

## Why consider the military and veterans as stakeholders?

*"No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks." -- James Allen*



2.1 million Service Members  
18.2 million Veterans

[Read more](#)



Over 250,000 Service members transition to the civilian sector every year serving as a significant talent pipeline for industry.

[Learn more](#)



Service members & Veterans can receive federal funding for credentials.

[Learn more](#)

Source: I.C.E. Military and Veterans Toolkit

## Overview of DOD Credentialing Programs

- Evolution and Establishment of Credentialing Programs and Policy
- Importance of Credentialing to Service Members
- Service Policies for Payment of Credentials and Related Fees
- Tools for Exploring Credentials
  - Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL)
  - MilGears (powered by COOL)
- I.C.E. Military and Veterans Toolkit

# Evolution and Establishment of DOD Credentialing Programs and Policy



# Why is Credentialing Good for the Military and Service Members?

Credentialing supports the entire military lifecycle.



## Recruiting

- Increase visibility of military career options
- Show recruits specialized credential opportunities available through military service



## Readiness

- Evaluate Career Readiness in initial training and across military life cycle
- Signal readiness of personnel with credentials
- Determine credentials that best support operations and maintenance



## Professionalization

- Align credentials and competencies to training and assessments
- Encourage attainment of complementary skills



## Retention

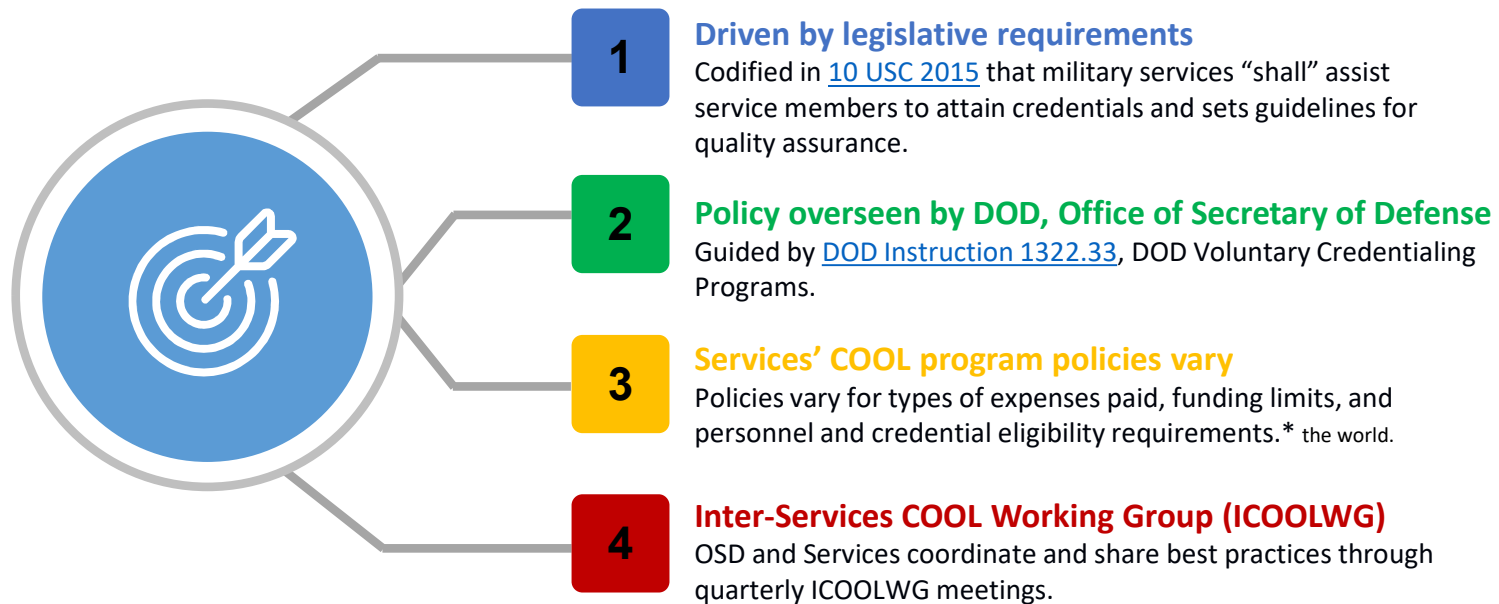
- Incentivize Service members to extend contract to complete credential requirements
- Show value of the accumulation of credentials in a military career



## Transition

- Bridge military occupations training to postsecondary education as advanced standing to save time and money
- Show connections to private-sector career opportunities
- Show employers value of military occupations, competencies, and credentials
- Signal competency equivalency between military training/experience and civilian credentials including occupational licenses

# DOD/Service Credentialing Policies



# Credentialing Programs and Policies Overview

	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	Coast Guard
<b>COOL Program Established</b>	2002	2005	2014	2014	2019
<b>Information Dissemination on COOL Sites: MOC to Credential Linkages/Analysis</b>					
Enlisted	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Officer	✓	✓	17XX only		✓
Warrant Officer	✓	✓			✓
<b>Payment of Voluntary Credentialing Fees: Covered Personnel Categories</b>					
Enlisted	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Warrant Officers	✓				✓
Officers	✓				✓
Federal Civilians					✓
<b>Criteria for Payment of Credential: Credential must have a nexus with military training/service and can be related to:</b>					
Most Military Occupation Duties	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Some Military Occupation Duties	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Collateral Duties/ASIs	✓	✓	✓		✓
Training (Military and Non-Military)	✓	✓			✓
Certificate	✓	✓			✓
Associate Degree	✓	✓			✓
Bachelor's Degree	✓	✓		One per degree	✓
Graduate Degree	✓	✓		One per degree	✓
Prior Military Occupations Held	✓	✓	✓		✓
Prior Civilian Occupations Held	✓	✓			✓
Civilian Career of Interest	✓				✓

Updated 1/25/2024



## Overview of Military Credentialing Policies (cont'd)

	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	Coast Guard
<b>Types of Credentialing Fees Covered</b>					
Application Fees	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Exams	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recertification or Maintenance Fee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Credential Preparation Fees Covered Through Voluntary Credential Program</b>					
Manuals, Study Guides, Textbooks	✓			Up to \$500 per goal	✓
Non-Traditional Training	✓			✓	✓
Traditional Education/Courses	✓				✓
<b>Number of Credentials/Dollar Limit</b>					
Number/Dollar Limit	\$4000/year (TA/CA combined cap)  Aviation related credentials for Active Duty Active Guard Reserve (up to \$1,000 paid)	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited up to \$4,500 lifetime	CA \$4500 per FY
<b>Service Policy</b>					
Reference	<a href="#">AR 621-5</a>	<a href="#">OPNAV INSTRUCTION 1540.56B</a>	MARADMINS: <a href="#">518/14</a> <a href="#">583/15</a>	AFI 36-2683 Voluntary Credentialing Programs (28 Feb 2024)	<a href="#">COMDTINST 1540.10</a>
End of Active Service (EAOS) Restrictions?	Soldiers must complete the requested training or exam at least 30 days prior to separation	>2 months prior; complete 30 days prior to separation; additional waivers available	>6 months prior	180-days prior to separation must pay out of pocket and get reimbursed NLT 60 days after separation	>6 months prior
Repayment for Failed Exams?	Yes	No, but cannot take again	No. Retakes not funded as well.	Yes, if unrelated to military occupation or Leadership page credential	No, but cannot take again
Additional Service Obligation?	No	No	No	No	No

# DOD COOL



## ABOUT DOD COOL

VISIT DOD BRANCH-SPECIFIC COOL SITES AND DOD CIVILIAN COOL



<https://www.cool.osd.mil>



# Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL)

COOL Programs *disseminate information* on legislatively mandated voluntary credentialing programs and *facilitate attainment* of credentials during military service.



## COOL Tools:

- **Search** by military occupation for civilian occupations and non-degree credentials (certifications, licenses, and apprenticeships) that are related to the job duties of that military occupation.
- **Research** information on credential content, requirements, preparation resources, and learn about selecting and attaining a credential.
- **Identify** credentials approved for funding through a Services' credentialing program and learn how to apply.
- **Connect** to MilGears, Powered by COOL, for customized results based on an individual service member's unique experience, training, and education.

# Key COOL Statistics

Credential program highlights



\*DOD Portal, DOD Civilian, Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard COOL. Air Force COOL specific website data not available; 1.3M registered users in over 3.7M unique sessions accessed the Air Force Virtual Education Center (AFVEC) for Credentialing Assistance, TA, and SkillBridge combined.





<https://milgears.osd.mil/>

## The MilGears Platform

Expansive suite of tools that allows for a complete personalized assessment of a service member's qualifications and professional growth opportunities, including

- Academic Credentials (degrees, certificates)
- Non-Academic Credentials (certifications, licenses, and apprenticeships)
- Job Opportunities (military, federal civil service, private sector)

Serves a variety of stakeholders

- Service members, Veterans, and Spouses
- Military leaders and decision makers
- Career and education counselors (military and civilian)
- Employers and industry and labor representatives
- Academia and other credential providers

# The MilGears Experience



## Explore

different career paths and learn about interesting roles



## Assess

how experience lines up with job demands and requirements



## Connect

with workforce and education opportunities to advance career goals

### Career Tools



#### Engage My Career

**Service members**

Get customized career and credentialing recommendations based on unique qualifications



#### Quick Explorer

**Any user**

Explore specific military and civilian career and credential opportunities



#### Cyber IT/CSWF

**Cyber workforce and decision makers**

Find out if you qualify for Defense Cyber Workforce Framework (DCWF) role requirements



#### Military-2-Mariner

**Service members**

Find out if you qualify for mariner careers and credentials based on your unique qualifications



## Military and Veterans Toolkit

Facilitating Credentialing of Service  
Members and Veterans



### Navigate the Toolkit



#### Get Approved for Funding

- GI Bill Funding
- Services' Credential Program Funding
- Are your credentials on COOL?
- Service Credential Payment Policies



#### Best Practices for Facilitating Credentialing

- Credentialing in the Military
- Best Practices Overview



#### Military 101

- Military 101 Presentation



#### Resources

- Mapping Military Occupations to Credentials
- Marketing to the Military
- Imagery Sources
- Other Resources

<https://www.credentialingexcellence.org/Resources/Military-and-Veterans>