

Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard Comparison

	Active Duty	Reserve and National Guard
Structure	<p>Active Duty Service members are the federal military force of the United States, which includes the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard.</p>	<p>Reserve Service members are a federal military reserve force, which includes the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air Force Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve. They may be activated for federal missions (e.g., combat deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan). They may also volunteer for various federal missions (e.g., non-combat overseas medical aid mission).</p>
		<p>National Guard Service members are a federal military reserve force as well as the militia force of each U.S. state and include the Army and Air National Guard. They may be activated for federal missions (e.g., combat deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan) or state missions (e.g., deployment within a state to aid in disaster response). They may also volunteer for various federal missions (e.g., non-combat overseas medical aid mission).</p>
Pay	<p>Service members are paid a salary every two weeks based on rank and time in service. The salary includes base pay, special pay (e.g., flight pay, sea pay, hazardous duty pay, submarine pay, etc.), and allowances for housing and food.</p>	<p>Service members are paid for each day worked. The amount is based on rank and time in grade. Pay includes base pay and special pay. During the two-week annual training period and for any amount of days a Service member is activated,</p>

<p>Pay (Continued)</p>	<p>Example: An E-5 with over 6 years of service would be paid \$4065 per month. Pay includes base pay at \$2797 per month, plus a housing allowance at \$900 per month (may be adjusted based on the local cost of living) and a \$368 food allowance.</p> <p>An O-3 with over 6 years of service would be paid \$7051 per month. Pay includes base pay at \$5540 per month, a housing allowance at \$1258 per month (may be adjusted based on the local cost of living), and a food allowance at \$253 per month.</p> <p>For a breakdown of Service-specific rank and grade information, see the Rank Insignia of the United States Armed Forces handouts at schoolresources.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/toolkit</p>	<p>he or she is paid exactly the same as Active Duty counterpart.</p> <p>Example: An E-5 with over 6 years of service would be paid \$373 per drill weekend, which includes only base pay for the time worked.</p> <p>An O-3 with over 6 years of service would be paid \$738 per drill weekend, which includes only base pay for the time worked.</p> <p>For a breakdown of Service-specific rank and grade information, see the Rank Insignia of the United States Armed Forces handouts at schoolresources.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/toolkit</p>
<p>Service Commitment</p>	<p>Enlisted members serve for a specific period of time. Typically, they serve 4-8 years, depending on the length of time training takes to for that position. Once their initial commitment is met and if their performance is acceptable, Service members can re-enlist for 2-6 years at a time. After Service members' commitments are finished, they are added to the Ready Reserve</p>	<p>Enlisted members serve for a specific period of time. Typically, this is 4-8 years. Once their initial commitment is met and if their performance is acceptable, the Service member can re-enlist for 2-6 years at a time.</p>

Service Commitment (Continued)	list, and may be called on to serve for the next four years.	
	Officers serve a minimum of 4 years, although initial commitments can be as long as 10 years for specific career fields, depending on the length of training time required. Once the initial commitment is met, the officer can continue to serve as long as their performance is acceptable. After Service members' commitments are finished, they are added to the Ready Reserve list, and may be called on to serve for the next four years.	Officers serve a minimum of 4 years, although initial commitment can be as long as 10 years for specific career fields. Once the initial commitment is met, the officer can continue to serve as long as their performance is acceptable.
Work Obligation	Service members are "on call" 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for all 365 days in a year; however, they typically work 40-50 hours per week.	Service members work a minimum of one drill weekend a month and two weeks of annual training during the year. Drill weekends normally involve training for a unit's wartime or domestic operations missions. If Service members are activated they function as an Active Duty Service member.
Programs and Services	Service members and their families are typically in close proximity to and eligible to use the Commissary (installation grocery), BX/PX (installation general merchandise store), and other services available on base (e.g., medical, family support, etc.).	Though Service members and their families do not often reside close to an installation, they are eligible to use the Commissary (installation grocery), BX/PX (installation general merchandise store), and other services available on base (e.g., medical, family support, etc.).

Programs and Services <i>(Continued)</i>	Service members' children are eligible for DoD funded child-care programs such as Child Development Centers, Child and Youth Programs, or respite care. See the Military Childcare Priority handout at schoolresources.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/toolkit for more information.	Service members' children are not typically located near nor are eligible for DoD funded child-care programs.
Medical Insurance	Members and their families do not pay a monthly premium for TRICARE (military health insurance).	Members and their families are eligible to purchase TRICARE medical insurance. As of January 2016, premiums are \$48 per month for a single Service member or \$210 per month for the Service member and their family.
	Active Duty Service members (and sometimes their families) can seek treatment at any military treatment facility.	Reservists cannot be seen at a military treatment facility unless they are on Active Duty orders.
Retirement	Service members are eligible for retirement after 20 years of service and earn 50% of their base pay (salary minus special pay and housing and food allowances). Payments begin the month following the last day of service.	Service members are eligible for retirement after 20 years of service. Retirement pay is calculated based on rank upon retirement and total number of days served throughout the career. Payments begin at age 60.
G.I. Bill Education Benefit	Service members are eligible for 100% of the benefit after serving 36 months of aggregate Active Duty service. The benefit includes tuition, books, and a housing allowance.	Service members are eligible for 100% of the benefit after serving 36 months of Active Duty. Active Duty time, including time spent in training and on deployment, is earned

G.I. Bill Education Benefit <i>(Continued)</i>	<p>For detailed eligibility requirements, see http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/post911_gibill.asp</p> <p>For more information on how the benefit can be transferred to children of the Service member, see the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill Tips for Military-Connected Students handout at schoolresources.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/toolkit</p>	<p>cumulatively.</p> <p>For detailed eligibility requirements, see http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/mgib_sr.asp</p> <p>For more information on how the benefit can be transferred to children of the Service member, see the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill Tips for Military-Connected Students handout at schoolresources.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/toolkit</p>
Permanent Change of Station (PCS)	<p>Service members typically PCS, or move to a new location, every 2-4 years. Families generally accompany the Service member during a move.</p>	<p>Units are regionally based and recruited. Members generally do not PCS throughout a career.</p>