, against equity or good conscience, or contrary to the best interests of the United States.

Thank you for your continued strong support for our Service members and their families. I am sending similar responses to the other signatories of your letter.

Sincerely,

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Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.



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MAY 15 2023

The Honorable Matt Rosendale
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Rosendale:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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The Honorable Kat Cammack
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Cammack:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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The Honorable Anna Paulina Luna
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Luna:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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The Honorable Keith Self
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Self:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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The Honorable Andy Biggs
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Biggs:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

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The Honorable Ben Cline
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Cline:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

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The Honorable Chip Roy
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Roy:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

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The Honorable Ralph Norman
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Norman:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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The Honorable Bill Posey
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Posey:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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The Honorable Scott DesJarlais, M.D.
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative DesJarlais:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

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The Honorable Neal P. Dunn, M.D.
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Dunn:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

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MAY 15 2023

The Honorable Rich McCormick, M.D., M.B.A.
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative McCormick:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

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The Honorable Ronny L. Jackson
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Jackson:

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The Honorable Josh Brecheen
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Brecheen:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

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The Honorable Lauren Boebert
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Boebert:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

Section 373 of title 37, U.S. Code, requires a Service member to repay to the United States any unearned portion of a bonus, incentive pay, or similar benefit if the member fails to satisfy a service or eligibility requirement. Service members who were administratively separated for refusing to be vaccinated against COVID-19 would be subject to this repayment requirement if, at the time of discharge, they had not completed a period of required service for which they had received a bonus. As a matter of policy, the Department believes that such repayment is appropriate. However, in accordance with 37 U.S.C. § 373, the Secretaries of the Military Departments have the authority on a case-by-case basis to grant an exception to such repayment if the Secretary of the Military Department concerned determines that the imposition of the repayment would be contrary to a personnel policy or management objective, against equity or good conscience, or contrary to the best interests of the United States.

Thank you for your continued strong support for our Service members and their families. I am sending similar responses to the other signatories of your letter.

Sincerely,

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Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

MAY 15 2023

The Honorable Matt Gaetz
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Gaetz:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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MAY 15 2023

The Honorable Scott Perry
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Perry:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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MAY 15 2023

The Honorable Jeff Duncan
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Duncan:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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MAY 15 2023

The Honorable Brian Babin, D.D.S.
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Babin:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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MAY 15 2023

The Honorable Pete Stauber
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Stauber:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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MAY 15 2023

The Honorable Carlos A. Gimenez
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Gimenez:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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MAY 15 2023

The Honorable W. Gregory Steube
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Steube:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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MAY 15 2023

The Honorable Mark Alford
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Alford:

Thank you for your February 6, 2023 letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning Service members who are required to repay bonuses after being involuntarily separated for failing to be vaccinated against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

At this time, no individual currently serving in the Armed Forces is being separated solely on the basis of their refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. In accordance with section 525 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, on January 10, 2023, the Secretary rescinded all policies within the Department of Defense (DoD) associated with the implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for Service members (members of the Armed Forces under DoD authority on active duty or in the Ready Reserve, including members of the National Guard).

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