



April 30, 2020

The Honorable Mark T. Esper  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Defense  
The Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Military Coalition (TMC), representing more than 5.5 million current and former service members, veterans, and their families and survivors, wishes to express its appreciation for the Department of Defense's (DoD's) work to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 for the Armed Forces. We are concerned about unintended impacts on service members and families, particularly those in the midst of a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) move when DoD's late March stop movement order was implemented.

We have been alerted that some service members in this position are now faced with two housing payments, one at the location of their gaining installation and one at the losing installation where they have been ordered to remain. Clearly, this creates an unfair burden on military families, especially as the situation is not their fault and they were moving at the direction of the military service.

To better understand the most acute challenges facing military families today, the COVID-19 Military Support Initiative (CMSI) conducted a Pain Points Poll garnering more than 3,200 respondents from March 18 to April 7, 2020. Thirty-two percent of week 5 Pain Points Poll respondents, with current PCS orders, indicated that they are (or will be) making two housing payments within the next 60 days, due to the stop movement order.<sup>1</sup>

Since it is widely believed that the Servicemember Civil Relief Act (SCRA) does not provide legal recourse for service members in this situation to get out of a rental agreement at their gaining installation, we request that you direct the Service Secretaries and Military Service Chiefs to encourage subordinate commanders and their leadership teams to be aggressive in their utilization of the Exception to Policy (ETP) process and all other means at their disposal to expeditiously move these families to mitigate financial strain.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and your leadership during these unprecedented times. We stand ready to work with you and the Department to ensure service members and their families are protected as they remain DoD's most important asset.

Sincerely,

Jack Du Teil  
President,  
The Military Coalition

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<sup>1</sup> <https://bluestarfam.org/pain-pts/>

Air Force Association (AFA)  
Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA)  
Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA)  
Association of Military Surgeons of America (AMSUS)  
Association of the United States Navy (AUSN)  
Blinded Veterans Association (BVA)  
Chief Warrants & Warrant Officers Association of the U.S. Coast Guard (CWOAUSCG)  
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service (COAUSPHS)  
Fleet Reserve Association (FRA)  
Gold Star Wives of America (GSW)  
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA)  
Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America (JWV)  
Marine Corps League (MCL)  
Marine Corps Reserve Association (MCRA)  
Military Chaplains Association of the United States of America (MCA)  
Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)  
Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH)  
National Military Family Association (NMFA)  
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association (NERA)  
Noncommissioned Officers Association (NCOA)  
The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA)  
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)  
United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA)  
U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association (USCGCPOA)  
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)