

**ARMY DIRECTOR, ACQUISITION CAREER MANAGEMENT
LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE AND ACQUISITION DEVELOPMENT (LEAD) POLICY**

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

PARA	SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FROM THE PREVIOUS POLICY
1	References: Updated to reflect current associated references
4.a	Program Description: Changed the first sentence to indicate that the LEAD is now a 12-month leadership development program.
4.b(2)(b)	Program Description: Added Acquisition Leadership Challenge Program (ALCP) Level II as a program graduation requirement for LEAD participants who already completed ALCP Level I before starting the program.
5.b(5)	Responsibilities (Army DACM Office LEAD Program Manager): Added "Prepares a Continued Service Agreement (CSA) for LEAD Program applicants by filling out the appropriate periods of obligated service and posting the pre-populated document to the DACM Office's LEAD Program webpage."
5.d(3)	Responsibilities (Commands/Organizations): Added "Plan, coordinate, and schedule developmental assignments within the Army acquisition community for their LEAD participants at their home station. Ensure LEAD participants are detailed to these developmental assignments."
5.e	Responsibilities (AAW Professionals): Added "Download a copy of the CSA from the DACM Office's LEAD website and carefully read and understand the terms and period of service obligation. Both the AAW professional and their supervisor must sign the CSA. The AAW professional must upload a signed copy of the CSA as part of their application in AAPDS."
6	Application: Included Organizational Leadership Course as an application requirement.
8.a	Participation: Made significant change to how LEAD participants are assigned while they are in the program. This sub-paragraph now reads "LEAD participants will remain on their parent organization's Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) throughout their participation in the program."
8.c	Participation: Added new language about accruing and receiving Program Management experience credit for participating in the LEAD Program.



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SFAE-ASC

12 January 2026

**MEMORANDUM FOR CIVILIAN ARMY ACQUISITION WORKFORCE
PROFESSIONALS**

SUBJECT: Leadership Excellence and Acquisition Development Program Policy

1. References:

- a. Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1, Subchapter B, Part 410 – Training.
- b. Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology), SFAE memorandum (Senior Rater Potential Evaluation Policy), 01 July 2020.
- c. Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology), SFAE memorandum (Leadership Excellence and Acquisition Development Program Guidance), 02 February 2022 - hereby superseded.

2. Purpose. This policy governs the implementation and administration of the Leadership Excellence and Acquisition Development (LEAD) Program, and general requirements for selection and participation in the program.

3. Applicability. This policy applies to Army Acquisition Workforce (AAW) civilians in the grades of General Schedule (GS)-12 and GS-13 (or band equivalent).

4. Program Description.

a. LEAD is a 12-month leadership development program, designed to develop future Army acquisition program managers, that is centrally managed and funded by the Army Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM) Office. The program offers board-selected participants expanded training, leadership, experiential, and other career development opportunities. More detailed information about the LEAD Program can be found on the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC) DACM Office website at <https://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/lead/>.

b. The program is comprised of two elements:

1) Developmental Assignments. LEAD developmental assignments are six months in length and may include, but are not limited to, positions such as Product Lead; Program Officer; Assistant Program Manager; staff officer at the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (ASA(ALT));

staff officer at Headquarters, Department of the Army; Executive Officer; or Department of the Army System Coordinator (DASC). LEAD participants are detailed to developmental assignment positions within the Army acquisition community at their home station, based on individual education, experience, and training needs, as well as the current and/or anticipated needs of the Army. In addition to this six-month developmental assignment at their home station, LEAD participants are required to complete a DASC assignment in the National Capital Region for a maximum period of 179 days in a temporary duty status. Any deviation from these development assignments must be approved in advance by the DACM Office's LEAD Program Manager (PM).

2) Developmental Training: The training listed below are program requirements that must be completed before graduation from the LEAD Program. Participants may submit a waiver or equivalency request for any of these courses to the LEAD PM for consideration on a case-by-case basis. Determination for acceptance of waivers is final and at the sole discretion of the DACM.

(a) Army.

(1) Congressional Operations Course

(2) How the Army Runs (HTAR)

(b) Leadership.

(1) Acquisition Leadership Challenge Program (ALCP) Level I

(2) If the LEAD participant already completed ALCP Level I before attending the LEAD Program, they must complete ALCP Level II as a graduation requirement.

5. Responsibilities.

a. Army Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM).

1) Provides oversight and management of the program announcement and selection board process.

2) Approves the Memorandum of Instruction (MOI) for selection boards.

3) Approves board members for the LEAD Program selection board.

4) Serves as convening authority for the LEAD Program selection board.

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5) Serves as the final approval authority for the LEAD Program's Order of Merit List (OML).

6) Serves as the final selection approval authority for the LEAD Program.

7) Provides funding to cover tuition and TDY costs for the DASC developmental assignment and required training.

8) Maintains command and control of graduation activities, including but not limited to location/venue selection and setup.

b. Army DACM Office LEAD PM.

1) Updates the LEAD Policy and procedures as needed.

2) Drafts and publishes the annual program announcement. Plans and oversees the board selection process each year.

3) Proactively supports promotion of the LEAD Program to AAW professionals.

4) Provides guidance regarding the submission of applications in the Army Acquisition Professional Development System (AAPDS), which is a module in the Career Acquisition Personnel and Position Management Information System (CAPPMS) within the Career Acquisition Management Portal (CAMP) (<https://apps.asc.army.mil/camp/>).

5) Prepares a Continued Service Agreement (CSA) for LEAD Program applicants by filling out the appropriate periods of obligated service and posting the pre-populated document to the DACM Office's LEAD Program webpage.

6) Notifies applicants if they have been selected or not selected for participation in the program.

7) Coordinates with the ASA(ALT) Deputy for Acquisition and Systems Management Office to plan and schedule LEAD Program DASC assignments.

8) Coordinates funding for LEAD participants with the USAASC G-8.

9) Plans, coordinates, and conducts the LEAD graduation ceremony.

10) Monitors program completion and collects pro-rated repayment of program expenses, if applicable.

c. USAASC G-8: Establishes a Line of Accounting in the Defense Travel System to fund the required LEAD Program training and DASC assignments.

d. Commands/Organizations.

1) Promote the program using available marketing tools, techniques, and channels.

2) Nominate and endorse AAW professionals, as applicable, each year to participate in the LEAD Program.

3) Plan, coordinate, and schedule program management-focused developmental assignments within the Army acquisition community for their LEAD participants at their home station. Ensure LEAD participants are detailed to these developmental assignments.

d. Supervisors.

1) Identify and encourage AAW professionals to participate in the LEAD Program.

2) Ensure employees meet all eligibility requirements, as outlined in paragraph 6 of this policy, before they apply to the program.

3) Ensure employees read and understand, in advance of submitting their application, the LEAD's CSA terms and period of service obligation.

e. AAW Professionals.

1) Discuss career development needs with their supervisor and obtain endorsement of their LEAD application through appropriate command channels.

2) Download a copy of the CSA from the DACM Office's LEAD webpage and carefully read and understand the terms and period of service obligation. Both the AAW professional and their supervisor must sign the CSA. The AAW professional must upload a signed copy of the CSA as part of their application in AAPDS.

6. Application.

a. Eligibility. LEAD applicants must meet all of the following eligibility criteria at the time of program application:

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1) Be a current civilian AAW professional in a Career or Career Conditional status position.

2) Be in the grade of General Schedule (GS)-12/13 or pay band equivalent.

3) Be at least Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act certified at the Practitioner level in Program Management and meet the certification requirements for their current position.

4) Have completed the Civilian Education System (CES) Intermediate Course or the Organizational Leadership Course. For more information about these courses, please see the Army Management Staff College's Educational Programs webpage at <https://armyuniversity.edu/amsc/EducationalPrograms>.

b. Required application documents: See Enclosure 1.

c. All LEAD applicants must sign and upload a CSA to AAPDS as part of their application packet. If accepted to the program, LEAD applicants must honor the terms and period of service obligation on their CSA.

7. Selection.

a. LEAD participants are selected from eligible applicants via a best-qualified board, comprised of GS-14 and GS-15 (or pay band equivalent) board members from the Army acquisition community.

b. LEAD participants are notified of their selection by the LEAD PM. They must accept or decline the offer in writing to the LEAD PM within 10 business days.

8. Participation.

a. LEAD participants will remain on their parent organization's Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) throughout their participation in the program.

b. Developmental Assignments.

1) The LEAD PM will determine each participant's start date in the program. LEAD participants must have a six-month Program Management-focused developmental assignment established at the beginning of the start date of the program.

2) Temporary assignments within Army must consist of formal development experience and/or training, as mandated by Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations 410 – Training (Reference 1.a).

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c. Selection and successful completion of the LEAD Program is a pathway to senior leadership positions within the Army acquisition community. LEAD participants are required to submit an application for consideration by the (ASA)ALT GS-14 Product Director (PD) Centralized Selection Board (CSB), prior to their graduation from the LEAD Program. Failure to apply to the PD CSB announcement during the PD CSB application window (typically in the February through April timeframe) may result in removal from the LEAD Program.

d. It is important that LEAD participants receive credit for Program Management experience because of their participation in the program. The 12 months spent in the LEAD Program counts as Program Management experience which can be applied towards earning DAWIA Program Management Advanced level certification and better position these AAW professionals to compete in future selection boards. Upon graduation from the program, the DACM Office will update each AAW professional's Acquisition Career Record Brief (ACRB) to reflect their LEAD cohort year group. The LEAD cohort year group can be found on Section III of the ACRB.

e. If a LEAD participant is unable to complete the program within 12 months due to a serious medical issue, extreme personal, family or financial hardship, or other compelling situation, they may request to withdraw from the program for compassionate reasons. They must sign and submit a memorandum requesting withdrawal to the first General Officer (GO) or Senior Executive Service (SES) in their chain of command for concurrence and then forward the document to the DACM for approval/disapproval. Participants may only be reinstated into the program after an approved withdrawal through concurrence from the first GO/SES in the chain of command and the DACM's approval. Reinstated participants will re-enter the program at the same approximate timeline as when they originally withdrew.

f. LEAD participants who receive promotions or accept lateral assignments prior to completion of their 12 months in the program will not continue and graduate from the program.

g. Graduation from the LEAD Program is contingent upon successful completion of all requirements identified in this policy.

9. For individual workforce questions about the LEAD Program or administrative assistance with the program, please see the DACM Office website at <https://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/lead/> or contact the LEAD PM.

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10. For general questions about this policy, please contact the Army DACM Office's Policy Mailbox at usarmy.belvoir.usaasc.mbx.dacm-policies@army.mil.

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RONALD R. RICHARDSON, JR.
Director
Acquisition Career Management

**ARMY DIRECTOR, ACQUISITION CAREER MANAGEMENT
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**ENCLOSURE 1
REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS**

1. Acquisition Career Record Brief (ACRB).

a. The Army Acquisition Professional Development System (AAPDS) pulls in the latest version of the applicant's ACRB from the Career Acquisition Personnel and Position Management Information System (CAPPMIS) automatically into their application. Applicants must ensure their ACRB is correct and up to date before they submit their application. Applicants may update and correct specific fields of their ACRB using the edit functions within CAPPMIS, which is located at Career Acquisition Management Portal (CAMP) at <https://apps.asc.army.mil/camp/>.

b. For the areas within the ACRB that cannot be changed by the applicant, please request assistance from the DACM Office's Acquisition Career Managers using the CAMP Help Request web link at <https://apps.asc.army.mil/camp/>.

c. Applicants should pay particular attention to Sections VI (Acquisition/Leader Training), VII (Education), and IX (Assignment History) of their ACRB, ensuring that the information is accurate. Section VI should only reflect top-level, relevant training completed. The Army DACM Office does not recommend including any Warfighting Acquisition University (WAU) continuous learning modules or annual Army required training in this section.

2. Resume.

a. Applicants must upload their resume using the prescribed format found on the LEAD Program webpage, located within the USAASC, DACM Office website (<https://asc.army.mil/>). Resumes will not exceed three pages and must be submitted in a .pdf format.

b. Resumes provide the applicant with the opportunity to highlight their significant educational achievements, work experience, skills, and accomplishments, which are key indicators to their success as an AAW professional. Applicants should also highlight their qualities and strengths, instead of simply listing their duties and responsibilities. They should ensure the descriptions and dates of their work experience match the information in their ACRB.

3. **Statement of Interest.** In a maximum of 4,000 characters, applicants must describe their reasons for applying to the LEAD Program and the benefits the Army will gain by their program participation and post-utilization. They should clearly articulate their professional goals, desired career path and how the LEAD Program will help them to achieve these goals. Applicants will be evaluated on the content of their statement of interest, as well as their grammatical accuracy and effective communication.

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4. **Senior Rater Potential Evaluation (SRPE)**. The SRPE is a critical piece of the application. In accordance with reference 1.b, the applicant's Senior Rater (SR) is the rater of the employee's rater. The SR must be a supervisor and senior in both grade and organizational position to the rated employee. The SRPE must have an ending date ("thru" date) within no later than one year of the closing date of the LEAD Program announcement. Failure to have a completed/finalized SRPE in CAPPMS at the time of announcement closing, will result in the applicant being declared ineligible and their application will not be submitted to the board for consideration.

5. **Command Endorsement Memorandum**. The Command Endorsement memorandum must be prepared and signed by the first General Officer or Senior Executive Service member within the applicant's chain of command. Once signed, the memorandum must be scanned and uploaded into AAPDS. See Enclosure 2 for a sample Command Endorsement memorandum.

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**ENCLOSURE 2
SAMPLE COMMAND ENDORSEMENT MEMORANDUM**

MEMORANDUM FOR Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM), 9900 Belvoir Road, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060

SUBJECT: Army Leadership Excellence and Acquisition Development (LEAD) Program Command Endorsement for INSERT APPLICANT'S NAME

1. This paragraph should first address who you are endorsing, the number of people you are endorsing from your command, and where this individual falls within that number. Make your strong argument up front.
2. This paragraph should address why the command is endorsing the individual and why for this specific program. Avoid making this endorsement generic. Each endorsement should be personalized and geared specifically for that individual and that specific program. Avoid focusing on an individual's resume and achievements – instead focus on their potential and how this program will benefit the individual and the Army.

FULL NAME
RANK (GO/SES) and POSITION
INSERT COMMAND