

Section VIII: Promotion

A. General Discussion. Marines, regardless of grade or status of participation, are expected to exercise ever-increasing maturity, leadership, and professionalism as they progress in grade. Ultimately, Marines are promoted with one goal in mind. That goal is the achievement and maintenance of the high standards of leadership and proficiency required for combat readiness. It has been said that Marines are promoted not because of what they have done but because of what the selection authority or board believes they are capable of doing.

1. As a Marine, the quality and types of duty you perform can significantly enhance your opportunity for promotion. Reserve participation, competitiveness with your peers, and Professional Military Education are keys to selection for promotion. You, the Marine, are the best advocate for advancing your career in the Marine Corps Reserve and for achieving your promotion. Finally, you are responsible for ensuring your personnel files, i.e., your Master Brief Sheet and Official Military Personnel File, are up to date and accurate for board consideration.
2. Retention in an active Reserve status is essential if an officer desires to retain a commission, be eligible for consideration for promotion, or be eligible for assignment to any of the various training opportunities.
3. Lastly, Professional Military Education is now directly linked to promotion. Officers and enlisted Marines alike are required to complete the appropriate PME in order to be considered “fully qualified” for promotion. Those PME requirements are thoroughly discussed elsewhere in this guide (Section VII, Appendix D, J).

B. Officer Promotion. Reserve officers in an active status are eligible for consideration for promotion when their active component running mate is in or above the promotion zone established for that active component officer’s grade. Members on the Standby Reserve Inactive Status List are not eligible for promotion to the next higher grade.

1. Prior to the convening of a Reserve Officer Selection Board, an officer eligible for consideration should submit a promotion package to the board. This package should include a completed RQS, an official photograph, missing fitness reports,

and a cover letter. The promotion board will be provided a copy of the eligible officer's OMPF, MBS, and CRCR. Keep in mind that updated material included within the promotion package stays with the board; it will not be forwarded for update or returned.

2. Letters of Appreciation, PME completion certificates, personal awards, recent fitness reports, and school certificates and transcripts awarded within a year of the eligible officer coming into the promotion zone (or items that have been omitted from the officer's OMPF), should be provided by the officer as updated material for consideration by the board.
3. Written requests for a member's OMPF and MBS should be sent to CMC (MMSB-34) (see Section VII for contact info). Requests for the OMPF and MBS should be sent no later than six months prior to the convening of the selection board. Assistance regarding the submission of promotion materials is available from SMCR administration personnel, MCRSC (SAB) 1-800-255-5082 ext 3209/3203, or HQMC (MMPR) at (703) 784-9710 or FAX: (703) 784-9865.

C. Enlisted Promotion. The enlisted promotion system enables Marines within each grade and MOS or OccFld to compete for promotion. The aim of the system is to advance the best qualified Marines to higher grades in order that MOS/OccFld vacancies will be continuously filled by Marines who are fully qualified to perform the duties of, and to assume the responsibilities of, the next higher grade.

1. The CMC has designated certain Marine Corps commanders with the authority to promote enlisted Marines to the grades of PFC through Sgt, as directed by CMC. Generally, in the reserve community, these commanders are commanders of units in the Marine Corps Reserve having custody of the service records of personnel under their commands.
2. Headquarters Marine Corps SNCO selection boards will make selections for promotion to the SNCO grades.
3. General information regarding promotions is available on the Manpower and Reserve Affairs (MM&RA) website (see Section VII).
4. Minimum time in grade (TIG) and time in service (TIS) criteria exist for enlisted promotions. Those TIG/TIS requirements are summarized in the following chart:

Minimum Time In Grade (TIG) and Time In Service (TIS) Criteria Enlisted Promotions				
Promotion to	Regular TIG	Promotion TIS	Meritorious TIG	Promotion TIS
PFC	6 months	6 months	N/A	None
LCpl	8 months	9 months	N/A	None
Cpl	8 months	12 months	N/A	6 months
Sgt	12 months	24 months	N/A	18 months
SSgt	27 months	4 years	N/A	4 years
GySgt	3 years	6 years	N/A	6 years
1stSgt/MSgt	As published by CMC	As published by CMC	----	----
SgtMaj/MGySgt	3 years	10 years	----	----

5. The following general information is provided as a rank-by-rank guide to enlisted promotion considerations:

Private First Class. Privates in the Drilling Reserve/Active Reserve will be promoted to PFC six months after the 1st day of the month of entry into initial active duty for training, if the commander deems their performance is satisfactory.

Lance Corporal. A PFC in the Drilling Reserve/Active Reserve who has eight months TIG and nine months TIS, and who is qualified for promotion as determined by the commanding officer, may be promoted to the grade of LCpl.

IRR Private First Class and Lance Corporal. The CG, MCRSC is authorized to promote members of the IRR to the grades of PFC and LCpl who have the required TIS and minimum TIG. These Marines must have served a minimum of six months in the IRR and have earned at least 27 retirement points in their last full anniversary year.

Corporal and Sergeant. The authorized commander will authorize promotion for members of the Drilling Reserve/Active Reserve on the basis of vacancies existing throughout the Marine Corps Reserve. These promotions will be effected on a quarterly basis, as OccFld requirements permit. Promotions will be based on TIG/TIS criteria and the “composite score” (CS) computed quarterly for each

eligible LCpl. Promotion periods will be in January, April, July and October.

IRR Corporal and Sergeant*. Members of the Individual Ready Reserve are eligible for promotion to Corporal and Sergeant provided they:

- 1) Are recommended for promotion by CG, Marine Corps Reserve Support Command (MCRSC).
- 2) Meet one of the following requirements:
 - Assessed directly from the active component.
 - Serve for six consecutive months as a member of the IRR prior to the convening of the promotion board.
 - Are in a mobilized status.
- 3) Earn at least 50 retirement points (in the anniversary year immediately preceding the convening date of the board).
- 4) Meet the published SMCR cutting score for their respective grade and Occfld.

* All members of the IRR, regardless of mobilization status, are considered for promotion in the IRR competitive category.

Staff Noncommissioned Officers. As noted earlier, promotion to the SNCO grades is the result of selection for promotion by a SMCR/IRR/AR Selection Board. Please note the following carefully:

To be eligible for consideration, a Marine must be serving in the SMCR, IRR, or the AR on the date the annual Reserve board convenes; through the session of the board (except for a minimum allowable period of 24 hours in the case of reenlistments); and on the date the board report is approved by the CMC. Marines executing inter-component transfers or who transfer between competitive categories during the board are not eligible for consideration. A single promotion board will be conducted in three phases to examine three separate competitive categories, the SMCR, IRR, and AR. Reserve Marines in each category will

compete with Marines from their category only (i.e., drilling Marines with drilling Marines, IRR with IRR, and AR with AR).

SMCR First Sergeant Selections. Reserve Gunnery Sergeants desiring consideration for promotion to First Sergeant (in addition to having met the minimum TIG/TIS and completed PME requirements) must submit a letter to the President of the Reserve SNCO Selection Board indicating which billet(s) they would be willing to serve. The list of vacant billets will be published via MARADMIN. This additional selection requirement is designed to fill the small number of geographically isolated (and hence difficult to staff) First Sergeant SMCR billets.

IRR Staff Noncommissioned Officers*. IRR Sgts through 1stSgt/MSgt are eligible to compete for promotion provided they:

- 1) Meet one of the following requirements:
 - Assessed directly from the active component.
 - Serve for six consecutive months as a member of the IRR prior to the convening of the promotion board.
 - Are in a mobilized status.
- 2) Earn at least 50 retirement points (in the anniversary year immediately preceding the convening date of the board).
- 3) Meet the date of rank/pay entry base date requirements announced for SMCR Marines for their respective grade and OccFld.
- 4) Demonstrate the leadership, integrity and maturity appropriate to the grade for which being recommended.
- 5) Meet the eligibility criteria for promotion to the next higher grade, as determined by a screening board conducted by the CG, MCRSC.

* All members of the IRR, regardless of mobilization status, are considered for promotion in the IRR competitive category.

D. What Selection Boards Consider.

1. Participation and Activity—Basic Retirement Point Requirements.

- a. **Career Retirement Credit Report (CRCR).** The CRCR is an important tool utilized by selection boards to measure a Marine's activity in the Marine Corps Reserve. The CRCR summarizes the annual totals of retirement points recorded in the Marine Corps Total Force System (MCTFS); it paints a general picture of a Marine's entire career.

All retirement points earned by a Marine should be reflected on the CRCR. Points are earned while on active duty, Active Duty for Special Work, Active Duty Training, Annual Training, Inactive Duty Training, and Extended Active Duty or while on the Active Reserve program. Additional information may be found in Section IV of this guidebook.

Each year, within 45 days after a member's anniversary, MCRSC mails a CRCR to each IRR/Standby Reserve member for certification, correction, and return by mail.

Instructions for review and correction of the report accompany the mailing. MCRSC will then update current, previous, and historical retirement data in the MCTFS. SMCR and AR Marines receive their CRCR for review and certification from their reporting unit.

AR or SMCR Marines should request a CRCR from their reporting unit if they have not received one within 60 days after their anniversary. IRR or IMA Marines who have not received a CRCR within 60 days of their anniversary date should request one from CG, MCRSC, (Attn: IRRB for IRR members or TFB for IMA members), at 15303 Andrews Road, Kansas City, MO 64147-1207.

It must be clearly understood that the CRCR is critical to the Reserve Marine. CRCRs should be routinely audited to ensure accuracy. Missing or incorrect information may adversely affect promotion opportunities, cause denial of reenlistment, denial of selection for a PME school, and adversely impact AR program status. Each Reserve Marine is responsible for ensuring their CRCR is correct.

2. **Fitness Reports.** Among the most important documents in official records at Headquarters Marine Corps are fitness reports. Absence of these reports may hinder appointment for promotions. Active participation in the Reserve Program ensures a sufficiency of fitness reports upon which a selection board may base its recommendations.

The sample reserve promotion package found in Appendix D of this guidebook contains more detailed information on fitness reports and members' responsibilities to ensure accuracy and completeness. Additionally, members must also ensure their Master Brief Sheets and Official Military Personnel Files are accurate and complete (these documents contain copies of members' fitness reports. See Section VII). The importance of keeping these documents updated cannot be overemphasized.

3. **Photograph.** Appendix D contains a Sample Reserve Promotion Package, with important information on promotion photographs. Promotion photographs are also a critical element of the total promotion package considered by selection boards.
4. **Reserve Qualification Summary.** Marines must complete a copy of a questionnaire entitled "Reserve Qualification Summary" (NAVMC 10476) as required by promotion, PME and other various boards. The purpose of this form is to provide an updated summary of skills, qualifications, and information that **might not have been previously included in a case file.** It ensures that all personnel actions taken (including promotion) are based on complete and accurate facts.

To obtain this form, members should contact their SMCR unit administration section, or MCRSC, and request a form. A sample NAVMC is found in Appendix D.

5. **PME.** As discussed in Section VII, PME is solidly linked to promotion in the Marine Corps. Officers and enlisted personnel must complete the appropriate PME for their grade in order to be "fully qualified" for promotion. Members are encouraged to review the PME requirements, by grade, found in Section VII and Appendix J of this guidebook.

6. **Active Duty Assignments.** There are a variety of active duty opportunities available to Ready Reserve officers. They include formal schools, OJT, training assistant assignments, umpire duty, safety officer duty, memberships on various boards, ADT for members of Selected Marine Corps Reserve units, and special project work. Opportunities can be found by contacting your local RSU, MCRSC, or visiting the MARFORRES website (see Section VI).
7. **Letter to the Selection Board.** Marines to be considered by a Reserve Selection Board should submit a promotion package to the board. Format for the package can be found within the solicitation message (MARADMIN). See also Paragraph (b), (c) of this section, and Appendix D.
8. **Personal Correspondence.** Marines are strongly encouraged to submit personal correspondence to the board. Only the Marine who is eligible for consideration by a selection board may provide written communication to the board. (This includes letters of recommendation, which should be included as enclosures within the Marine's promotion package. See below.) All such communication must be addressed to the president of the appropriate selection board (i.e., President of the FY-00 Reserve Major Board, etc.), Commandant of the Marine Corps (MMPR-1) for officers or (MMPR-2) for enlisted personnel, Headquarters Marine Corps, 17 Lejeune Road, Quantico, VA 22134-5104. **To be considered, the board must receive all correspondence no later than the convening date of the board.**

Correspondence may include, as enclosures or attachments, correspondence from any individual. Correspondence to a selection board should address any matter of significant importance for the purpose of attaining an accurate and complete record. Letters of appreciation, correspondence courses completed, personal awards, school certificates or transcripts awarded within a year of an eligible Marine coming into the promotion zone, or material that was omitted from the OMPF, should be provided by the Marine as updated material for consideration by the board. Material submitted to the board stays with the board; it is not forwarded for addition to a Marine's OMPF or MBS.

Correspondence should not criticize or reflect upon the character, conduct, or motive of any other Marine. Appendix D contains more information on promotion board correspondence.

E. Alternatives When Not Selected. As a Marine, you have much to offer the Corps. The promotion process is keenly competitive and non-selection should not be viewed as a negative assessment of your contribution to the Marine Corps. There are many opportunities for you to participate in the Marine Corps and to be considered again for promotion in the future. There are steps you can take to improve your opportunity for favorable promotion consideration.

1. **First**, commit yourself to serve as a Marine at your highest and best level of performance. Make certain that a timely fitness report is submitted up the chain of command so that it is in your record for next year's board.
2. **Second**, if you have not done so already, begin **now** to make sure that your records, especially fitness reports, are complete. MBSs and OMPFs can be obtained from CMC (MMSB-34) at the address listed below in Paragraph 6.
3. **Third**, within 90 days of the convening date of the Board, you should send your own "promotion package" to the Board for its consideration. This would normally include your cover letter explaining (if applicable) any gaps or other known deficiencies in your record, an official photograph, and a current Reserve Qualification Summary. Your cover letter should be brief and factual (not argumentative), and you should attach any recent (within six months) documentation that may strengthen your case (such as an award).
4. **Counseling Available.** The board's deliberations are confidential, and non-selection can occur for any of a large number of reasons. You may call the Career Management Team at Headquarters Marine Corps (1-877-415-9275) to inquire about the competitiveness of your file.
5. **Assistance at MCRSC.** If you have questions concerning the promotion process, preparing your promotion package, or other questions, call your SMCR administration section. If you are a member of the IRR/MTU or IMA, call MCRSC at 1-800-255-5082 ext 3209/3203. For questions regarding the SNCO promotion process, the Promotions SNCO at extension 3209/3203 can assist.

F. Marines' Right and Responsibility to Review the Record.

1. **How to Obtain a Copy of Your Record.** All officers and SNCOs have personnel files maintained at Headquarters Marine Corps. Master Brief Sheets

(MBS) and Official Military Personnel Files (OMPF) contain the entire record of a member's service in the Marine Corps. The OMPF and MBS are two of the most critical documents considered by promotion boards. Every Marine is responsible for ensuring their OMPF and MBS is current, accurate and complete. MBSs may be obtained by writing to:

Commandant of the Marine Corps (MMSB-34)
Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps
2008 Elliot Road
Quantico, VA 22134-5030

- Facsimile requests may be sent to (703) 784-5688.
 - A Marine's Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) may be requested from the same address, office code (MMSB-10).
 - Both the OMPF and the MBS may be ordered concurrently by sending the request to office code (MMSB-12).
 - Additional information regarding the MBS or OMPF may be obtained at toll-free 1-800-268-3710; FAX: (703) 784-5792; or by email at mmsbompf@manpower.usmc.mil.
 - Customer service is available at (703) 784-3970 or 3985.
 - OMPF and MBS are available for local pick up by calling (703) 784-5640.
2. **What to Look For and How to Correct Your Record.** Appendix D contains extensive information on how to audit and correct your official personnel files. In general, Marines should ensure data contained in the OMPF and MBS is accurate, current, and complete. Information in the OMPF and MBS should be identical. Discrepancies or omissions in the OMPF or MBS should be addressed in correspondence to Headquarters Marine Corps or to the President of the Selection Board, if applicable.
3. **Key Elements For Promotion Consideration.** Key elements for promotion consideration are the promotion package photograph, the Reserve Qualification Summary, the Reserve Career Retirement Credit Report and the member's Fitness

Reports. Appendix D provides detailed information on these elements. Perhaps the most crucial of these elements is the Marine's Fitness Reports. No single element before the selection board is more important. Fitness report gaps or inaccuracies may raise questions concerning a member's service or give the board an inaccurate or incomplete picture of the member's service. The individual Marine is responsible for ensuring his or her OMPF and MBS are correct.