



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-1000

SECNAVINST 1520.7G  
ASN(M&RA)  
22 Jan 2019

SECNAV INSTRUCTION 1520.7G

From: Secretary of the Navy

Subj: LAW EDUCATION PROGRAM

Ref: (a) 10 U.S.C.  
(b) DoD Directive 1322.12 of 12 April 2004  
(c) OPNAVINST 1520.23C  
(d) DoDD 5500.07-R, Joint Ethics Regulation, August 1993  
(e) OPNAVINST 1120.11A  
(f) OPNAVINST 1210.5A  
(g) SECNAVINST 1920.6C  
(h) SECNAVINST 5200.35F  
(i) 37 U.S.C.  
(j) SECNAV M-5214.1

Encl: (1) Law Education Program Responsibilities  
(2) Law Education Program Guidance

1. Purpose. To establish policies and procedures for the Law Education Program (LEP) for the Department of the Navy (DON) under section 2004 of reference (a) and references (b) through (i) and provide authority to establish Excess Leave Programs (Law) (ELP(L)) within the Services. This instruction is a complete revision and should be read in its entirety.

2. Cancellation. SECNAVINST 1520.7F.

3. Applicability. The provisions of this instruction apply to all officers on the active duty list of the Navy and Marine Corps and all Navy Full-Time Support (FTS) officers (except officers in the Medical, Dental, and Nurse Corps). Detailed program information is included in enclosures (1) and (2).

4. Policy. In meeting the needs of the Navy and Marine Corps for career judge advocates, it is DON policy to use LEP and ELP(L) to attract career-oriented commissioned officers, distributed among year groups, to serve as judge advocates by providing an opportunity to obtain a fully-funded legal education.

Officers accessioned through LEP bring valuable experience and diversity to the judge advocate community.

a. The following conditions pertain to LEP:

(1) Must earn a Juris Doctorate from an American Bar Association (ABA) approved law school under provisions established by the ABA at the time of the applicant's graduation;

(2) Program participants must complete their Juris Doctor degree within 36 months;

(3) No agreement detailing an officer to law school may be implemented during a period in which the President has been authorized to induct persons into the Armed Forces involuntarily. During such periods, judge advocates will be identified through other sources. Agreements in effect at such time will not be voided by nature of induction authority; and

(4) No more than 25 officers in the DON may begin law school in a single fiscal year.

b. The following conditions pertain to ELP(L). The Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) and the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) may authorize active duty officers to be placed in excess leave as students at ABA approved law schools for a period not to exceed 36 months. Excess leave is leave other than that accrued under Section 701 of reference (a). CMC and CNO may implement this authority and establish eligibility criteria for ELP(L) within their respective Service.

5. Responsibilities. See enclosure (1).

6. Eligibility. All DON candidates for LEP must meet conditions set forth in paragraphs 5.a through 5.c, below, which are established by references (a) and (b) and cannot be waived. Additionally, all candidates for LEP must meet criteria set forth in paragraphs 5.d through 5.g, as applicable.

a. Education. Hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution.

b. Paygrade. Be an O-1, O-2, or O-3.

c. Service Requirements:

(1) Hold United States citizenship and be serving on active duty as a commissioned officer on the active duty list, or on active duty with the Navy FTS Program;

(2) Upon commencement of legal studies under orders to LEP, have served on active duty for a period of not less than two years and not more than six years (in officer and/or enlisted status);

(3) Must be able to complete 20 years of active service, of which at least 10 years must be as a commissioned officer, before his or her 62nd birthday in order to retire as an officer.

d. Medical, Dental and Nurse Corps Officers. Navy Medical, Dental, and Nurse Corps officers are ineligible.

e. Marine Corps Reserve Officers. Marine Corps reserve officers must apply for, and be offered, regular commissions prior to being considered by the LEP selection board.

f. Nuclear Power Trained Officers. Navy nuclear-trained officers are not normally eligible for transfer from the nuclear enterprise until completion of a Department Head (Submarine) or CVN Principal Assistant (SWO(N)) tour. Because this requirement cannot be met with the timing requirements for LEP, exceptions to allow Navy nuclear-trained officers to apply to the LEP selection board will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Nuclear Propulsion Program Manager OPNAV (N133).

g. Aviation Trained Officers. Navy aviation officers who have completed training and are designated as naval aviators must fulfill Minimum Service Requirements (MSR) prior to being eligible for LEP. MSR waivers may be approved on a case-by-case basis by Aviation Officer Assignments (PERS-43). Marine Corps aviation officers who have completed training and are designated as naval aviators must fulfill MSR prior to being eligible for LEP. MSR waivers may be approved on a case-by-case basis by Officer Plans (MPP-30).

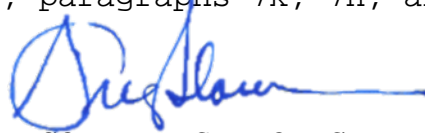
h. In accordance with reference (h), the establishment and use of internal controls and accounting procedures are mandated to ensure: effectiveness and efficiency of operations; reliability of financial reporting; and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Additionally, as part of the annual Manager's Internal Control Program (MICP) report, the Navy and Marine Corps will provide the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (ASN (M&RA)) with copies of the sections of their reports that are relevant to LEP and ELP(L). The reports will include summary descriptions of internal controls used, their sufficiency, and any identified weaknesses or deficiencies.

7. Records Management. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned according to the records dispositioned schedules found on the Directives and Records Management Division (DRMD) portal page:  
<https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/SitePages/Home.aspx>

8. Forms and Reports

a. Forms. SECNAV 1520/1, Navy Law Education Program Application and NAVMC 10274, Administrative Action listed in enclosure (2) of this instruction can be obtained at:  
<https://navalforms.documentservices.dla.mil>.

b. Reports. The reporting requirements contained in paragraph 6h, enclosure (1), paragraph 4a, and enclosure (2), paragraphs 1e and 3a are exempt from information collection control by reference (j), part IV, paragraphs 7k, 7n, and 7p.



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**LAW EDUCATION PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) (ASN(M&RA)), establishes policy for the Law Education Program (LEP).
2. Commandant of the Marine Corps:
  - a. Manages LEP and ELP(L) for the Marine Corps.
  - b. Recommends to ASN(M&RA) by August each year, the number of Marine Corps officers to be selected for LEP.
  - c. Receives applications, conducts initial screening, and acts on requests from Marine Corps officers to take the Law School Admission Test after the application deadline.
  - d. Prepares all material for the Marine Corps selection board.
  - e. Writes the Marine Corps board precept, convenes the selection board, gives final approval to and maintains records of board actions, and notifies candidates of their status.
  - f. Prepares Marine Corps service agreements for signature, selects law schools, notifies selectees of their schools, acts on requests to attend school on an accelerated or decelerated basis, assigns appropriate designator and details selectees.
  - g. Monitors Marine Corps program participants at law school, determines summer assignments, acts on requests for outside employment and administers procedures to dis-enroll Marine Corps officers from the program.
  - h. Publicizes the program in the Marine Corps.
3. Judge Advocate General:
  - a. Publicizes LEP throughout the Navy.
  - b. Approves LEP quotas via the annual accession plan.
  - c. Determines Navy officers' summer assignments.

d. Acts on requests for outside employment by Navy officers. Permission to engage in outside paid employment will normally be granted only when such employment would enhance the professional qualifications or performance of program participants.

e. Certifies those Navy and Marine Corps officers considered qualified to perform duties as trial and defense counsel of general courts-martial under section 827 of reference (a).

f. In coordination with President, Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), monitors performance of Navy program participants at law school and acts on any requests to attend law school on an accelerated basis.

4. Chief of Naval Operations (CNO):

a. Approves Navy selection board precept, convenes the Navy selection board, and approves the final report.

b. Verifies eligibility of all Navy applicants.

c. Counsels and advises all Navy applicants on application status.

d. Prepares all material for the Navy LEP selection board.

e. Retains all original applications from Navy officers and all permanent records of Navy board actions for the duration specified by DON policy.

f. Notifies Navy candidates of their status and prepares Navy service agreements for signature.

g. Details Navy officer selectees to law school.

h. Administers procedures to dis-enroll Navy officers from the program.

i. Directs the Chief of Naval Personnel to serve as the Navy Resource Sponsor, unless tasked otherwise by CNO.

j. Directs Navy Personnel Command to serve as the Navy Board Sponsor, unless tasked otherwise by CNO.

5. President, NPS Civilian Institutions (CIVINS) Program (Code 031A) oversees implementation of Navy graduate education policy following procedures outlined in reference (c).

a. Monitors academic performance of all Navy LEP students enrolled in civilian institutions, to include approval of individual education plans, major field of study changes, and student quota projections.

b. Prepares all funding documents to pay for Navy graduate education and processes all Navy student reimbursements.

c. In coordination with the Judge Advocate General, monitors performance of Navy program participants at law school and acts on any Navy requests to attend law school on an accelerated basis.

**LAW EDUCATION PROGRAM GUIDANCE**

1. Application Procedures. Eligible Navy officers who desire to apply for the Law Education Program (LEP) must submit SECNAV 1520/1T, Navy Law Education Program Application to Navy Personnel Command (PERS 4416). Applications must reach PERS-4416 prior to the date delineated in the applicable NAVADMIN. Eligible Marine officers who wish to apply for LEP must submit an Administrative Action (AA) form to the Commandant of the Marine Corps (MMOA-3), with a copy to Plans and Innovation Branch of Judge Advocate Division, prior to the date published in the annual MARADMIN of the fiscal year in which the applicant desires to begin law school. Application packages must include the following:

- a. Names of all colleges attended and date baccalaureate (or any other degree) was received. State class standing, if known, and cumulative grade point average. Enclose copies of all college transcripts.
- b. Active Duty Base Date (ADBD). ADBD is the date computed to represent the date when all service on active duty in any of the U.S. Forces, or in a Regular or Reserve component, would have commenced if it were continuous to the present.
- c. Statement of legal education completed and any legal training/experience gained in civilian and/or military life.
- d. A prioritized list of ABA accredited law schools in the United States to which the applicant has applied. Applicants are encouraged to apply to more than one school. Applicants must apply to at least one law school in which in-state tuition fees can be obtained and one school near the officer's current duty station. Navy applicants must also apply to one school located in a fleet concentration area (Norfolk, VA; Jacksonville/ Mayport, FL; San Diego, CA; Pearl Harbor, HI; or Washington, DC). Note: Navy officers may provide letters of acceptance as received. Marine Corps officers shall submit law school acceptance letters as received prior to the convening of the LEP selection board.
- e. The date the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) was taken and enclose a copy of the score report. Applicants must take



the LSAT at their own expense. All LSAT scores must be submitted and received prior to convening of the selection board. The LSAT is administered by the Law School Admission Council, [www.lsac.org](http://www.lsac.org).

f. A statement of 500 words or less indicating the steps the applicant has taken to learn about a career as a member of the Judge Advocate General's Corps or as a Marine Corps judge advocate and the reasons for seeking such a career.

g. Prior to submitting an application, Navy officers shall complete a structured interview with two Navy judge advocates, both of whom must be senior to the applicant. If available, one of the two interviewers should be a former LEP participant. Navy applicants will be granted only one interview in a 3-year period. Marine Corps officers shall be interviewed by a senior (O-5 or O-6) Marine Corps judge advocate. Navy and Marine Corps candidates shall refer to this interview and identify their interviewer in their application.

h. Current work mailing and e-mail addresses and phone number must be included.

2. The Marine Corps uses two programs, the Funded Law Education Program (FLEP) and ELP(L):

a. FLEP. Pursuant to section 2004 of reference (a), as implemented by reference (b), commissioned officers of the Marine Corps, while continuing to draw full pay and allowances, may be ordered as students at Government expense to ABA accredited law schools located in the United States for education leading to the degree of Juris Doctor.

b. ELP(L). Commissioned officers of the Marine Corps may be placed in excess leave to attend ABA accredited law schools located in the United States for a period not to exceed 36 months leading to a Juris Doctor and completion of legal licensing requirements. Excess leave is leave other than that accrued under section 701 of reference (a). It is not charged against an officer's leave account and does not have to be repaid. Pursuant to section 502 of reference (i), no pay and allowances are authorized for such periods, and ordinary leave is not accumulated. Officers continue to accrue time for

promotion and retirement purposes, and remain eligible for other active duty benefits. Officers in the ELP(L) must, at a minimum, pursue a normal course schedule with the objective of receiving a Juris Doctor within 36 months, and such other requirements established by the CMC.

c. For FLEP officers, temporary additional duty periods (summer assignments to legal offices, other such duty, hospitalization, etc.) or leave periods count against preexisting obligated service on a day-for-day basis. For ELP(L) students, all periods in a pay status similarly count. No other periods of participation in FLEP/ELP(L) may be counted against preexisting obligated service.

d. FLEP/ELP(L) participants are authorized to remain in a student/excess leave status for up to 36 months while pursuing a basic law degree and admission to the bar. Student/excess leave status begins on the date of reporting to the unit to which assigned while attending law school.

e. Satisfactory completion of either FLEP or ELP(L), coupled with successful completion of the Basic Lawyer Course and the Basic Operational Law Training Course, leads to designation as a Marine Corps judge advocate (Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) 4402).

### 3. Other Requirements

a. All candidates may submit copies of fitness reports or awards not yet in their official service record.

#### b. Navy

(1) Letters of recommendation will neither be considered nor placed before the selection board.

(2) Interviews of Navy candidates will be documented by the interviewer using a Judge Advocate General (JAG) Corps Structured Interview Assessment form. Completed forms must be forwarded by the interviewer to OJAG Code 61 by the date specified in the applicable NAVADMIN.

c. Marine Corps

(1) Marine Corps applicants must achieve a minimum LSAT score of 150 out of 180. Waiver requests for applicants not required to take the LSAT shall be forwarded, via Plans and Innovation Branch of Judge Advocate Division, to MMOA-3.

(2) A letter of recommendation from the interviewer is required for Marine Corps officers. Letters will be forwarded to the Commandant of the Marine Corps (MMOA-3).

4. Criteria for Selection of Law School. The Judge Advocate General approves the law school to be attended by Navy officers. The Commandant of the Marine Corps approves the law school for Marine Corps officers. The following criteria pertain:

a. The rigor and recognized reputation of the school are fundamental considerations and may outweigh all other elements.

b. Cost of tuition and fees, including the possibility for reduced tuition based on in-state tuition rates.

c. Change of duty station entitlements and proximity of the school to the officer's current duty station.

d. Opportunities for full-time, year-round academic study.

e. The availability of military supervision, administrative support, and summer Navy/Marine Corps legal training in the area of the desired school.

5. Selection Procedures and Criteria

a. The Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP) and the Commandant of the Marine Corps will convene separate LEP selection boards annually. Selection board membership consists of the following:

(1) Navy. Active duty officers. The majority must be in the Judge Advocate General's Corps and at least one must be an O-6.

(2) Marine Corps. Active duty officers. At least two must be judge advocates and at least one must be an O-6.

b. Board members shall select those program participants best qualified for selection for LEP and appointment in the Judge Advocate General's Corps or designation as a Marine Corps judge advocate, as appropriate, based on the following:

- (1) Completeness and quality of the application.
- (2) Command endorsement.
- (3) Quality of academic and military records.
- (4) LSAT score.
- (5) Interview results.

## 6. Assignment

a. Selectees will not be assigned to law schools until they execute the service agreement prepared by PERS-4416 or the Commandant of the Marine Corps, as appropriate.

b. Selectees will be assigned for administrative purposes to a Navy or Marine Corps activity near the law school to be attended, in the status of duty under instruction. They will be eligible for all pay and allowances appropriate to their grade and length of service consistent with references (a) and (j). Hazardous duty pay, special pay (e.g., sea pay), and incentive pay (e.g., flight pay) to which the officer may be entitled, by virtue of special qualification or prior duty assignment, is subject to termination upon reporting to law school. Service obligations which accrued prior to participation in LEP are computed in accordance with applicable rules and regulations and are in addition to any obligation incurred as a result of participation in LEP.

c. Mandatory tuition and fees will be paid by DON to include one bar examination review course.

d. PERS-4416 and the Commandant of the Marine Corps shall

prescribe procedures in the service agreement for the submission of semester and final transcripts and evidence of admission to the bar.

e. Per section 2-303 of reference (d), participants may not engage in outside paid employment without the prior written approval of the Judge Advocate General or the Commandant of the Marine Corps (with the recommendation of the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant). Permission to engage in outside paid employment will normally be granted only when such employment would enhance the professional qualifications or performance of program participants.

f. At the discretion of the Judge Advocate General or the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Marine Corps program participants will be required to either attend summer school or accept assignment to a legal office during summer vacation periods. To the extent possible, legal office duty shall involve legal or paralegal tasks consistent with the training and experience of the officer. Commandant of the Marine Corps will provide necessary funds and issue temporary additional duty orders for summer military duty.

#### 7. Appointment, Designation and Service Requirements

a. Navy selectees shall be designated as student judge advocates (1950) without a change in Regular or Reserve status, grade, or date of rank. In accordance with references (e) and (f), upon successful completion of law school and admission to the practice of law as described in paragraph 7(d), or at any time after selection at the discretion of CNP, Navy LEP participants shall be designated as judge advocates (2500) in the Regular Navy. Upon successful completion of the Basic Lawyer Course at Naval Justice School, they may be certified by the Judge Advocate General as qualified and competent to perform duties as trial and defense counsel of general courts-martial. In such capacity, they will accept transfer or detail as judge advocates.

b. Marine Corps selectees shall be designated as student judge advocates (4401) without a change in Regular or Reserve status, grade, date of rank. Upon successful completion of law school and the Basic Lawyer Course at Naval Justice School, and

admission to the practice of law as described in paragraph 6d, they may be certified by the Judge Advocate General, upon the recommendation of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, as qualified and competent to perform duties as trial and defense counsel of general courts-martial and designated as judge advocates (4402). In such capacity, they will accept transfer or detail as judge advocates.

c. All LEP program participants will serve on active duty following completion of the program for two years (24 months) for each year (12 months), or any part thereof, of legal training in the program. ELP(L) participants will serve on active duty following completion of the program for one year (12 months) for each year (12 months), or any part thereof, of legal training in the program. In no case will the total period of obligated service under ELP(L) be less than two years (24 months). "Training in the program" commences as of the date of reporting for duty under instruction, at the unit to which the officer is assigned while attending law school, and terminates on the earliest of the following dates:

(1) Admission to the practice of law before a Federal court or the highest court of a State, a U.S. Territory, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the District of Columbia;

(2) Detachment from duty under instruction; or

(3) Graduation from Naval Justice School or upon reporting to the member's ultimate command.

d. The active duty service obligation commences on the day following the date an officer's training terminates. The obligation and time spent in law school are in addition to any other remaining service obligation (e.g., Naval Academy, Officer Candidate School or Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps) incurred by the officer under any other provisions of law or by agreement. The obligation for additional service is not met while a program participant is attending law school. Time spent during summer vacation, under orders at a legal office or in a leave status is considered as time participating in LEP and counts on a day-for-day basis toward obligated service accrued prior to entering the program.

e. An officer will make prompt application for admission to the practice of law upon completion of law school.

(1) Application will be made to a Federal court or the highest court of a State, the District of Columbia, a U.S. Territory, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The court selected must have jurisdiction over (1) the site of the law school attended, (2) the officer's domicile, or (3) with prior notice to and approval by the Judge Advocate General or Commandant of the Marine Corps, as appropriate, any other place in which the officer may be eligible to seek admission to the practice of law.

(2) If a bar examination is required in the jurisdiction for which he or she is seeking admission, the officer will take the first bar examination after receipt of the law degree. In the event the officer fails the first bar examination, he or she will take the next examination.

(3) If the officer passes the bar, he or she will make prompt arrangements (at no cost to the government) to proceed to, and be admitted to, the practice of law before a Federal court, the highest court of a State, the District of Columbia, a U.S. Territory, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

(4) In the event an officer fails to be admitted to the practice of law within one year from the date of graduation from law school, or fails to successfully complete the Basic Lawyer Course at the Naval Justice School, that officer will serve, unless sooner separated under reference (g), the period of obligated active duty service, computed in paragraph 7(c), in that officer's former designator or MOS, in addition to any service obligation incurred by that individual under any other provisions of law or agreement.

## 8. Termination

a. Prior to graduation, an officer may be dis-enrolled from the program for deficiency in academic performance, abandonment of the study, or other good cause.

(1) Deficiency in academic performance shall include, but not be limited to, suspension or expulsion from law school,

receipt of one or more failing grades, placement on academic probation, or failure to graduate within three years of admission to law school.

(2) Deficiency in conduct shall include, but not be limited to, criminal conviction by court-martial or civilian tribunal, receipt of non-judicial punishment, a finding of misconduct or substandard performance of duty before an administrative separation board or commission of such behavior, recognized as inconsistent with either the high standards of conduct for officers or the ethical standards of the legal profession.

(3) Abandonment of the study shall include, but not be limited to, voluntary disenrollment from law school.

b. While still in law school, the officer shall be notified, in writing, of the grounds upon which he or she is being considered for termination and shall be afforded an opportunity to make a written reply. Such reply, if made, shall be considered by the Judge Advocate General or the Commandant of the Marine Corps, as appropriate, in determining whether the officer should be dis-enrolled from the program. The grounds for the final decision shall be set forth in writing and a copy provided to the officer.

c. An officer dis-enrolled from the program will incur, unless sooner separated under reference (g), a one-year active duty service obligation in that officer's former MOS or designator, for each year (12 months) or any part thereof of his or her training in LEP computed as described in paragraph 7(c), not to exceed three years. This is in addition to any other service obligation incurred by the officer.

d. Under Section 2005 of reference (a), an officer who, voluntarily or because of misconduct, fails to complete the period of active duty incurred, will reimburse the United States Treasury in an amount that bears the same ratio to the total cost of law school provided the officer, as the unserved portion of active duty bears to the total period of active duty the officer has agreed to serve. The cost of education for the program includes all monies paid under paragraph 6(c).