

The Military Occupational Specialty Administrative Retention Review

■ By Maj. Xarhya Wulf

The Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) Administrative Retention Review (MAR2) is the Army's fix to the confusing and lengthy MOS Medical Retention Board (MMRB) process. The MAR2 program became effective Aug. 23, 2012, through Army Directive 2012-18 and determines whether a Soldier with a permanent physical profile 3 or 4 (P3 or P4) will be retained in his primary MOS (PMOS)/area of concentration (AOC), reclassified into another MOS, or referred to the Disability Evaluation System (DES).

Background

The DES is used to determine the fitness for duty and applicable disability benefits of Soldiers with duty-related impairments. The DES is composed of the medical evaluation board (MEB) and the physical evaluation board (PEB). Soldiers are referred to the DES when they no longer meet medical retention standards in accordance with chapter 3 of Army Regulation 40-501, Standards of Medical Fitness. Four methods are used for DES referral:

- An MEB initiated by the medical treatment facility (MTF).
- A fitness for duty medical examination.
- The Reserve component non-duty-related process.
- The MMRB (now replaced by the MAR2 program).

The MMRB was costly, lengthy to adjudicate, and not streamlined across components. On Jul. 2, 2008, Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., then Army Chief of Staff, asked retired Gen. Frederick M. Franks, Jr., to lead an effort to review

the medical evaluation board/physical evaluation board process. Franks' 2009 study identified that the MMRB was cumbersome and confusing.

Further analysis was conducted, and the Army initiated a MAR2 pilot program on Aug. 1, 2010. As a result of the successful 2-year pilot, the MAR2 process was approved for Army-wide use. The MAR2 process saves the Army an estimated \$15.3 million and more than 16,000 man-hours annually. MAR2 also significantly shortens the turnaround time for adjudication.

Starting the MAR2 Process

The MAR2 process applies across components, but the timeline may be longer for Army National Guard and Army Reserve actions.

Figure 1 provides a look at the process. First, the Soldier receives a permanent designator P3 or P4 on a Department of the Army (DA) Form 3349, Physical Profile. On a weekly basis, the installation career counselor or a designated representative receives the profile from the patient administration division and sends it to the first commander in the rank of lieutenant colonel or higher in the Soldier's chain of command. If the commander identifies a discrepancy in the profile, he may refer the Soldier to the profiling authority for profile reassessment.

The commander or his designated representative must then counsel the Soldier on the MAR2 process and document it on a DA Form 4856, Developmental Counseling Form. Once this is done, the commander or his designated representative will ensure the MAR2 packet is prepared and forwarded to the installation career

counselor, who will forward the packet to the component's senior human resources authority.

Army Directive 2012-18 outlines the specifics of the program, and Military Personnel [MILPER] Message 13-036 identifies the specifics on the packet's preparation.

Adjudication

The senior human resources authority reviews the documents for accuracy and adjudicates one of three options.

Retain the Soldier in his PMOS/AOC. The Soldier either meets PMOS/AOC standards or has been provided a waiver by his PMOS/AOC proponent.

Reclassify the Soldier. The Soldier does not meet the standards for his PMOS/AOC and a waiver of the standards was not favorably considered by the proponent. However, the Soldier is able to perform the functional activities required of every Soldier listed in block 5 of Department of the Army Form 3349 (physical profile) and remains eligible for reclassification into a different PMOS. (The MOS that the Soldier is reclassified into is based on the needs of the Army.)

Refer the Soldier to the DES. The Soldier does not meet PMOS/AOC standards and does not qualify for reclassification into a different PMOS/AOC because of his physical profile or because manpower requirements do not support reclassification.

The Appeal Process

Once the Soldier receives notice of the commander's decision, he has 10 duty days to submit an appeal. The mere fact that the Soldier does not

agree with the PMOS/AOC approved by the Human Resources Command for reclassification is not a valid reason to appeal. Appeals are initiated for material errors or missing documents from the Soldier's MAR2 packet.

If the Soldier agrees with the decision or elects not to appeal, the decision will become final on the date of agreement or election.

The appeal process is as follows:

- The Soldier submits an appeal in writing to his commander.
- The commander may make a recommendation on the appeal, but it is not required. However, the commander is required to transmit the Soldier's appeal through the chain of command to the appellate authority for a final decision.
- The appellate authority issues a written decision on the Soldier's appeal. This decision is final on the date of issuance.
- The written decision is transmitted to the Soldier's commander, who will notify the Soldier of the decision.

MAR2 Process Considerations

From the time a Soldier receives a permanent P3 or P4 profile until the

MAR2 process is completed, including a final decision on any appeal, the following conditions apply:

- The Soldier is temporarily nondeployable; however, the commander may permit deployment after consulting a medical officer.
- The Soldier is eligible for awards and promotions.
- The Soldier is ineligible for assignment instruction or orders, reenlistment, permanent change of station, transfer within or between components, or training. If the Soldier received an assignment or orders before initiation of the MAR2 process, the process must be completed and a final decision rendered before proceeding on assignment.
- The Soldier may be subject to disciplinary action.
- The Soldier is required to perform duties within profile limits.

MAR2 uses a software application within the Medical Operational Data System called e-Profile. It is a global tracking tool that is used for Soldiers with temporary or permanent medical conditions that may render them medically not ready to deploy.

Once the final decision has been received and accepted by the Soldier, the component's senior human resources authority will update the administrative system and the Medical Protection System with the appropriate data.

Army Directive 2012-18 contains examples of the MAR2 counseling form, the Soldier's memorandum, the senior human resource authority decision, and the Soldier acknowledgment of the final decision. Soldiers who have questions are encouraged to contact their unit career counselor or health services representative.

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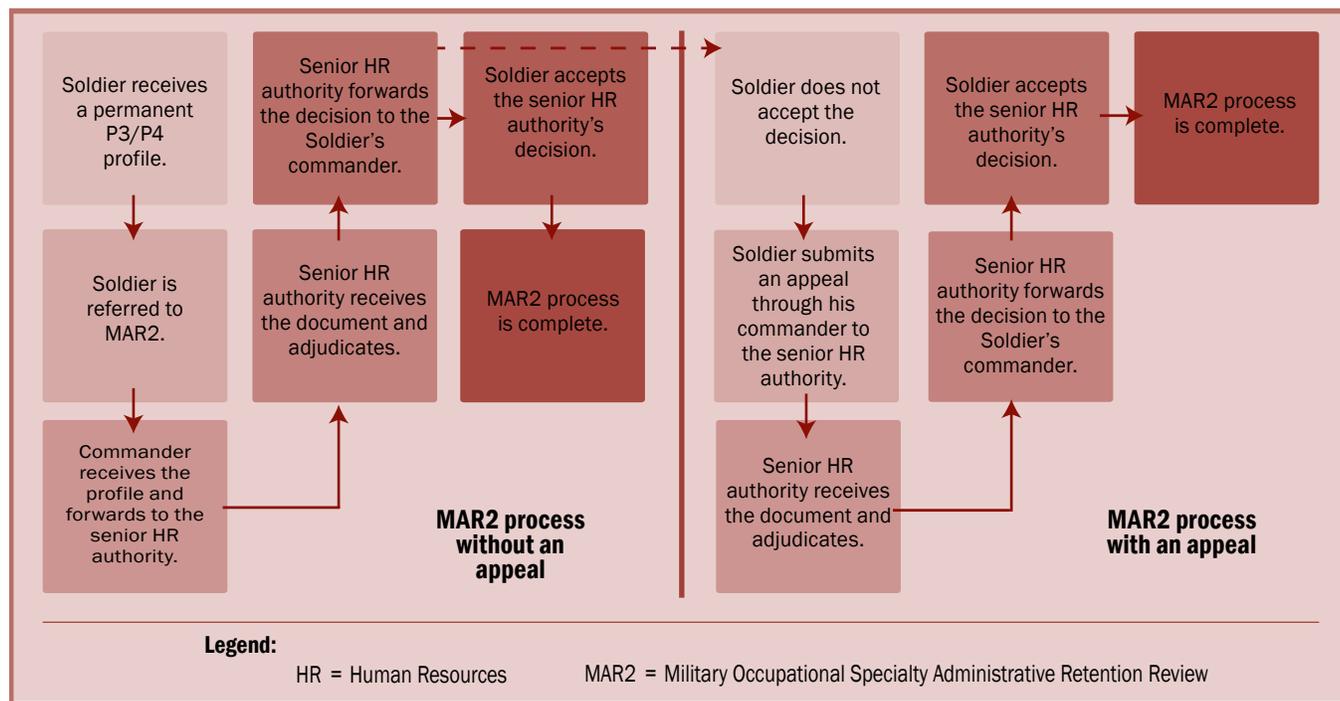


Figure 1. The Military Occupational Specialty Administrative Retention Review Process.