

# Command Inspector General Quarterly Newsletter

For the Soldiers, Airmen, and Civilians of the Virginia National Guard 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter – November 2022



**MISSION:** Serve as an extension of the eyes, ears, voice, and conscience of the commander, and to determine for the commander the state of economy, efficiency, discipline, morale, esprit de corps, and readiness throughout the Virginia National Guard.

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## Religious Accommodation requests related to uniform and grooming

\*References:  
AR 600-20 Appendix P, AR 670-1, AFPD  
52-2, AFI 36-2903

For the VARNG, the first general officer in the chain of command, and above may approve, disapprove, or elevate religious accommodation requests for beards, hijabs, and turbans worn in accordance with the standards provided in AR 670-1. Requests must be approved or forwarded to the DCS, G-1 with a recommendation for disapproval within 60 calendar days of initial submission. Requestors must continue to comply with AR 670-1 standard for non-accommodated Soldiers while the request is pending.

For the VAANG, the Wing Commander is the approval authority for hijabs; beards; indoor/outdoor head coverings; turban or under-turban/patka worn with unshorn beard and with unshorn hair. Religious apparel must be neat and conservative (defined as, discreet, tidy, and not dissonant or showy in style, size, design, brightness, or color). Final review will take place within 30 days for cases arising within the U.S. and within 60 days for all other cases, with strict limitations on exception for exigent circumstances. Until approval of their requests, Airmen will continue to comply with directives, instructions, and lawful orders.

## Suspension of Favorable Actions – Commander’s Investigations (Army)

References:  
AR 600-8-2

During the conduct of an AR 15-6 investigation, commanders must ensure that all the subject(s) and / or suspect(s) are flagged utilizing Flag Code L “Commander’s investigation” IAW AR 600-8-2 Flag Code L is a non-transferrable flag. AR 600-8-2 defines subjects as: “A person involved in an incident or event under investigation in such a way that disciplinary action may follow, the person’s rights or privileges may be adversely affected, or the person’s reputation or professional standing may be jeopardized.” Subjects and suspects are differentiated as follows: the subject of an investigation may not be suspected of violating a criminal law, but rather failure to comply with a duty, obligation, regulation, or other requirement that could result in adverse action. A suspect is a person about whom some credible information exists to believe that the person committed a particular criminal offense. Ultimately, commanders can remove a flag if: the investigation results in no adverse findings against the Soldier, the Soldier is flagged for pending court-martial or nonjudicial or administrative disciplinary action resulting from the adverse findings of the commander’s investigation and the commander decides to take no action against the Soldier.

## Guidance on Personal Social Media Use

DOD References:  
DODI 5400.17 , Section 2635.702 of Title 5, CFR

On 12 August 2022, the Secretary of Defense released DODI 5400.17, establishing the first department-wide social media policy. In addition to outlining guidance on official social media accounts, this policy also provides guidance on personal social media use by DOD personnel. While personnel are authorized to have personal social media accounts, they must adhere to the following rules:

### Maintain a clear distinction between personal and official accounts

- When initially activating an account, personnel should use personal contact information (email/telephone).
- All personal social media accounts must be clearly identified as personal.
- Accounts must avoid use of DOD titles, insignia, uniforms, or symbols that imply DOD sanction or endorsement.
- Personnel are encouraged to include a disclaimer, such as, “views and opinions expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily represent views of DOD or its Components.”
- Personnel can forward, like, or link to official information, provided it does not imply DOD endorsement.

### Do not disclose non-public information

- Personnel are prohibited from disclosing non-public information to further private interests or others’ private interests.
- Personnel must adhere to operations security and unit-level directives (also while deployed).

### Do not conduct official business on personal social media accounts

- Personnel can not use personal accounts to conduct official DOD communications.
- Personnel cannot use personal social media accounts so friends, followers, or private contacts can gain access to DOD programs or seek action from DOD officials.

### Do not accept compensation for any activity relating to one’s status as a DOD Civilian Employee or Service member

- Personnel cannot use their official position or public office for personal financial gain, or the endorsement of any product, service, or enterprise. Use of one’s official position includes use of official titles, photos displaying a connection to one’s DOD status (photo in uniform/wear of lapel pin or lanyard).
- Personnel cannot use their official position for the private gain of friends, relatives, or persons.

### Do not engage in prohibited political activity, as defined in applicable law and regulation

- Personnel cannot engage in political activity on their personal social media while in the Federal workplace or while on-duty (telework included).
- Political activity is defined as an activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political party, or partisan political group.

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