OKARNG RETENTION SOP

OKLAHOMA NATIONAL GUARD SOP
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HEADQUARTERS OKLAHOMA NATIONAL GUARD OFFICE OF
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
3501 NE MILITARY CIRCLE
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73111

Personnel Procurement Army National Guard

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OKARNG RETENTION SOP

Summary: This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) covers retention and attrition management in the
OKARNG.

Interim Changes: Interim changes to this SOP are not critical unless they are authenticated by the Executive, Oklahoma Army National Guard. Users will destroy interim changes on their expiration dates unless sooner superseded or rescinded.

Suggested improvements: The proponent agency of this SOP is the OKARNG Office of Military Personnel (G1). Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on **DA Form 2028** (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) directly to:

G-1 Retention Branch
3501 NE Military Circle
OKC, OK 73111
ng.ok.okarng.list.g1-retention-acl@army.mil

OKARNG RETENTION SOP

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Section I General

1-1. Purpose: This SOP provides guidance, highlights policy, outlines specific responsibilities, and establishes uniform procedures to assist commanders in implementing and maintaining a comprehensive retention program within the OKARNG.

1-2. Scope: Retention procedures prescribed herein are applicable to all units and personnel in the OKARNG. This SOP defines the mandatory minimum requirements and associated administrative procedures for enlisted personnel and, where appropriate, officer retention.

1-3. General: The Oklahoma Army National Guard Retention Program is based on the premise of command involvement in the retention process from section leader to senior command level. This program is designed to retain the required number of trained, qualified, and motivated personnel to maintain strength and allow the command to achieve its mission.

1-4. References: See **Annex A References**.

1-5. Explanation of abbreviations and terms: See Glossary.

1-6. Equal Opportunities: The OKARNG Retention Program is free of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or non-disqualifying handicap.

Section II Objectives

1-7. Reenlistment Objective: The reenlistment objective is a set rate established to enable the OKARNG to attain and maintain state strength requirements. The reenlistment rate as outlined by the annual State Operations order, it is a percentage of ETSs vs reenlistments equal to or greater than 85% (50% from current FY and 35% from future FYs). There are two categories in the reenlistment objective, the total of which must equal the state goal established annually by the Adjutant General.

a. Current Year reenlistment: A set number of reenlistments from the current FY from 1 October through 30 September to meet minimum state manning by the end of the FY, as established by the National Guard Bureau.

b. Rolling 365 ETS: A progressing number of eligible re-enlistees that can be reenlisted prior to current FY as they enter their 365-day ETS window. These reenlistments can put a unit ahead of next FY mission by reducing the number of Soldier eligible to reenlist. All efforts with AGR Soldiers, technicians, and Soldiers who

desire to re-enlist to extend should be made prior to 01 May of that fiscal year. This helps in the next fiscal year's reduction in Re-enlistment Mission Goals. Regardless of mission, if a Soldier wishes to reenlist prior to their ETS year their reenlistment should be executed immediately if they have a justifiable reason according to NGR 600-200 table 8-1.

c. See **Annex B Retention Calculation** for establishing a running estimate for you organization.

1-8. Non-ETS attrition objective: The Non-ETS attrition is non-programmed losses due to medical, judicial, criminal, AWOL, or other reasons. This attrition objective has been established to minimize personnel turbulence, help attain and maintain authorized strength levels and enhance readiness. Annual Attrition mission from the State Operation Order is to achieve and sustain less than or equal to 13%. This is computed by using the number of losses for the FY divided by the assigned strength.

1-9. Retention Mission: To ensure equity of the state's retention mission each Major Subordinate Command (MSC) is assigned a mission that is both challenging and attainable, MSC missions are determined based on their percent of the State's enlisted ETS population compared with the enlisted loss objective. Remember your reenlistment mission is based off your reenlistment eligible population, if the number of Soldiers eligible to reenlist changes that will change your reenlistment mission in DPRO.

Section III Responsibilities

1-10. The Adjutant General:

a. Develop and implement comprehensive retention programs.

b. Establish policies IAW DA and NGB guidance and procedures for the managers of retention personnel.

c. Ensure that sponsorship, orientation, interview programs, and retention mission are being reported.

d. Recognize units meeting retention goals at the annual leadership conference.

1-11. All Commanders: Use this SOP at all levels and develop a Strength Maintenance Plan (SMP) at every level of command as of 01 October each fiscal year. No other SOP is required for inspection purposes. Commanders can develop their own, internal SOP if desired. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to, ensuring that:

a. Soldiers who are serving honorably and faithfully, and who meet the criteria in NGR 600-200, chapter 8 (including waivable disqualifications) are interviewed. Interviews will determine the Soldier's career plans and intentions and will ensure they're counseled at the 450-day window on the various career opportunities for which

they may be eligible. Counseling and intent are recorded in the Retention Management System (RMS).

b. Every Soldier is given the opportunity for continued service unless barred for reenlistment or otherwise ineligible for reenlistment.

c. Every Soldier is counseled IAW Chapter 3 and **Annex C Soldier Retention Lifecycle** of this SOP, FM 6-22 and is provided every opportunity to become qualified if allowed by current directives. Qualified Soldiers are given the opportunity to compete for position vacancies to enhance personal, professional and career development as well as unit readiness.

d. All Soldiers are educated on the Selective Reserve Incentive Program (SRIP) and all Soldiers are properly counseled on and processed for, incentive(s) to which they are entitled.

e. All Soldiers are educated on the Blended Retirement System and understand Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), Continuation Pay, and other associated entitlements.

f. All commanders and other leaders are periodically informed of current procedures, responsibilities and authorized and required actions for Soldiers who do not attend training.

g. Unsatisfactory participants: Soldiers with over 8 unsatisfactory periods within AYE are ineligible to receive incentives. Additionally, Soldiers with an unsatisfactory period within 90 days are ineligible to reenlist.

h. Soldiers defined in AR 135-178 and NGR 600-200 as untrainable, undesirable, or unsatisfactory performers, will have a bar to reenlistment IAW Army regulations and those who cannot or will not be qualified and immediately available for active duty in the event of a call, order, or partial or general mobilization, are prevented from extending or immediately reenlisting.

i. Public affairs, command information, and retention resources are used to publicize current incentives that may affect Soldiers' career decisions and the overall retention program.

j. Emphasize the importance of retention ceremonies and provide command influence on these events.

k. Every organizational element has the retention personnel prescribed by NGB and State directives, which prescribe their proper training and use. Unit Career Counselors (UCCs) are officially appointed with a memorandum of record at every command level. See **Annex D Appointment Memorandum Example**.

l. Unit sponsorship is implemented and documented in RMS.

1-12. Battalion Commanders and higher:

a. Monitor retention progress and evaluate success of subordinate commanders.

b. Provide the necessary command emphasis through staff members and subordinate commanders to ensure that the retention program reaches its assigned objectives.

c. Conduct command UCC visits to subordinate command elements to assist the chain of command in the analysis of the retention program and the development of corrective measures to any noted deficiencies.

d. When applicable request G1 State Career Counselors support for all command levels through Brigade to the State Strength Manager.

e. Prepare a Strength Maintenance Plan, see **Annex E Strength Maintenance Plan**.

1-13. Command Sergeant Major:

a. Emphasize the use of the chain of command and ensure that the NCO support channel is viable and functioning throughout the command.

b. Facilitate the involvement of Senior NCOs in the sponsorship and career counseling programs.

c. Create education opportunities to ensure Soldiers understand their benefits and incentives available, promotion requirements, and career and retirement planning.

d. Provide guidance to ensure that all personnel understand the proper use of the chain of command and its importance in the retention mission.

e. Make retention related activities a paramount point of interest in all unit visits and inspections. Special emphasis should be placed on monitoring of the command sponsorship program.

1-14. Unit Commander: Unit Commanders are ultimately responsible for success of unit retention programs. Ways to ensure success are listed below:

a. Regularly monitor units 450 days ETS roster.

b. Develop and participate in an orientation and sponsorship program for all new members to assure an orderly transition into the unit and OKARNG.

c. Prepare a Strength Maintenance Plan, see **Annex E Strength Maintenance Plan**.

d. Appoint proper UCC's, maintain appointment within the unit retention binder, and ensure they are trained, and retention is their sole job for unit activities.

e. Ensure RMS counseling and intent are completed, captured, and kept current for all enlisted personnel starting at 450 days of ETS see **Annex C Soldier Retention Lifecycle.**

f. Ensure that retention interviews and counselings are conducted and recorded in RMS per this SOP and applicable.

g. Ensure that the chain of command is sensitive to retention related problems that might exist, and they are addressed immediately by the chain of command with the support and assistance of retention personnel.

h. Recognize individuals who extend or reenlist with appropriate ceremonies and awards (See **Annex F Reenlistment Ceremony MOI** and **Annex G Group Reenlistment Script** and OMD Regulation 672-1 Chapter 3-9 Recruiting and Retention Ribbon).

i. Make available the Azimuth Survey and review quarterly with the State Career Counselor Team. The code for the Azimuth Survey is the first three characters for the Soldiers UIC minus the "W".

j. Personally interview all Soldiers requiring or requesting a discharge and provide a detailed report with the 5W's. Validate all points made by the Soldier by confirming documentation, employment issues, and all other reasons that may need confirmation. All conditional releases and hardship discharges will be filed on a OKARNG 17-1.

1-15. First Sergeant: The First Sergeant or the Detachment NCOIC is the key enlisted member of any unit. They must take a leading role in sponsorship, retention and retention training efforts of the command. This role must be in the for front for the unit to reach and maintain a high degree of readiness. The First Sergeant must be willing to listen and be involved in individual problem solving when it cannot be accomplished by subordinate NCOs. This can be accomplished by:

a. The Units sponsorship program is the 1SGs responsibility.

b. Ensure the unit retention program is administered effectively at all levels and update higher echelon NCO Support Chain of issues.

c. Work in closely managing their UCCs to ensure they are receiving total support within the unit.

d. Inform the commander of all personnel actions and other events having an impact on retention.

e. Ensure all Soldiers within the unit are informed of retention and incentive changes. Engage with the State Career Counselors and the State Strength Management Team. See **Annex H Retention Poster** and https://ok.ng.mil/ARNG-Retention/ , both of which are updated quarterly.

f. Make sure all enlisted members use the chain of command, and Soldiers understand an open-door policy exists for all enlisted members when a problem cannot be solved at a lower level. The State Career Counselor have an open door policy as well and can be used to help solve changes at all levels.

g. Monitor the NCO Corps to ensure First Line Leaders (FFL) are given the responsibility and authority to perform their duties, as part of the training process.

h. Conduct meaningful training.

i. Ensure First Line Leaders (FLLs) are involved in the retention effort and informed of the current entitlements and incentives. See **Annex H Retention Poster** and https://ok.ng.mil/ARNG-Retention/ , both of which are updated quarterly.

j. Facilitate proper Retention program operations in the absence of the UCC and assistant UCC.

k. Counsel Soldiers within 450 days of ETS. Ensure that intent is documented and comments are updated in RMS.

1-16. Platoon Leader:

a. Perform unscheduled interviews with a cross-section (random sample) of the platoon to assess attitudes and instill the fact that the unit is interested in each person as an individual, and document notes in RMS.

b. You are your Platoon Sergeant select Soldier(s) that reflect the Be, Know, Do of the Army to conduct your platoon's sponsorship program.

c. Ensure that all platoon members are receiving meaningful training.

1-17. Platoon Sergeant:

a. Assist the First Sergeant in identifying reasons for excessive absenteeism within the unit and provide recommendations for solutions in this area to the Commander.

b. Coordinate and/or conduct training for the platoon on subjects impacting retention (e.g., career progression, available benefits incentives, Blended Retirement System).

See **Annex H Retention Poster** and https://ok.ng.mil/ARNG-Retention/ , both of which are updated quarterly.

c. Perform retention interviews and ensure that interviews are performed by subordinate NCOs and documented in RMS.

1-18. First Line Leader (FLL):

a. A good retention rate can be achieved in a unit if its leaders recognize these two concepts:

(1) Soldiers will remain in the National Guard if they have the perception that their time spent with the Guard is worthwhile. This can only be achieved over an extended period by challenging Soldiers with good relevant training, by providing them with avenues for personal growth and upholding Army standards.

(2) Soldiers experiencing personal conflicts, will remain in the Guard if the problem is identified, and leadership works on resolution and utilizes resources available to eliminate/improve the problem.

b. The FLL is the primary trainer who must make a conscious effort to identify retention related problems and take immediate action to eliminate/improve them.

c. Help Soldiers design a career plan through coordination with career counselors: evaluate background and qualification; determine wants, needs, desires, goals, and aspirations; recommend available programs and options, and the requirements the Soldier must meet. For assistants with this see **Annex H Retention Poster** and https://ok.ng.mil/ARNG-Retention/ , both of which are updated quarterly.

e. Counseling:

(1) Conduct an interview/counseling session with every enlisted member (E-6 and below) within the squad/team/section annually on the anniversary month of the members enlistment/reenlistment/extension. This required counseling session maybe accomplished plus or minus one month of the target month. As prescribed by FM 6-22. See **Annex I Retention Example of Benefits DA 4836**.

(2) Document this interview/counsel session in RMS.

f. Verify that a sponsor is appointed for every new member assigned to their squad/team/section.

CHAPTER 2
RETENTION (STAFFING and SUPPORT)

SECTION I Staffing

2-1. State Career Counselor Team: The State Career Counselor Teams primary objective is to support all levels of command with strength maintenance education and assistance to maintain a healthy, deployable force. Please see **Annex J State Career Counselor Team MOU** for detailed duty descriptions.

2-2. Organization and utilization: The primary mission is to provide support and supervision of all retention related objectives crucial to meeting the strength maintenance mission.

2-3. Director of Manpower and Personnel- G1

a. Manage and support commanders with special emphasis on ensuring they provide awareness training to complement the participation enhancement and retention control measures of units.

b. Provide liaison between the recruiting and retention programs, Public Affairs Office, ESGR, and Family Programs.

c. Provide guidance for chain of command retention personnel.

2-4. Unit Administrative NCO responsibilities:

a. The unit admin NCO is responsible for maintaining RMS, ensuring all counseling and notes are properly maintained, as well as ensuring all extensions and bonuses are processed through RMS work-buckets within 30 days from signature date.

b. The unit admin NCO is responsible for providing the UCCs with current ETS rosters and any other necessary administrative reports and information needed for the UCCs to achieve their retention mission.

c. Tracking Soldiers enrolled in Blended Retirement System (BRS) and assisting them in their election to receive Continuation Pay.

2-5. G-1 Retention Branch responsibilities: G-1 Strength Maintenance Team is under the direct supervision of the State Retention Manager and will be evaluated on OKARNG's retention performance. G-1 Retention Branch is specifically responsible for ensuring that every Soldier is contacted before separating.

a. Advise status of progress, current policies and procedures, as well as shortfalls to all command levels.

(1) Advise G1 on state progress and relevant attrition and retention issues.

(2) Advise BN and BDE staff on best practices, policy updates, and reporting standards.

(3) Advise URNCOs and unit staff on RMS functionality and usage, retention education, battle rhythm and all other retention related issues as they arise.

b. Assist all command levels as needed with, but not limited to:

(1) Inspecting and troubleshooting RMS usage across formations.

(2) Conducting discharge review boards.

(3) Counseling/extending Soldiers at risk for ETS when unit efforts have been exhausted.

(4) As needed transfer Soldiers to new unit within the OKARNG. Coordinating with losing and gaining units.

(5) Developing and validating functionality of sponsorship program.

(a) Ensure sponsorship training and program is being conducted by the unit 1SGT.

(b) Ensure unit sponsors are assigned according to this SOP.

(c) Inspect Unit Retention programs for all pertinent documents, information, and instructions ensuring that all information is current and tracked in RMS.

c. Educate all OKARNG Soldiers on programs, benefits, incentives, and continuing service in the OKARNG utilizing.

(1) Conduct FTUS training on RMS, BRS, retention overview as needed scheduled through State Strength Management Team.

(2) Brief Soldiers within 450 days of ETS as to available benefits, incentive career planning options, MOS conversion, BRS management, and education benefit transfer as requested through State Strength Management Team.

(3) Conduct Unit Career Counselor training.

d. Coordinate with G-1 enlisted branch, G-3 schools branch, and education as well

as incentives branch to provide career planning guidance.

e. Complete RMS actions in the BDE and State buckets to ensure completeness and that extensions are being processed within 30 days of the signature date.

f. Process extensions in RMS work-buckets to include updating individual IPERMs and IPPSA.

g. Receive, validate, and distribute available extend to defend items when requested by the service member.

h. Send out emails with pertinent information on benefits, entitlements and incentives to all Soldiers within the 450 day ETS window.

i. Validate comments that are in RMS regarding Soldier's intent is marked.

2-6. Unit Career Counselors responsibilities: Commanders at all levels will appoint a UCC to provide continuity in the organization's retention program. UCCs and alternates are specifically responsible for:

a. Keeping the commanders/NCO Support Chain informed on all matters pertaining to the unit's retention program.

b. When necessary, ask assistance from respective State Career Counselor NCO for guidance and assistance.

c. Maintain the unit's retention records and files, such as Unit Retention Folder.

d. Update RMS with all counseling, notes, and extension intent for Soldiers within unit. Seek assistance from the ADMIN if needed.

e. Schedule all required counseling/interviewing sessions IAW Chapter 3 and **Annex C Soldier Retention Lifecycle** of this document.

f. Conduct an initial orientation interview with new Soldiers, E-6 and below, during their first drill with the unit. This interview will be recorded in RMS.

g. Assist the 1SG in introducing new Soldiers to their sponsor.

h. Conduct 450 days to ETS reenlistment/extension interview and document in RMS.

i. Facilitate the unit's retention program for more see **Annex H Retention Poster** and https://ok.ng.mil/ARNG-Retention/ , both of which are updated quarterly.

j. Monitor the commander climate as it pertains to retention.

k. Coordinate reenlistment/extension ceremonies within the unit see **Annex F Reenlistment Ceremony MOI** and **Annex G Group Reenlistment Script** for additional guidance.

l. Ensure Soldiers are conducting mid-career Azimuth Survey. The code for the Azimuth Survey is the first three characters for the Soldiers UIC minus the "W".

2-7. Battalion Career Counselor responsibilities/Battalion S-1:

a. Appointed by the Battalion Commander, ideally assistant PSNCO when possible.

b. Monitor and guide UCCs in their responsibilities and daily duties.

c. Provides feedback and reports to the Battalion Commander and CSM on all matter's retention related, to include their unit's retention atmosphere.

d. Plan and coordinate all battalion MWR activities and retention related events utilizing State Career Counselor to assets as needed.

e. Ensuring that the UCCs are trained and that their units are providing them with necessary assets to perform their duties as UCCs.

f. Review extensions and bonuses in RMS Battalion and when applicable move to BDE work-buckets. When needed process bonuses in the Unit Bonus Eligibility Report (UBER) bucket.

g. Review and validate counseling are being conducted and documented in RMS across the Battalion.

h. Tracking all discharges and ensuring all requirements and suspenses are met.

i. Coordinating and providing constant feedback to the brigade level Career Counselors and State Career Counselors about retention related activities.

j. Maintain and update the Battalion Retention Folder if used.

k. Request and coordinate support of Battalion Retention Events with G1 Retention Branch or respective State Career Counselor.

2-8. Brigade Career Counselor/ Brigade S-1 responsibilities:

a. Provide the Brigade Commander and Brigade CSM or representatives with reports and continued assessments of the brigade's retention environment.

b. Ensure that Battalion Career Counselors are properly trained and understand

their responsibilities as the Battalion Career Counselors.

c. Review RMS extension and bonuses, working with their respective State Career Counselor representative, and when appropriate transferring them to state work-buckets.

d. Assist BNs with Soldiers retention requests such as transfers, schools, and MOS conversions. For additional support contact the State Career Counselors.

e. Monitor BDE's BRS CP eligible population to ensure they can opt in for continuation pay. See Chapter 6 Other Retention Tools and Benefits for detailed guidance.

f. Ensuring the Battalion Career Counselors are tracking and monitoring discharge requests through the entire discharge process.

g. Providing feedback and coordination with the State Career Counselor NCOs as to all retention related issues, concerns, reports and Brigade policies and procedures.

h. Maintaining the Brigade Retention Binder and ensuring accuracy. The binder will include at a minimum BDE Retention SOP, BDE Career Counselor Appointment Memo, Strength Maintain Plan and BDE Sponsorship Guidance.

i. Assisting the Brigade Commander and CSM or designees to develop and implement their Strength Maintenance Plans for each FY.

Section II Support

2-9. Funding: The budgeting and expenditure of Federal funds for retention purposes is described in NGR 601-1. The State RRC is the program manager for these funds and will be consulted for advice and assistance in all retention funding matters.

2-10. Vehicles: Vehicles for the State Career Counselor Team are provided through the State RRC and State logistics office. Vehicles specifically allocated are used only for their support. In the event a special allocation is not available, transportation must be provided from existing vehicles or through reimbursement for private vehicle mileage per Volume 1, Joint Travel Regulations (JTR).

a. Primary duty UCCs must use existing organizational vehicles of those available from Transportation Motor Pools (TMP) according to current directives.

b. UCCs must use available unit vehicles in accordance with current policies.

2-11. Office Space: Retention office space will be provided by the MSCs to the State Career Counselor Team in the Armories of the organizations they support.

2-12. Publicity and Awareness: The RRC will promote maximum involvement from retention personnel, supported organizations, the Public Affairs Office, and other public affairs assets.

a. Public Affairs can assist with photographic coverage of retention events, activities, and the preparation of media releases to both the civilian and military (local, state, and national) media.

b. Units should utilize **Annex H Retention Poster** in conjunction with exiting administrative bulletin board.

2-13. Presentation items: Extend to Defend items are designed to reinforce an OKARNG message with potential extenders, and the personnel who influence these Soldiers. Soldiers that have extended can go to the E2D link https://forms.osi.apps.mil/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=D9fm-kuVEUiStgUw1vhMQ5wAbI2TiwhAiIz2LN9hi45UMUhGRkE1VlhOWkhDVEVWOEUyQ1dESkFHMCQlQCN0PWcu&route=shorturl to request their items. The items will be presented to Soldier by their leadership.

2-14. Administrative: Retention personnel at all levels should be provided adequate administrative support to accomplish retention actions.

a. The State Career Counselor Team personnel should not be used to prepare routine administrative items such as extension, and retention data folders (other than to enter remarks and update information).

CHAPTER 3

INTERVIEWS, RECORDS AND COMMITMENTS

3-1. Interviews and counseling: See **Annex C Soldier Retention Lifecycle** for concise timeline of retention interviews and record keeping. Army policy and doctrine requires counseling for numerous purposes on many occasions. Commanders will ensure all OKARNG Soldiers are periodically interviewed and counseled. All Soldiers that are eligible to be extended or reenlisted will be done immediately.

a. The commander is required to interview their Soldiers a minimum of two times during the initial enlistment or after the individual Soldier transfers into the unit. The first documented interview should take place during the initial gain within the organization's sponsorship program. The second should take place nine to twelve months prior to the expiration of the enlistment on a DD Form 4856 and uploaded in RMS.

b. The UCCs are required to conduct a minimum of three interviews with the Soldier during their enlistment. The first interview should take place during the new member's first drill and/or upon completion of on ramp. The second interview will be done 15 months prior to the expiration of enlistment and documented in RMS. The third

interview will be done four months prior to the expiration of enlistment and documented in RMS.

c. The First Line Leader will have an interview with his/her Soldiers every year during the anniversary month of their ETS. The required interview may be accomplished plus or minus one month of the target month.

3-2. Phases of interviews: Each interview should be designed to accomplish a goal that considers the Soldier's time in the organization, relative experience and grade, and time remaining to ETS. There are three phases to guide these interviews and to help set the tone and approach used.

a. **Reception Phase**. This phase provides an adjustment period to help the Soldier become familiar with the unit and its personnel. The sponsorship and orientation program are the most important part of this phase.

b. **Career Development Phase**. This phase starts when the Soldier feels that most of their enlistment goals have been met. Depending upon the length of the enlistment period, this phase may cover several months or years. FFL conducts many of these interviews to provide performance and career counseling. The theme should be one of constant measurement of achievement, abilities, and goal setting. A measure of the Soldier's current feelings toward the unit and the ARNG can be the question "**If you were eligible to reenlist today, would you?**" This will help prepare the Soldier for the actual reenlistment decision and help the organization work on any factors (within its control), that may cause the Soldier to say no. This is also a good time to use the Azimuth Survey. To help accomplish this, the FLL can use the Army Career Tracker aid in career guidance and mentorship.

c. **Reenlistment interview Phase**. These interviews are conducted toward the end of the enlistment period and are all documented in RMS. They are focused on the Soldier's qualifications for reenlistment/extension, options, goals and decisions, and available incentives. Everyone involved in the process of retaining quality Soldiers must be aware that a few reenlistment interviews cannot overcome the absence of the other types of interviews discussed above. The following Reenlistment interviews are required:

(1) The UCC conducts reenlistment interview at least 3 times during a Soldiers enlistment, the last of which will be 4 months prior to ETS.

(2) The 1SG should conduct a reenlistment interview 10 months prior to ETS.

(3) The Commander should conduct a reenlistment interview 6 months prior to ETS.

(4) The State Career Counselor Team conducts reenlistment interviews 450 and 30 days prior to ETS. Although, the State Career Counselor team is always available to speak with Soldiers at any time during their enlistment.

3-3. Retention Data Folder: The Retention Data Folder is ultimately replaced by RMS. Retention Data Folders are not mandatory, however, they can still be used as a tool for UCCs to capture data during counseling and interviews for later input into RMS.

CHAPTER 4

SPONSORSHIP AND ORIENTATION PROGRAM

4-1. Design of the programs: The Sponsorship Program is the first element of the Oklahoma Army National Guard's retention program. It is designed to ensure the early and complete integration of new Soldiers into their units. This information is provided to help with the new Soldier integration into the OKARNG.

4-2. Sponsor selection: Careful selection consideration is necessary as the sponsor will serve as the new member's first role model in the organization. A sponsor will be assigned in person and RMS to each new unit member at On-Ramp or at the Soldier's first drill.

The sponsor should:

a. Know unit operations, unit mission, and state organization.

b. Have a good attitude and military bearing.

c. Present a neat and orderly appearance.

d. Be of the equal or greater rank and same gender as the Soldier when possible.

e. The lineage and history of the unit.

4-3. Administration of the program: The 1SG monitors and supervises the conduct of the unit sponsorship program. URNCOs and UCCs may be used to help monitor and facilitate this program. As a minimum, State Career Counselors can provide training and assistance for personnel designated as sponsors.

4-4. Procedures: All procedures for administering a sponsorship program are assigned, documented, and closed out in RMS. They should closely resemble each other, and examples given in this SOP.

a. Specific sponsorship procedures need to be developed in compliance with the provided example in **Annex K Sponsorship Checklist**.

b. The steps or sequence in which the Soldier is processed is important and outlined in AR600-8-8 Total Army Sponsorship program.

c. The Retention Folder will be initiated by the RSP. The RSP NCO will forward the retention folder to On Ramp upon completion of the Gold Phase.

d. RMS Sponsorship will be initiated by the gaining unit in all non- RSP assisted accessions.

e. Sponsors and First Line Leaders will meet the following members prior to first formation.

(1) Prior service members

(2) Interstate/Intrastate transfers

(3) OCS/ROTC candidates

(4) In-Service Recruits

(5) Any Soldier returning from a break in service from their assigned unit. It is the responsibility of the FLL and 1SG to ensure the new member receives a complete orientation of the unit and the Oklahoma Army National Guard. The sponsor will introduce the new member to all key personnel and document in RMS.

f. Unit Commanders should welcome all new members and conduct orientation IAW AR 13591 and will brief the Soldier on SHARP and EEO policies.

g. The Soldiers in the RSP will be handed off to their FLL/Sponsor at On Ramp and the unit will ensure that the sponsor/FLL contacts the Soldier prior to first drill.

Chapter 5

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

5-1. Unit Career Counselor NCOs: UCC training is offered at a minimum of twice per year by the G1 Retention Branch. Additional training can be provided by requesting through the State Retention Manager or State Career Counselor. At a minimum, training in the following areas will be provided:

a. Current incentives and requirements for reenlistment/extension.

b. Current promotion criteria for each grade.

c. Sponsorship Program.

d. Benefits for Soldiers and their Families.

e. Establishment and maintenance of unit retention records and files.

f. Counseling requirements.

g. Organizational transfers and MOS options within the State .

h. RMS usage and functionality.

5-2. Other personnel: There are no specific retention training requirements other than the above listed positions. However, it is highly recommended to attend the NGB Retention Workshop conducted at PEC by key personnel (commanders, officers, NCOs and FTUS personnel). The Retention Program is successful when all key personnel support and actively participate.

5-3. Career Development: Appropriate retention topics will be included in the following Career Development training:

a. NCO Professional Development courses.

b. The NCO Development Programs (AR 350-17) for which Command Sergeants Major have responsibility.

c. UCC course topics.

5-4. Update Training: In addition to initial orientation training all retention personnel should, at least annually, attend UCC refresher training conducted by G1 Retention Branch to update themselves on newest SRIP, incentives, career development training and Soldier Support Programs.

Chapter 6

OTHER RETENTION TOOLS AND BENEFITS

6-1 Blended Retirement System- Continuation Pay (BRS-CP): The BRS-CP is a significant retention tool for Soldiers that are enrolled in BRS. All leaders should be familiar with whom in your formation is enrolled in BRS. Soldiers who enlisted January 1st, 2018, and beyond are automatically enrolled into BRS. The primary way to confirm a soldier opted into BRS that enlisted before January 2018 is to check their MyPay under the RET PLAN box. If this box has BLENDE, the Soldier is opted in, if is has CHOICE the Soldier is legacy. Soldiers are offered an entitlement- continuation pay- at the mid-career mark. This is often a larger sum of money than the current bonus and is offered to all Soldiers in the Oklahoma Army National Guard (Enlisted, Officer, AGR), regardless of status (M-Day, AGR, Tech).

6-2. Blended Retirement System-Continuation Pay Processing

a. Calendar Year (CY) 25, CY 26, and CY 27 Blended Retirement System-Continuation Pay (BRS-CP) Policy Guidance - 31DEC24 FINAL is attached outlines the changes to the BRS-CP and processing.

b. Units counsel all Soldiers who are in the BRS-CP (Continuation Pay) window.

c. Soldier requests CP using the BRS -CP Control Number Request Form as well as complete the online training module at https://olms.armyfamilywebportal.com .

d. BRS-CP Control Number Request Form is submitted to Education and Incentives office by the BDE S-1s.

e. Education and Incentives office verifies eligibility and sends the BRS-CP Control Number Request Form to HRM-I at NGB.

f. HRM-I validates eligibility and BRS_CP Control Number Request Form is sent with a control number to the Education and Incentives office.

g. Education and Incentives office sends the BRS-CP Election Form to the BDE S-1s.

h. Soldier CAC signs the BRS-CP Election Form along with their immediate commander. HRM will CAC sign as the "Certifying Official". Soldier must extend the same day on a DA 4836 to meet the four-year service obligation. NOTE: Soldier will only have to extend to meet the 4 year service obligation from their signature date on the BRS-CP Election Form. The signature dates on the 4836 must match the Soldier's signature date on the BRS_CP Election Form.

i. BDE S-1s process the DA 4836 in RMS (Retention Management Software).

j. BDE S-1s apply ADSO S4 in IPPSA and validate updated ETS date.

k. BDE S-1s send the BRS-CP Election Form, BRS Counseling Statement and DA 4836 to the Education and Incentives office.

l. Soldier completes required training on the Army Family Web Portal and have Readiness NCO input into DTMS.

l. Education and Incentives office validates the required documents and sends them to HRM-I.

m. HRM-I validates that ADSO S4 is applied and Soldiers meets TIS remaining requirements and processes the contract for payment. See **ANNEX L IPPS-A BRS-CP ADSO How to Guide** for additional details.

n. BRS-CP is expected to take 60-90 days to process.

o. Soldiers who are not eligible to extend their service (barred to continued service statement, flagged, or otherwise not qualified for retention) are not authorized CP.

p. The only authorized form of signature on the HRM-I BRS-CP Control Number Request Form and BRS-CP Election Form is a CAC signature.

q. The date in the text box must match the date of the CAC signature.

r. If the BRS-CP Election Form does not contain the same data sent to the State IM with the control number issuance, the form will be returned without action as an invalid contract.

s. HRM-I must be able to validate all CAC signatures using the signature validation status in Adobe. Any alteration, manipulation, or inability to verify metadata will result in an invalid request.

6-3. State Retention Website and Resources: The State Retention Team manages a public website, accessible by cell phone or computer, at the following link:

https://ok.ng.mil/ARNG-Retention/

All updated policies, procedures, benefits, and training are available at this website. Additionally, there is a retention tab on the OK Guard app readily available with the same resource.

6-4. Extend to Defend: Soldiers who re-enlist for more than one year may request an extension item by going to the retention website. Please go to https://ok.ng.mil/ARNG-Retention/ and click on the current FY Extend 2 Defend Form for a current list of items available.

6-5. Posters and Retention Items Request: Posters, retention items (not extend to defend) and postcards are available. Units must request these items from their State Career Counselor Team NCOIC or at ng.ok.okarng.list.g1-retention-acl@army.mil . See **Annex H Retention Poster with QR Codes.**

Chapter 7 AWARDS AND CEREMONIES

7-1. The Commander's Trophy:

a. The Commander's Trophy: Held once a year and awards the large (40 or more retention mission) and small (39 or less) battalions with the highest re-enlistment mission. This trophy is passed along each year to that year's winner. A plaque is also awarded which stays with that respective organization. See **Annex M Commander's Retention Trophy and Plaque** for more details.

7-2 Reenlistment and Extension Ceremonies

a. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and procedures for conducting Reenlistment and Extension Ceremonies within the OKARNG. These ceremonies aim to recognize and celebrate the commitment of service members who choose to continue their military careers, thereby enhancing morale, fostering community, and promoting retention in alignment with NGR 600-200

(1). Reenlistment and Extension Ceremony: A formal event held to honor service members for their decision to remain in the National Guard, highlighting their contributions and reinforcing the importance of retention. At a minimum each organization within the OKARNG should host a ceremony to recognize the continued service of those Soldiers that extended during the year

(2). Policy Statement: The Oklahoma Army National Guard is committed to recognizing the dedication of its service members through Reenlistment and Extension Ceremonies. These events serve to boost morale, strengthen unit cohesion, and encourage a culture of long-term commitment to service.

b. Objectives of the Reenlistment and Extension Ceremony

(1) Honor Commitment: Acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of service members who have chosen to remain in the OKARNG.

(2) Boost Morale: Foster a sense of pride and accomplishment among service members and their families.

(3) Encourage Retention: Promote the benefits of continued service within the National Guard, encouraging others to consider their commitment.

(4) Strengthen Community: Build camaraderie within the unit and support networks for service members and their families.

c. Planning and Execution

(1) See **Annex F Reenlistment Ceremony MOI** and **Annex G Group Reenlistment Script**.

d. Recognition Criteria: To be recognized during the Reenlistment Ceremony, service members must meet the following criteria:

(1) Retention Commitment: Service members must demonstrate a commitment to continued service for a minimum of 1 year.

e. Ceremony Execution

(1) See **Annex F Reenlistment Ceremony MOI** and **Annex G Group Reenlistment Script**

f. Responsibilities

(1) Unit Commanders: Responsible for endorsing and recognizing service members, promoting retention initiatives, and ensuring a successful ceremony.

(2) State Career Counselors: Provide guidance and support for retention efforts and assist with the preparation of recognition materials.

(3) Service Members: Expected to engage in retention activities and support their peers in the decision to continue their service.

7-3 Recruiting and Retention Ribbon: This policy establishes the criteria and guidelines for the awarding of the Recruiting and Retention Ribbon to service members of the National Guard, in accordance with AR 600-8-22, AR 601-210, NGR 600-200 and Oklahoma Military Department (OMD) 672-1. The primary focus is on retention efforts that contribute to maintaining a strong and committed force.

a. Scope: This policy applies to all personnel within the National Guard who are engaged in recruiting and retention activities, as well as to those who achieve the criteria for the Recruiting and Retention Ribbon.

b. Definitions

(1) Recruiting and Retention Ribbon: A ribbon awarded to OKARNG members who demonstrate exceptional performance in recruiting and retention efforts.

(2) Retention: The act of retaining service members who have completed their initial service obligation and choose to continue their military career.

c. Policy Statement: In alignment with NGR 600-200, AR 600-8-22 and OMD 672-1 the OKARNG is committed to enhancing retention initiatives through the recognition of outstanding performance in this area. The Recruiting and Retention Ribbon acknowledges those who have significantly contributed to the retention of service members within their units.

d. Criteria for Awarding the Ribbon: To qualify for the Recruiting and Retention Ribbon, service members must meet the following criteria:

(1) Be an appointed UCC for 12 consecutive months.

(2) Retention Activities: Actively participate in or lead retention initiatives, such as:

(a) Conducting retention interviews.

(b) Organizing retention ceremonies or events.

(c) Supporting unit sponsorship programs for junior service members.

(d) Engaging in community outreach to promote the benefits of continued service.

(3) Maintain accurate records of retention efforts and outcomes, including documentation of retention activities and the impact on the unit's overall retention rate.

(4) Receive endorsement from the unit commander, confirming that the service member has met the above criteria and has demonstrated commitment to enhancing retention within the unit.

e. Application Process

(1) Units must submit OKNG 38-E for eligible service members for the Recruiting and Retention Ribbon to their unit Commander, including documented evidence of their retention activities and outcomes.

(2) Review: The BN S1 will review the application and supporting documentation to ensure compliance with the established criteria.

(3) Approval: Upon review, the unit will submit the OKNG 38-E to BDE S1 and for final approval and issuance of the ribbon authority will be designated to the State G1.

f. Responsibilities

(1) Unit Commanders: Responsible for promoting retention initiatives, endorsing applications for the ribbon, and recognizing the contributions of service members.

(2) State Career Counselors: Tasked with providing guidance and support for retention efforts, including assistance with the application process for the ribbon.

(3) Service Members: Expected to engage in retention activities and maintain documentation of their contributions to the unit's retention efforts.

Chapter 8

Retention Management System (RMS)

8.1. RMS Prescribed Access, Access Request Instructions, User Guide, User Workflow Diagram and Access Request 2875

a. See **Annex N RMS Prescribed Access** for who needs what access in

field.

b. See **Annex O RMS Access Request Instructions**

c. See **Annex P RMS User Guide** for detailed "how to" for RMS.

d. See **Annex Q RMS User Workflow Diagram**. If you have any further question please contact the State Career Counselor team at ng.ok.okarng.list.g1-retention-acl@army.mil.

e. See **Annex R RMS System Authorization Access Request Form DD 2875**

OFFICIAL:

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OKARNG RETENTION SOP

GLOSSARY Section I Abbreviations

ADT	Active Duty for Training (formerly full-time training duty)
AGR	Active-Duty Guard/Reserve
ARNG	Army National Guard
ARNCO	Area Retention Non-Commissioned Officer
AT	Annua1 Training
ATA	Additional Training Assembly
CNGB	Chief National Guard Bureau
DA	Department of the Army
DAMPRE	Drill Attendance Monitoring Procedures and Reports
DRB	Discharge Review Board
ESGR	Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve
ETS	Expiration (of) Term of Service
FTARF	Full-Time Attrition/Retention Force
FTUS	Full Time Unit Support
FY	Fiscal year
HHD	Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment
HQ	Headquarters
HR/EO	Human Relations/Equal Opportunity
IADT	Initial Active-Duty Training
IAW	in accordance with
IDT	Inactive Duty Training
ING	Inactive National Guard
IRR	Individual Ready Reserve
MOS	Military Occupational Specialty
MTOE	Modified Table of Organization and Equipment
MUTA	Multiple Unit Training Assembly
NCESGR	National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve
NGB	National Guard Bureau
NGB ARP	Army Personnel Division NGB
NGB-ARP-E	Enlisted Branch
NGB APP P	Personnel Programs Branch
NGB Pam	National Guard Bureau Pamphlet
NGR	National Guard Regulation
NON-ETS	Non-Expiration (of) term of service
PAD	Public affairs detachment
QOL	Quality of life
R&R NCO	Recruiting and Retention NCO

RMS	Retention Management System
RRC	State/recruiting and Retention Commander
RSP	Recruit Sustainment Program
SRO	Selected Reserve Obligation
SRIP	Select Reserve Incentive Program
STARC	State Area Command
TDA	Table of Distribution and Allowances
TRADOC	United States Army Training and Doctrine Command
URNCO	Unit Retention NCO
USASSI	United States Army Soldier Support Institute

Section II Terms

Unit Career Counselor. An individual appointed to retention NCO duties but who does not have an MTOE/TDA position requiring MOS 79: may hold MOS 79T only as secondary or additional MOS if qualified (NGR 600-200, chapter 4).

Attrition Management Work Group (AMWG) A group of senior officers and NCOs who analyze and recommend changes based upon retention trends, indicators, and results.

Average Enlisted Assigned Strength. A figure derived by adding the number of enlisted personnel assigned at the beginning and at the end of each month and dividing the sum by two. Used as the basis for non-ETS loss discussions.

Expiration (of) Term of Service (ETS). The date on which an enlistment, reenlistment, or immediate reenlistment (including extensions to any of these) is scheduled by contract to expire. For obligated Soldiers serving on a contract that will expire before the military service obligation (Try One, 3X5, 4X2), the selected reserve obligation completion date.

Human relations/equal opportunity. Efforts to assure equitable treatment of all personnel based on merit, fitness, capability, and other job-related factors, and no treatment based on non- job-related factors such as race, religion, color, national origin, gender, age, and non- disqualifying handicaps.

Inactive Duty Training (IDT) status. ARNG training status (other than for active duty, extended active duty, active-duty Guard/Reserve and active duty for training) under Title 32,
United States Code. Commonly referred to as "drill status."

Manageable non-ETS losses. Discharges and transfers which the organization may, can, or should affect through actions, events, and/or policies that they control.

National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (NCESGR). A Department of Defense committee with ARNG members under the Office, Deputy Assistance Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs) to promote employer support for members of all Reserve components of the Armed Forces of the United States. Each State should also have at least one ESOR committee.