



**DEFENSE SUPPORT SERVICES CENTER  
EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE**  
4800 MARK CENTER DRIVE, SUITE 05E22  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22350-4000

**OPERATING INSTRUCTION**

**SUBJECT:** Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Operating Instruction 1250.21, "Statement of Support Program"

- References:**
- (a) DoD Administrative Instruction 15, "OSD Records and Information Management Program," May 3, 2015, as amended
  - (b) DoD Instruction 1205.22, "Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve," February 6, 2017
  - (c) DoD Instruction 7730.54, "Reserve Components Common Personnel Data System (RCCPDS)," May 20, 2011
  - (d) Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Five-Year Strategic Plan, Fiscal Year 2023-2028, October 5, 2022
  - (e) ESGR Operating Instruction 1250.02, "ESGR Structure & Operating Procedures," March 22, 2023
  - (f) ESGR Operating Instruction 1250.05, "Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Subcommittee Management Program," July 6, 2023
  - (g) ESGR Operating Instruction 1250.30, "Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award," April 26, 2023
  - (h) ESGR Operating Instruction 1250.31, "Outreach Program," July 10, 2023
  - (i) ESGR Operating Instruction 1250.40, "Public Affairs Policy and Procedures," April 17, 2023
  - (j) United States Code, Title 38, Chapter 43

**1. PURPOSE**

Provides for the effective implementation and administration of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Statement of Support (SoS) Program in support of the ESGR mission as described in DoD Instruction 1205.22.

**2. INFORMATION COLLECTION**

- 2.1. Per DoD Administrative Instruction (AI) 15, "OSD Records and Information Management Program," National Guard and Reserves Statement of Support Records," referred to in file number 1803-09 of Office of the Secretary of Defense Deposition Schedule Series 1800 titled USD Personnel and Readiness, are temporary. Cut off at the end of the calendar year in which activity has been completed. Destroy 15 years after cutoff.
- 2.2. Per DoD Administrative Instruction (AI) 15, "OSD Records and Information Management Program," "Awards issued under the authority of Heads of

OSD Components, Defense Agencies and Field Activities,” referred to in file 202-70 of the Office of the Secretary of Defense Disposition Schedule Series 200 titled Management and Operations, case files and awards packages created and maintained by OSD Components, Defense Agencies and Field Activities for Federal employees, contractors, non-governmental organizations, corporations, civilian personnel and groups nominated for Incentive Awards and Honorary and other honorary awards issued under the authority delegated to the Heads of OSD Components, Defense Agencies and Field Activities (Patriot Award, Seven Seals Award, Above and Beyond Award, and other awards under their purview) are temporary, cutoff annually, in the calendar year upon which the final determination (approval/disapproved) was made, and destroyed 15 years after cutoff. (<https://www.esd.whs.mil/RIM/>)

### 3. APPLICABILITY

This ESGR operating instruction applies to Headquarters (HQ) ESGR, ESGR Volunteers, and ESGR contracted personnel.

### 4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1. Civilian Employment Information (CEI): CEI is a requirement per DoDI 7730.54. The instruction mandates that all Reserve Component (RC) Service members input their civilian employment information into a database maintained by the Defense Manpower Data Center. ESGR is a customer of this data and uses it to focus employer outreach (EO) activities to the known employers of RC Service members.
- 4.2. EventPLUS: Software used to manage and coordinate ESGR state committee (SC) outreach, training, and administrative activities. It provides for management and coordination of the entire event lifecycle including setup, approval, pre-event, event registration, and after-action reports, in addition to SoS and Patriot Award tracking
- 4.3. Headquarters (HQ) ESGR: Per DoDI 1205.22 led by the Executive Director (ED), HQ ESGR is comprised of military personnel and full-time civilian employees who administer ESGR programs and initiatives. HQ ESGR provides ombudsman services, conducts national employer and RC member outreach initiatives, and provides direction, training, and support to all ESGR SCs.
- 4.4. Reserve Components (RCs): Per DoDI 1235.12, the RCs of the armed forces are: The Army National Guard of the United States, The Army Reserve, The Navy Reserve, The Marine Corps Reserve, The Air National Guard of the United States, The Air Force Reserve, and The Coast Guard Reserve.

- 4.5. State Committee: Per HQ ESGRI 1250.21, a state organization of local volunteers who perform ESGR’s mission in 54 states and territories including the District of Columbia, Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands.
- 4.6. Statement of Support (SoS) Program: Program is to increase employer support by encouraging employers to act as advocates for employee participation in the military. Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA): Chapter 43 of Title 38 of United States Code, otherwise known as “USERRA” was signed into law on October 13, 1994. USERRA prohibits discrimination in employment based on an individual’s prior service in the uniformed services; current service in the uniformed services; or intent to join the uniformed services. An employer is also prohibited from discriminating against a person because of such person’s attempt to enforce his or her rights under the Act.

5. ACRONYMS

CEI	Civilian Employment Information
EO	Employer Outreach
EOD	Employer Outreach Director
ESGR	Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve
HQ ESGR and Reserve	Headquarters Employer Support of the Guard
RC	Reserve Component
SC	State Committee
SoS	Statement of Support
VST	Volunteer Support Technician
USERRA	Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act

6. POLICY

- 6.1. Supportive employers are critical to maintaining the strength and readiness of the Nation’s Guard and Reserve units.
- 6.2. Per DoDI 1205.22, ESGR operates programs to develop and promote employers supporting and valuing the employment of members of the RCs.

- 6.3. Each ESGR SC implements the SoS program to gain and maintain employer support for the National Guard and Reserve.
- 6.4. ESGR obtains SoS from known employers of RC Service members, as well as employers who potentially employ National Guard and Reserve Service members
- 6.5. CEI is available to support obtaining SoS from known employers of National Guard and Reserve Service members.

## 7. RESPONSIBILITIES

### 7.1. HQ ESGR will:

- 7.1.1. Provide outreach program objectives, guidance, policy, products, resources, and oversight under the guidance and supervision of the Chief of Volunteer Support.
- 7.1.2. Provide “best practices” materials in the documents library of the Members Management System (MMS).
- 7.1.3. Through HQ ESGR Volunteer Support, disseminate and collect information to and from the SCs.
- 7.1.4. Provide CEI data to SCs as requested.
- 7.1.5. Coordinate operational and logistics support for SoS location signings with appropriate SC, as per Section 7.2.2 of this instruction.
- 7.1.6. Ensure SCs have access to the most current products from the fulfillment vendor.
- 7.1.7. Ensure the SC upload SoS data into EventPLUS monthly for tracking.
- 7.1.8. Use MMS to maintain a list of active Employer Outreach Directors (EOD).
- 7.1.9. Maintain SoS recordkeeping in EventPLUS per record retention regulations.
- 7.1.10. Use the data in EventPLUS to provide the SCs with names of employers who previously signed an SoS as an opportunity to sign a reaffirmation.

- 7.1.11. When appropriate, coordinate gaining new Secretary of Defense signature on the SoS template.
- 7.2. Headquarters (HQ) ESGR Employer Engagement:
- 7.2.1. Provide outreach services to corporate and military organizations at a national level.
  - 7.2.2. Provide outreach services, with ESGR state volunteers, to state level elected officials, other high-profile politicians, and public figures such as state governors, state police commissioners, and mayors of large cities.
  - 7.2.3. Participate and coordinate with ESGR state volunteers to ensure support and resources are available at outreach exhibits, presentations, conferences, and multi-state events; organizes and facilitates national level SoS signings. Examples include but are not limited to organizations that HQ ESGR considers corporate outreach, such as the Society for Human Resources Management, Walmart, Amazon, or organizations that have the word “National” in their title.
  - 7.2.4. Participate in conventions of military and veteran support organizations such as the National Guard Association of the United States, Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, Reserve Organization of America, Military Officers Association of America, Marine Corps Reserve Association, and others.
- 7.3. SC Chairs will:
- 7.3.1. Appoint a SC EOD to manage and monitor the EO program.
  - 7.3.2. Ensure the SC EOD receives appropriate training for the position and is aware of the expectations of the role.
  - 7.3.3. Ensure planning, execution, and reporting of outreach programs is in alignment with the ESGR Strategic Plan and guidance from HQ ESGR.
  - 7.3.4. Ensure the SoS program takes advantage of, and is in accordance with, the full spectrum of outreach products, services, and programs, per ESGR policy.
  - 7.3.5. Ensure the SoS program is managed with approved ESGR products secured through the online store maintained by the fulfillment vendor.

7.3.6. Gain and maintain relationships with centers of influence, such as senior government, civic, and industry leaders within the state.

7.3.7. Ensure compliance with SoS program reporting requirements using EventPLUS.

7.4. The SC EOD will:

7.4.1. Lead SC initiatives to gain SoS from the known employers and potential employers of National Guardsmen and Reservists in the SC area of responsibility.

7.4.2. Design and manage an appropriate SC EO structure as necessary to accomplish the EO mission.

7.4.3. Manage and distribute CEI data as requested, employer leads, requests for SoS received from HQ ESGR, ESGR website, or other lead sources to SC members for execution of outreach initiatives and activities.

7.4.4. Maintain, at a minimum, monthly contact with the volunteer support regional team.

7.4.5. Ensure appropriate SCs and the Chief of Volunteer Support are apprised of SoS signings that include multiple employers at different locations.

7.4.6. Ensure SC EO volunteers have the necessary materials, resources, and training to implement the EO program.

7.4.7. Report all EO activities in EventPLUS.

7.4.8. Maintain a SC listing of actively serving EO volunteers.

7.4.9. Utilize this instruction for the implementation and administration of the SoS program.

## 8. SoS SIGNING PROCEDURES

8.1. SoS signing ceremonies for employers with multiple locations should be followed up by providing a replica that is an exact likeness of the signed SoS for all locations of that employer, whether that location is in the CEI database or not.

8.1.1. The SC or HQ ESGR executing the initial SoS signing ceremony is

responsible for obtaining employer permission and mailing address information from the employer to send the SoS replicas to all employer locations.

8.1.2. The production and mailing of replicas directly by the employer to all the employer's locations is highly encouraged; however, HQ ESGR will pay for the production and mailing of SoS replicas through the ESGR fulfillment contractor to locations designated by the employer.

8.2. The ESGR entity executing the initial SoS signing ceremony (SC or HQ ESGR) is responsible for coordinating with HQ ESGR Employer Outreach, to ensure the mailing of SoS replicas from the ESGR fulfillment vendor.

8.3. The SC EOD is responsible for keeping the SC leadership informed and for communicating with HQ ESGR Employer Engagement, regarding potential SoS signings with employers that have locations across SC boundaries.

8.4. HQ ESGR Employer Outreach will notify appropriate SC EODs about SoS signings and prompt them to enter information in EventPLUS for the locations of that corporate entity.

## 9. SoS PROGRAM PROCEDURES

9.1. Prioritize the SoS program in the following order:

9.1.1. Priority 1: Employers who have not signed a SoS and who currently appear in the CEI database.

9.1.2. Priority 2: Employers who have not signed a SoS who currently employ National Guard and Reserve Service members but who do not appear in the CEI database.

9.1.3. Priority 3: Employers who have not signed a SoS who may employ National Guard and Reserve Service members.

9.2. Process when HQ ESGR receives request for an SoS from employer:

9.2.1. SoS request: When a request for a SoS is submitted on the ESGR website, the on-line request generates an automatic e-mail notification to HQ ESGR Corporate Outreach, who then notifies the appropriate SC chair, or other designated SC member(s), alerting them to the request.

9.2.2. SC volunteers: The designated SC member should forward the notification to the SC EOD for immediate follow-up.

- 9.3. The SC EOD should assign lead follow-up responsibility to an EO volunteer. It is essential to initiate follow-up with interested employers as quickly as possible following receipt of their information. The following steps outline the process of contacting employers.
  - 9.3.1. Step 1: Make initial contact to determine the employer's current level of support for their National Guard and Reserve Service member employees and, if appropriate, schedule a SoS signing.
  - 9.3.2. Step 2: Organize a SoS signing ceremony and prepare the SoS certificate. Prior to the day of the signing ceremony, ensure the employer's name is printed correctly on the SoS certificate. Use an SoS signed by the current Secretary of Defense or other HQ ESGR approved version.
  - 9.3.3. Step 3: Conduct the signing ceremony
    - 9.3.3.1. On the day of the signing ceremony, have extra brochures and business cards for your audience, arrive early to meet your host, and get comfortable with the signing venue.
    - 9.3.3.2. Following the signing ceremony, make time to visit with the employer's Human Resources Manager to discuss their human resources policies and compliance with USERRA.
  - 9.3.4. Step 4: Record the SoS signing in EventPLUS or send the information to the appropriate committee member to submit.
  - 9.3.5. Step 5: Conduct follow-up. Best practices for employer follow-up will be available in the document library in MMS. Conducting an ESGR Statement of Support signing event video is available at <https://www.esgr.mil/Volunteers/Resources-Library>. At a minimum, follow-up annually on the local level and every 3 years at the national level.
  - 9.3.6. Step 6: Direct mail solicitation. Solicitation of SoS via direct mail is authorized under this instruction with the following requirements:
    - 9.3.6.1. The direct mail solicitation package must contain a SoS document with the ability for the employer to mail back contact information.
    - 9.3.6.2. In addition to the SoS document, enclose a cover letter introducing ESGR and the purpose of the mailing in the direct mail packet. The cover letter must also inform the recipient, to



register as a supportive employer on the ESGR website, the contact information must be completed and returned to ESGR.

9.3.7. Step 7: Conduct EO events.

9.3.7.1. Conducting EO events is a major part of the SoS program. SCs are encouraged to develop an EO plan which provides an opportunity for the SC to inform and educate known employers of RC Service members.

9.3.7.2. After the event, EO volunteers must make follow-up efforts by contacting their assigned employers and encouraging them to sign the SoS.

9.3.7.3. See paragraph 9.3.5 of this enclosure for more information on staying in touch with employers.

9.4. Monitoring of results. SCs have the responsibility to upload the following information for each SoS into EventPLUS for tracking:

9.4.1. Business Name and Address

9.4.2. Contact name.

9.4.3. SoS signature date.

9.5. SoS certificates: SCs may obtain SoS from the HQ ESGR fulfillment vendor. EODs are encouraged to order and maintain a sufficient supply of SoS to accomplish their EO mission.

9.6. SoS employer checklist: See Appendix 1 of this instruction for an outline of the SoS program designed to help the EOD organize EO activities.

10. EFFECTIVE DATE: Effective immediately. This instruction will be reviewed by HQ ESGR on an annual basis.

Jonathan R. Townsend, CAPT, USN  
Executive Director

## Appendix 1: SoS Program Checklist

This checklist comprises the recommended steps for successful implementation the SoS program.

- 1. Receive List of Assigned Employers - Data available from the SC EOD, Area Chair, Volunteer Support Technician (VST) or SC Chair.
- 2. Maintain Supply of SoS Certificates - Maintain a sufficient supply of current SoS certificates for use at employer outreach events and signing ceremonies.
- 3. Make Initial Contact with Each Employer – Contact director of human resources, when appropriate, to determine level of employer support and what is needed for them to sign and provide assistance.
- 4. Organize the Signing Ceremony - Work with the employer to ensure event is well attended, invite local unit commanders, ESGR SC leadership and public affairs (for public relations and photographic support), and the local media. Record the event into EventPLUS for tracking.
- 5. Prepare the SoS Certificate – Work with the employer to determine exactly how the SoS should read, and if possible, incorporate a company/corporate logo (.jpg or .png for example). The SoS should be presented in a folder whenever possible.
- 6. Conduct Follow-up - Maintain the relationship with the employer through regular contact, provide assistance as requested and use ESGR events such as Bosslifts and Briefings with the Boss to encourage greater awareness and employer support.
- 7. Report Results - Report results of employer visits/contacts to the SC EOD or area chair as applicable for entry into the SoS database.
- 8. Report Volunteer Hours – Record all volunteer hours after completion of SoS. Contact VST for assistance if necessary.

Appendix 2: Sample Statement  
of Support



**STATEMENT OF SUPPORT  
FOR THE GUARD AND RESERVE**



We recognize the Guard and Reserve are essential to the strength of our Nation and the well-being of our communities.

In the highest American tradition, the patriotic men and women of the Guard and Reserve serve voluntarily in an honorable and vital profession. They train to respond to their community and their country in time of need. They deserve the support of every segment of our society.

If these volunteer forces are to continue to serve our Nation, increased public understanding is required of the essential role of the Guard and Reserve in preserving our national security.

**Therefore, we join other employers in pledging that:**

- We fully recognize, honor and comply with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).
- We will provide our managers and supervisors with the tools they need to **effectively manage those employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.**
- We appreciate the values, leadership and unique skills Service members bring to the workforce and will encourage opportunities to employ Guardsmen, Reservists, transitioning Service members and Veterans.
- We will continually recognize and support our country's Service members and their families in peace, in crisis, and in war.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employer



Ronald E. Bogle  
National Chair, ESGR

Lloyd J. Austin III  
Secretary of Defense

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Date



## CHANGE AND REVIEW LOG

Review the Instructions at least annually to ensure:

- (a) References are current
- (b) Changes in procedures are documented
- (c) Necessary revisions are published

Maintain this record throughout the life of the document.

Date	Author	Version	Reason
Dec 27	Frank Huff	1	Update to general admin data and format
Dec 27	Frank Huff	1	Updated appendix 2 with current Statement of Support with Secretary Austin's signature
Feb 2	Frank Huff	5	Format changes and updates ED signature block
Jul 6, 2023	Andy Rivera	Final	Final Proofread