

A Soldier's Guide to Voluntary Active Duty

The Army needs trained Reserve Component Soldiers to support a range of missions. Some missions are in direct support to Overseas Contingency Operations, either in Theater or as part of the CONUS (stateside) Support Base. Other missions support Active Component units or Reserve Component units in their "peacetime" operations. This short guide is intended to provide RC Soldiers with an understanding of the basic terms and processes of volunteering for Active Duty.

Unless specifically noted, the information in this guide applies to US Army Reserve Soldiers (USAR), Army National Guard Soldiers (ARNG) and Regular Army Retirees – collectively referred to as the Selected Reserve. Soldiers in the USAR may be serving in Troop Program Units (TPUs) which are drilling units (performing weekend and annual training) or Individual Mobilization Augmentees (IMAs) – Soldiers assigned to units and who muster annually but do not drill each month. Soldiers assigned to the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) have been released from Active Duty or their Reserve unit, but have a commitment remaining on their service contract and may be voluntarily or involuntarily recalled to duty. All of these categories of reserve manpower are referred to collectively as the "Reserve Components" (RC).

Mobilization Versus Voluntary Active Duty. All Reserve Component units and Soldiers are eligible to be ordered to Active Duty under the provisions of US law by the appropriate authorities. Under the current mobilization directives, the Secretary of the Army can mobilize units and individuals under 10 USC (called "Title 10 or Title X") sections 12302 for INVOLUNTARY (units or individuals) mobilization or under 12301 VOLUNTARY (the Soldier must agree to being recalled) orders to active duty. So if you are ordered to active duty involuntarily (as a unit or individual) you are mobilized. If you volunteer, you will be ordered to Active Duty, but you are not mobilized – the authority for each category determines your status. The conditions (length of tours, protections, etc.) of active duty service are different between Mobilization and Voluntary Active Duty.

Some of the Types of Active Duty. There are many types of active duty under which a Soldier can be ordered – either voluntarily or involuntarily – to active duty. The categories are applied based on the different purposes of the duty in order to provide the Army with flexibility in the duration and conditions of active duty service. Some purposes of active duty can be for operational support, medical/health recovery, disciplinary or judicial actions, training, or counter narcotics support, etc. The most often used categories are:

Active Duty for Operational Support (ADOS). ADOS is an authorized tour of active duty under Title 10, USC, Section 12301(d) and includes the duties previously called ADSW, EAD, TTAD. The Army further differentiates ADOS as ADOS-AC (OPADOS) or ADOS-AC (Admin). These tours support the active Army or other DoD agency by filling an open active billet with a volunteer RC Soldier. OPADOS is for operational support missions only and is limited by funding availability. OPADOS is administered by HQDA, G-3/5/7. ADOS-AC (ADMIN) is for administrative support missions only and is also limited by funding availability. It is administered by HQDA, G-1. Note – Tours are limited to the current funding year so all tours must end on 30 Sep regardless of start date.

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Contingency Operations – Active Duty for Operational Support (CO-ADOS). Soldiers volunteering for duty in support of contingency operations to serve with active or reserve units with a direct connection to the support of overseas contingency operations serve under CO-ADOS tours. The term CO-ADOS replaced the old terms CO-EAD and COTTAD. HQDA, G-3/5/7, Mobilization Division (DAMO-ODM) validates CO-ADOS requirements. Gaining commands must identify by-name volunteers to fill open CO-ADOS requirements.

Active Duty for Operational Support – Reserve Component (ADOS-RC). Voluntary, RC funded duty (replaces the term ADSW). Each Reserve Component is authorized to order volunteers to Active Duty to support Reserve Component missions and requirements, and is funded and approved by the Reserve Component headquarters. ADOS-RC tours are managed by each Reserve Component and therefore not processed in DAMPS-A.

Medical Retention Processing (MRP). RC Soldiers on active duty for contingency operations in support of Overseas Contingency Operation (OCO) found by military medical authority to have a OCO-connected, unresolved in-the-line-of-duty (LD) medical condition may be eligible for Medical Retention Processing (MRP) under provisions of 10 USC 12301(h). Details on this WTU program may be found at the WTU Consolidated Guidance (Administrative) link on the HQDA G-1 homepage at www.armyg1.army.mil. MRP tours are managed by Human Resource Command (HRC) and therefore not processed in DAMPS-A.

Active Duty for Training (ADT) – this tour is a category of AD that is used to provide structured individual and/or unit training, including on-the-job-training, or educational courses to RC members. Included in the ADT category are annual training (AT), initial ADT (IADT), and other training duty (OTD). The primary purpose of ADT is to provide individual and/or unit readiness training. ADT tours are managed by each Reserve Component and therefore not processed in DAMPS-A.

Understanding the terms and types of Active Duty should help you determine what kind of Active Duty you can volunteer for. Tour of Duty is the Army system to find open active duty opportunities. DAMPS-A is the Army voluntary active duty request processing system. See the TOD or DAMPS-A site for more information at <https://mobcop.army.mil> or contact your unit mobilization team for assistance in volunteering for active duty.