

Subject: Extremism Stand Down

Notice: This is an internal planning document and **will not be released** in whole or in part to the public or media. However, the information contained herein may be used to respond to public and media queries.

1. References.

- 1.1. HQDA EXORD 108-21: Extremism Stand Down.
- 1.2. DoD Memorandum, Stand-Down to Address Extremism in the Ranks, FEB 5, 2021.
- 1.3. DoDI 5400.13 Public Affairs Operations, OCT 15, 2008
- 1.4. DoDI 5405.03 Development, Submission and Approval of Proposed Public Affairs Guidance.
- 1.5. AR 360-1 The Army Public Affairs Program, OCT 8, 2020.
- 1.6. AR 600-20 Army Command Policy.

2. Background and Coordination.

2.1. The Army's success depends on the competence, resilience, discipline, and trust we build in our teams. Discrimination, hate, and harassment in the ranks corrode the Army's ability to build these teams and break trust with the Army's number one priority, its people. A modern, ready Army depends on leaders creating an environment that holds all personnel to high standards of conduct, where mutual respect permeates the culture, and where every Soldier is part of the team and can say with confidence, "This Is My Squad."

2.2 On February 5, 2021, the Secretary of Defense signed a memorandum directing a stand-down to address extremism in the ranks. The directive contains three specific requirements for the stand-down. The stand-down is the first initiative in a deliberate campaign to identify and eliminate the corrosive effects of extremist behavior in the workforce.

2.3 Approved as PAG by OCPA on 18 FEB 2021.

3. Public Affairs Posture.

3.1. Public Affairs posture is active.

4. Holding Statement.

4.1. Corrosive behavior such as discrimination, extremism, and sexual harassment or assault have no place in our formations and tear at the fabric of the Army. To reinforce the Secretary of Defense's guidance, the Army will conduct a service-wide stand-down which will be completed by April 6, 2021, for active component commands and no later than June 6, 2021, for reserve component commands. All Soldiers and Army Civilians will participate in the stand-down. The stand-down event will address the impacts of extremism in the ranks, and the responsibilities of commands to foster an environment free of discrimination, hate, and harassment to prevent harm to the Army and honor the American people's trust.

5. Themes, Messages and Talking Points.

5.1 Themes: People

5.2. Messages.

- Army values have not changed. We have always been a values-based organization. Character matters inside our organization.
- The vast majority of Soldiers who serve in the military are doing so with honor, integrity, and character, upholding their oath to protect and defend the U.S. constitution and do not engage in extremist behaviors.
- The Army does not tolerate extremism and other corrosive behaviors in our ranks. Army policy requires commanders to notify the appropriate authorities upon learning that a Soldier is involved with extremist activities.
- Army Senior Leaders are committed to confronting extremism in the Army, identifying the root of the problem, and understanding the issue's depth.
- At the direction of the Secretary of Defense, the Army will conduct a “stand-down” to occur within the next 60 days for all Soldiers and Army civilian employees across the Army, stopping unit activities for a period of time to discuss the topic of extremism in the ranks.

5.3. Talking Points.

- The Army is committed to upholding the Department of Defense policy that prohibits actively advocating, or participating in organizations that advocate, supremacist, extremist, or criminal gang doctrine, ideology, or causes.
- Commanders have the authority to employ the full range of administrative and disciplinary actions, including administrative separation or appropriate criminal action, against military personnel who violate Army or DoD policy.
- The Army will not tolerate corrosive behaviors and activities—such as extremism, racism, sexual assault and harassment—in our formations.
- The Army is committed to building cohesive teams that are trained and disciplined, on which everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
- 130,000 new Soldiers join the Army every year – cultivating character and inculcating the Army Values is a non-stop mission for us. We must ensure new Soldiers know that they must live by the Army values while serving in the greatest Army in the world.

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- Army leaders at the unit level need to understand how corrosive behaviors impact their units, develop systems to prevent these behaviors from occurring, and report these behaviors if they do occur.

Questions and Answers:

Q1. What is considered an extremist organization or activity?

A1. Extremist organizations and activities are ones that advocate:

- Racial, sex (including gender identity), sexual orientation, or ethnic hatred or intolerance.
- Creating or engaging in discrimination based on race, color, sex (including gender identity), national origin, religion, or sexual orientation.
- The use of force or violence or unlawful means to deprive individuals of their rights under the United States Constitution or the laws of the United States, or any state, local or tribal laws.
- Support for terrorist organizations or objectives.
- The use of unlawful violence or force to achieve goals that are political, religious, discriminatory, or ideological in nature.
- Expressing a duty to engage in violence against DoD or the United States in support of a terrorist or extremist cause.
- Support for persons or organizations that promote or threaten the unlawful use of force or violence or criminal activity.
- Encouraging military or civilian personnel to violate laws or disobey lawful orders or regulations for the purpose of disrupting military activities (subversion).
- Participating in activities advocating or teaching the overthrow of the U.S. Government by force or violence, or seeking to alter the form of government by unconstitutional means (sedition).

Q2. What is the Army's position on Soldiers actively advocating on behalf of supremacist causes?

A2. The Army strictly prohibits military personnel from actively advocating supremacist or extremist ideology. The Army strives to provide an atmosphere of dignity and respect for all Soldiers — and an environment free from discrimination, hate, harassment, and other damaging behaviors. Army policy requires commanders to report this behavior. The Army maintains several reporting mechanisms—such as iSALUTE—which Soldiers may use to anonymously report actual or suspected activity that violates Army policy.

Q3: What is the Army guidance on participation in extremist organizations and activities?

A3: Participation in extremist organizations and activities by Army personnel is inconsistent with the Army Values and the responsibilities of military service. It is the commander's responsibility to maintain good order and discipline in their unit. Every commander has the inherent authority to take appropriate actions to accomplish this goal.

Q4: Is this stand-down a result of our current political environment?

A4: This stand-down is the result of the Secretary of Defense's directive on February 5,

2021. We will reiterate that extremism is not acceptable in the Army. The Army's number one priority is our people, so we want to address these issues head-on. The stand-down event will address extremism and the responsibilities of commands to create an environment free of discrimination, hate, and harassment to prevent harm to the Army and honor the American people's trust. To that end, commanders are also encouraged to discuss other corrosive behaviors, such as sexual assault and harassment.

Q5. Why is the Army conducting an Army-wide stand-down?

A5. On February 5, 2021, the Secretary of Defense released a memorandum to the Department, ordering the stand-down to address and understand the scope of extremism within the ranks. This stand-down is the first initiative to better educate ourselves and our Soldiers about the breadth of this problem and how we will eliminate it. The stand-down event will address the impacts of extremism and the responsibilities of commands to create an environment free of discrimination, hate, and harassment to prevent harm to the Army and honor the American people's trust.

Q6. What is the purpose of the Army-wide stand-downs?

A6. The Army-wide stand-down will enable Army personnel to recognize, deter, and report incidents of discrimination, hate, and harassment in the ranks and understand how to further develop a climate wherein extremism will not be tolerated. The stand-down will educate personnel to recognize and report indicators of extremism and identify when to take further action. We will also confirm that all personnel understand, as part of their oath of office, their rights, responsibilities, and limitations regarding their behavior and speech in accordance with the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Q7. When is the Army-wide stand-down to be completed?

A7. The Army-wide stand-down will be completed by April 6, 2021, for active component commands, and by June 6, 2021 for reserve component commands.

Q8. Will the Army-wide stand-down solve all the issues addressing extremism and other corrosive behaviors?

A8. This is the first step in a larger effort to address corrosive behavior, such as extremism, in the ranks. The Army is prioritizing this issue to ensure it is appropriately addressed. The stand-down will provide the opportunity for leadership to listen to the Soldiers they lead-- their concerns, their experiences, and any recommended solutions on how to tackle this issue.

Q9. What has the Army done to address domestic extremism and extremism in the ranks?

A9. The Army is actively engaged in multiple efforts. This past July, the Army published revisions to Army Regulation 600-20, Army Command Policy. This regulation prescribes policy regarding extremist organizations, cyber activity, and social media. Violators of these prohibitions are subject to administrative and criminal penalties. The Army requires all Department of the Army personnel to complete threat awareness training annually. The training, conducted by Counterintelligence Agents, provides a venue for the agent to address unique situations and answer questions. It also ensures Department of the Army

personnel know their point of contact for reporting suspicious activity or behavior.

Q10. What are the next steps the Army will take after the Army wide “stand down” to help reinforce the position of combating extremism and other corrosive behaviors in its formations?

A10. The Army has the responsibility to educate Soldiers that extremist and other corrosive behaviors are unacceptable. We will continue to re-enforce Army values and treat people with dignity and respect. This stand-down is just the first initiative to further understand the scope of any problem and assess current Army policies to ensure compliance with Department of Defense policy.

Q11. How do you report extremist activities?

A11. Leaders will notify their supporting counterintelligence organization in cases where they know or suspect that Soldiers are engaging in extremist activities. Leaders will also report all incidents pertaining to extremist activities to the Army Criminal Investigation Command. Soldiers may also report using iSALUTE, and iWATCH, which are telephonic and online reporting mechanisms.

Q12. What can you do about someone’s thoughts or beliefs?

A12. The Army protects Soldiers’ constitutional rights afforded by the First, Fourth, and Fifth Amendments to the United States Constitution. As such, all Army policies, including those which regulate freedom of speech and association, are dictated by military necessity to maintain good order and discipline. Per Department of Defense policy, Soldiers are prohibited from actively advocating for or participating in extremist groups as stated in DoD Instruction 1325.06, “Handling Dissident and Protest Activities Among Members of the Armed Forces.”

Q13. How is the Army addressing extremist cyber-related activities?

A13. On July 24, 2020, the Army issued a revised Army Command Policy (AR 600-20), explicitly prohibiting Soldiers from engaging in cyber-related activities in support of extremist organizations or criminal gangs. Violators may be subject to adverse administrative action and criminal penalties in accordance with the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Examples of prohibited cyber-related activities include:

- Participating in the promotion of demonstrations or rallies through the use of cyber activities and social media.
- Promotion of a meeting or activity through the use of cyber activities and or social media with the knowledge that the meeting or activity involves an extremist cause.
- Fundraising activities using cyber activity or social media.
- Recruiting or training members (including encouraging other Soldiers to join) using cyber activity or social media.
- Creating, organizing, or taking a visible leadership role in such a cyber or social media activity.
- Promoting information through cyber activity, the primary purpose and content of which concerns advocacy or support of extremist causes, organizations, or activities; and it appears that the information presents a clear danger to the loyalty,

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discipline, or morale of military personnel or the distribution would materially interfere with the accomplishment of a military mission.

- Browsing or visiting internet Web sites or engaging in cyber activities when on duty, without official sanction, that promote or advocate violence directed against the U.S. or DoD, or that promote international terrorism or terrorist themes.

6. PA/Communication Planning Instructions and Command Relationships.

6.1. Commands will nest their communications efforts with the OCPA communication plan. Major commands will inform the OCPA media relations division of national-level media embeds covering stand-down days. The Office of Chief of Public Affairs will coordinate national-level news media visits with Army senior leaders and/or directly to units. Commands will coordinate and synchronize their public affairs efforts through OCPA utilizing digital media, escorted media, news media, and coordinating media coverage from a range of stand-down participants. Commands will share photos, news media stories, and any content which supports the events directed by the Army stand-down. Content should be uploaded to DVIDS.

7. Social Media Guidance.

7.1. Information about the stand-down efforts must reach all levels of the Army. Unit Public Affairs should amplify their stand-down by posting to their official digital media accounts and maximize distribution to higher headquarters and the army.mil webpage. Commands should leverage Facebook cross-posting, Twitter, Instagram and coordinate with OCPA's Digital Media Division for potential sharing on national-level platforms. Use the @usarmy handle.

7.3. Visit www.army.mil/socialmedia/soldiers for more information and guidance on appropriate online conduct and how to report misconduct.

8. Public Affairs Points of Contact.

8.1. OCPA: LTC Gabriel Ramirez at Gabriel.j.ramirez2.mil@mail.mil or 703-695-0373 **8.2.** OSD: osd.pa.dutyofficer@mail.mil