

# On Course



## NAVY PERSONNEL COMMAND Bureau of Naval Personnel

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### It's not too late to register, vote absentee or in person

By JO1 Teresa J. Frith,  
NAVPERSCOM Communications Office

Voting is one of our most important privileges and should be taken very seriously by all Americans. With the November 2 general election almost upon us, the Navy has made voting a high priority and encourages all Sailors to register and vote.

Secretary of the Navy Gordon R. England said in a recent message to the Fleet, "I encourage all eligible Sailors, Marines and their family members to vote." He added that Sailors should "register early" and "be assured that your vote counts." [\(To read the Secretary's full message, click here\).](#)

September 3-10 is Armed Forces Voter Week and is the last big push to get all Sailors registered to vote in their home states and/or to order an absentee voter ballot using the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). It is recommended that voters send this form in at least 45 days prior to an election, but the earlier you mail it in the better, so that the ballot gets to you quickly, and you can mail it back in time to be counted.

You can find an online version of the FPCA at <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/onlinefpc.html>. The form

must be filled out according to the rules and regulations of your state home of record. Some states allow you to fax in the form to expedite the ordering of your absentee ballot, but you still must mail in the hard copy so that they will have a copy of your signature on file. The website also offers a link to the rules and regulations unique to each state or U.S. territory.

Under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, any Sailor or their family member can vote absentee through their home state of record, even if you are not stationed there. While it is not necessary to live in the state that you are voting in, you must be a resident of that state.

While a military member can choose to vote absentee in their current state of residency, they can also decide to register to vote in whatever state they are stationed in. However, the decision you make on where to register to vote does affect your permanent state of residency.

"Sailors can by virtue of their PCS orders choose to vote in whatever state they are stationed in," explained

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### News You Can Use

**CNO to NNOA: 21st Century Human CapitALL System needed now**

**NKO transitions, updates to Phase II**

**Group backs tying pay to performance**

**Navy to convert some medical billets**

**DoD approves Army plan to reach out to Sailors, Airmen**

**Virtual counseling makes education opportunities easier for Sailors, Marines**

**Navy establishes Diversity Directorate**

**House panel approves legislation on bonuses, travel time compensation**

**Sailors waiting for new combat uniforms**

### Recent NAVADMINS

**186/04** Our Right to Vote

**185/04** Joint Specialty Officer Designation

**177/04** Significant Changes to Navy Awards Processing

**176/04** FY-05 National Security Management Program

**175/04** FY-06 Olmstead Scholarship Program

**168/04** Navy Uniform Update

**165/04** Critical Housing Area Update

**161/04** Armed Forces Classification Test Update

**154/04** Annual Recertification of Special Duty Pay

**152/04** Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery

## **BUPERS website to get new look, more user-friendly navigation**

by JOI Teresa J. Frith  
NAVPERSCOM Communications Office

Beginning in late September, visitors to the Bureau of Naval Personnel (BUPERS) website will see a new, graphically-pleasing design with a user-friendly navigation system that makes it easier for users to find the information they need.

For the past several months, the website has been undergoing a major restructuring and consolidation process designed to ensure the most accurate, current and useful information will be available to Sailors, civilians and their families.

"We have been going through over 19,000 web pages to make sure the new website contains only the most accurate, up-to-date information on the topics that our customers need to keep them informed on the latest policies, regulations and other important items," said Brigette Decent, Navy Personnel Command Web Content Manager for the project.

Visitors to the new homepage will be able to choose from seven main categories: boards, officers, enlisted, support and services, about us, career information,

and a reference library. The first five will be accessible by either clicking on a photo above the category title, or by clicking on it via a list of the categories above the photos. Clicking on the appropriate title on the same list will take a user to the other two categories. All seven have clickable drop-down menus that list additional information pertaining to that subject. ([Click here for preview](#))

The website will also feature two entirely new options not available on the old site: a login feature to gain entry into protected material and a Google-powered search engine. The login feature will give authorized users permission to get into places such as the local BUPERS intranet, or other protected areas. The new search engine will search the entire website for wanted items and make it faster and easier to find them if they are available.

Another new feature will be a choice between a low band and a high-speed version of the website. The low band is for customers without access to a high-speed connection such as DSL or cable who must use a dial-up access. It will

also make the site more accessible to Navy ships while they are deployed.

According to Decent, the transition will be mostly seamless to users. "In the beginning the users will continue to click on the same, familiar links they have used in the past," she said. "If the information has been converted to the new version of the website, the user will automatically be sent to it. Otherwise, the current version of that link will open as usual."

The entire website is expected to be transitioned into the new version by late January. Between now and then, all the current material will gradually migrate from the old style pages to the new ones, with the exception of anything found to be out-dated or otherwise incorrect. The website will also be fully compatible with all government accessibility requirements, as well as all Navy and Department of Defense regulations.

"We are very excited about the new website," said Decent. "We are endeavoring to make it the best, most accurate and useful site that will be something everyone will want to use."

## **Enlisted and Officer Community Managers move to Millington**

by JOI Teresa J. Frith  
NAVPERSCOM Communications Office

As of September 1, the Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP) Enlisted and Officer Community Managers (ECMs and OCMs) now call Millington, Tenn. home. Many of the ECMs and OCMs, formerly located in Washington, D.C., relocated, enabling more efficient and effective Human Capital management.

Besides a physical move, the two groups are now under a different department. Previously under CNP N13, the Assistant Chief of Naval Personnel for Military Personnel Plans and Policy, they now report to PERS-4, Assistant Chief of Naval Personnel for Distribution, in Millington. The move is due to a realignment meant to place the ECMs and OCMs in one location for consistency. Proximity to the officer and enlisted detailers will also be beneficial to both.

"The move was made to align both distribution and community management

under the Career Management pillar," said CAPT Nancy Dillard, OCM for the Information Professional Community. "This will increase efficiency and consistency and improve interaction between detailers and community managers."

The jobs of both require them to work closely with the detailers, which benefits all Sailors at sea and ashore. An OCM develops end-strength, accession, and promotion plans, and works to ensure their respective community has the right force to fill needed requirements.

The ECM's primary role is to be the "Community's Advocate" as compared to the detailer, who is the "Sailor's Advocate." This balance is necessary in order to ensure the respective community's "health." That is achieved through accession planning, inventory management which includes developing advancement quotas, monitoring retirements/reenlistments, determining career paths and separations, sea/shore rotation, as well

as managing incentives programs (Selective Reenlistment Bonus, Special Duty Assignment Pay, Enlistment Bonus, etc). Additionally, the Quota Management Office (QMO) is moving west with the ECMs and will fall under the PERS 4011 Shop. They are responsible for "A" and "C" School quotas which result in training the Navy of the future.

"Moving the ECMs and QMO to Millington is the right thing to do and has been a long time coming," said CDR Tom Trotto, Prospective Head, Enlisted Community Manager. "It will benefit not only the Sailors in a customer service sense but is also a wise business decision, as we've reduced the manpower footprint required to get the job done."

New phone directories for the offices will be published in the Sep-Dec *LINK-Perspective*. The ECM and OCM offices are now located in the Whitten Building, building 791, along with the enlisted and officer detailers.

## FFSC Marks 25th Anniversary With Record Numbers

### From Navy Personnel Command Communications Office

MILLINGTON, Tenn. (NNS) — Usage of Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) services is at an all-time high, as the center marked its 25-year anniversary of serving Sailors and their families in July.

Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) utilization figures in 2003 show more than 4.3 million service contacts at the 55 FFSCs worldwide – a 16.8 percent increase over the previous year and a two-year increase of 35.7 percent. Navy Personnel Command officials attribute the increased usage to the impact of the war on terrorism on Navy families and to changes in service delivery at the centers.

“We are noticing a lot more folks soliciting information from us to deal with extended absence on the home front,” said Capt. Mary Ann Margosian, director of Navy Personnel Command’s Fleet and Family Support Division. “We also have a lot of family members taking care of military children on their own. We’ve reached out to those families and the schools to talk about what deployment means.”

Though the usage of the center’s various programs is on the rise, the center has enhanced delivery of services. FFSC dispatched teams to conduct 75 Return & Reunion events at sea during a two-month period alone last year, and added online features, such as the Department of Defense’s new Navy OneSource information and referral system at [www.navyonesource.com](http://www.navyonesource.com).

Margosian also credits the center staff for ramping up outreach efforts to Sailors and their families from base to base, and responding to their needs. Utilization of the center’s Spouse Employment Assistance Program and New Parent Support Program, for example, is up 68.5 percent and 69 percent, respectively, over the past two years.

“FFSCs continue to evolve. I’ve said that from year one, and here we are

coming up on 25,” said Anita Keegan, on staff when the first FFSC opened its doors in Norfolk, Va., July 16, 1979, and still on staff as administrative services coordinator for the Norfolk FFSC. “I still enjoy hearing, ‘I had no idea you did that.’”

The first two centers opened 25 years ago in Norfolk and San Diego, providing the sort of one-stop services shop recommended by the landmark Navywide Family Awareness Conference in November 1978. Norfolk FFSC offered information and referral, counseling and a 24-hour hotline staffed by trained senior petty officers and Marine sergeants. They cited 6,000 information and referral inquiries and 556 social work cases opened in its first year of operation.

Today, the center offers 67 delivery sites worldwide and 14 core programs for single and married Sailors alike, including services that help them balance their budgets (Personal Financial Management), move to a new base (Relocation Assistance Program) and make the transition to civilian life (Transition Assistance Management Program). There are now five centers in Hampton Roads alone – not including a satellite office at the Newport News, Va., shipyard – and they collectively cited nearly one million service contacts in 2003.

“The military is a very arduous lifestyle - that cannot be denied,” explained Margosian. “We ask a lot of our Sailors, and we offer them something in return. When they have problems or need resources to enhance their careers or family life, we have an avenue for them.”

Margosian acknowledged that there are still many Sailors who have never been inside an FFSC – especially singles who may not be aware of the career-enhancing resources and self-help classes available at the FFSC. On the 25th anniversary of the program, she invites them to check out the center and see how far their benefits go.

“Many folks don’t get information about the FFSC until it’s too late or until

it’s time to take a TAP [Transition Assistance Program] class,” Margosian said. “Even if you don’t have a family, go in there. Know what tools are in your toolbox.”

The center provides operational, mobility and counseling support to service members and their families, helping them adapt to Navy life. Center services are a benefit, free to all service members, single or married, including activated Reservists, retirees and Department of Defense civilians in overseas locations.

For more information about the FFSC or to locate the nearest Center, visit FFSC on the Web at [www.persnet.navy.mil/pers66](http://www.persnet.navy.mil/pers66), or e-mail FFSC headquarters at [mill\\_ffsp@navy.mil](mailto:mill_ffsp@navy.mil).

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## ... Voting

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LCDR Mark Lofton, Navy Voting Assistance Program Officer, Navy Personnel Command. “But be careful, as once you choose to vote in a state, that makes it your new home of residency. For example, if your home of residency was previously in California and you are now stationed in Tennessee, you could choose to register and vote in Tennessee, but you would lose your residency in California if you did so.”

Overseas voters can also use the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (SF 186) if they don’t receive their regular state ballot in time. In some circumstances, it can also serve as a last minute back up for a state absentee ballot. Check your state’s rules and regulations for more information or talk to your Voting Assistance Officer (VAO).

Military voters can find a wealth of information and forms at the DoD voting website located at <http://www.fvap.gov>, as well as the Navy voting website at <http://www.bupers.navy.mil/nvap/>. For additional questions, contact your local VAO or LCDR Lofton at (901) 874-4606 or DSN 882-4606.