

(B) the estimated number of officers needed to fill vacancies in those positions during the period in which it is anticipated that officers selected for promotion will be promoted; and

(C) the number of officers in a space force active status authorized by the Secretary of the Air Force to serve both on sustained duty and not on sustained duty in the grade and competitive category under consideration.

(b) PROMOTION TO BRIGADIER GENERAL AND MAJOR GENERAL.—

(1) DETERMINATION OF MAXIMUM NUMBERS.—Before convening a selection board under section 20211 of this title to consider officers for recommendation for promotion to the grade of brigadier general or major general, the Secretary of the Air Force shall determine the maximum number of officers serving in a space force active status on sustained duty, and the maximum number of officers serving in a space force active status not on sustained duty, that the board may recommend for promotion.

(2) DETERMINATIONS.—In order to make the determinations under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall determine—

(A) the number of positions needed to accomplish mission objectives which require officers serving in a space force active status on sustained duty, and in a space force active status not on sustained duty, in the grade to which the board will recommend officers for promotion; and

(B) the estimated number of officers on sustained duty and not on sustained duty needed to fill vacancies in those positions over the 24-month period beginning on the date on which the selection board convenes.

(Added Pub. L. 118–31, div. A, title XVII, §1716(c), Dec. 22, 2023, 137 Stat. 644.)

**§ 20238. Establishment of promotion zones**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Before convening a selection board under section 20211 of this title to consider officers for promotion to any grade above first lieutenant or lieutenant (junior grade), the Secretary of the Air Force shall establish a promotion zone for officers serving in each grade and competitive category to be considered by the board.

(b) DETERMINATION OF NUMBER.—The Secretary of the Air Force shall determine the number of officers in the promotion zone for officers serving in any grade and competitive category from among officers who are eligible for promotion in that grade and competitive category. Such determination shall be made on the basis of an estimate of—

(1) the number of officers needed in that competitive category in the next higher grade in each of the next five years;

(2) the number of officers to be serving in that competitive category in the next higher grade in each of the next five years;

(3) in the case of a promotion zone for officers to be promoted to a grade to which section 523 of this title is applicable, the number of officers authorized for such grade under

such section to be on sustained duty on the last day of each of the next five fiscal years; and

(4) the number of officers that should be placed in that promotion zone in each of the next five years to provide to officers in those years relatively similar opportunity for promotion.

(Added Pub. L. 118–31, div. A, title XVII, §1716(c), Dec. 22, 2023, 137 Stat. 645.)

**§ 20239. Promotions: how made**

(a) PROMOTION LISTS.—

(1) PLACEMENT OF NAMES ON PROMOTION LIST.—When the report of a selection board convened under section 20211 of this title is approved by the President, the Secretary of the Air Force shall place the names of all officers approved for promotion within a competitive category on a single list for that competitive category, to be known as a promotion list, in the order of the seniority of such officers on the Space Force officer list or based on particular merit, as determined by the promotion board, or as modified by the Secretary of the Air Force under section 20217 of this title.

(2) TIME OF ESTABLISHMENT OF PROMOTION LIST.—A promotion list is considered to be established under this section as of the date of the approval of the report of the selection board under paragraph (1).

(b) PROMOTIONS; HOW MADE; ORDER.—

(1) APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY.—Officers on a promotion list shall be promoted by appointment in the manner specified in section 20201 of this title.

(2) TIMING.—Officers on a promotion list for a competitive category shall be promoted to the next higher grade in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Air Force.

(3) ORDER.—Except as provided in subsections (e) and (f), promotions shall be made in the order in which the names of officers appear on the promotion list and after officers previously selected for promotion in that competitive category have been promoted.

(4) PROMOTIONS TO GRADE OF FIRST LIEUTENANT.—Officers to be promoted to the grade of first lieutenant shall be promoted in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Air Force.

(c) PROMOTION OF FIRST LIEUTENANTS ON AN ALL-FULLY-QUALIFIED OFFICERS LIST.—(1) Except as provided in subsection (f), officers on the Space Force officer list in the grade of first lieutenant who are on an approved all-fully-qualified-officers list shall be promoted to the grade of captain in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Air Force.

(2) An all-fully-qualified-officers list shall be considered to be approved for purposes of paragraph (1) when the list is approved by the President. When so approved, such a list shall be treated in the same manner as a promotion list under this chapter.

(3) The Secretary of the Air Force may make a recommendation to the President for approval of an all-fully-qualified-officers list only when

the Secretary determines that all officers on the list are needed in the next higher grade to accomplish mission objectives.

(4) For purposes of this paragraph, an all-fully-qualified-officers list is a list of all officers on the Space Force officer list in a grade who the Secretary of the Air Force determines—

(A) are fully qualified for promotion to the next higher grade; and

(B) would be eligible for consideration for promotion to the next higher grade by a selection board convened under section 20211 of this title upon the convening of such a board.

(5) If the Secretary of the Air Force determines that one or more officers or former officers were not placed on an all-fully-qualified-list under this subsection because of administrative error, the Secretary may prepare a supplemental all-fully-qualified-officers list containing the names of any such officers for approval in accordance with this subsection.

(d) DATE OF RANK.—

(1) GENERAL RULE.—The date of rank of an officer appointed to a higher grade under this section is determined under section 741(d) of this title.

(2) ADJUSTMENTS.—The date of rank of an officer appointed to a higher grade under this section may be adjusted in the same manner as an adjustment may be made under section 741(d)(4) of this title in the date of rank of an officer appointed to a higher grade under section 624(a) of this title. In any use of the authority under the preceding sentence, section 741(d)(4)(C)(ii) of this title shall be applied by substituting “Space Force officer list” for “active-duty list”.

(3) ADDITIONAL PAY AND ALLOWANCES PRECLUDED.—Except as provided in paragraph (2) or as otherwise specifically authorized by law, an officer is not entitled to additional pay or allowances if the effective date of the officer’s promotion is adjusted to reflect a date earlier than the actual date of the officer’s promotion.

(e) DELAY OF PROMOTIONS TO GENERAL OFFICER GRADES TO COMPLY WITH STRENGTH LIMITATIONS.—Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Defense, the promotion of an officer on the Space Force officer list to the grade of brigadier general or major general shall be delayed if that promotion would cause any strength limitation of section 526 of this title to be exceeded. The delay shall expire when the Secretary of the Air Force determines that the delay is no longer required to ensure compliance with the strength limitation.

(f) AUTHORITY TO DELAY APPOINTMENTS FOR SPECIFIED REASONS.—The provisions of section 14311 of this title shall apply to the appointment of an officer under this section in the same manner as they apply to an appointment of an officer under that section, and any reference in that section to an reserve active-status list shall be treated for purposes of applicability to an officer of the Space Force as referring to the Space Force officer list.

(Added Pub. L. 118–31, div. A, title XVII, §1716(c), Dec. 22, 2023, 137 Stat. 645; amended Pub. L. 118–159, div. A, title V, §521(s), Dec. 23, 2024, 138 Stat. 1882.)

## Editorial Notes

### AMENDMENTS

2024—Subsec. (c)(2). Pub. L. 118–159, §521(s)(1), substituted “paragraph (1)” for “subparagraph (A)”.

Subsec. (d)(2). Pub. L. 118–159, §521(s)(2), substituted “section 741(d)(4)(C)(ii) of this title” for “subparagraph (C)(ii) of such section”.

### § 20240. Acceptance of promotions; oath of office

(a) ACCEPTANCE.—An officer who is appointed to a higher grade under section 20239 of this title is considered to have accepted the appointment on the date on which the appointment is made unless the officer expressly declines the appointment.

(b) OATH.—An officer who has served continuously since taking the oath of office prescribed in section 3331 of title 5 is not required to take a new oath upon appointment to a higher grade under section 20239 of this title.

(Added Pub. L. 118–31, div. A, title XVII, §1716(c), Dec. 22, 2023, 137 Stat. 647.)

### § 20241. Removal of officers from a list of officers recommended for promotion

(a) REMOVAL BY PRESIDENT.—The President may remove the name of any officer from a promotion list at any time before the date on which the officer is promoted.

(b) REMOVAL FOR WITHHOLDING OF SENATE ADVICE AND CONSENT.—If the Senate does not give its advice and consent to the appointment to the next higher grade of an officer whose name is on a list of officers approved by the President for promotion (except in the case of promotions to a grade to which appointments may be made by the President alone), the name of that officer shall be removed from the list.

(c) REMOVAL AFTER 18 MONTHS.—(1) If an officer whose name is on a list of officers approved for promotion under section 20238(a) of this title to a grade for which appointment is required by section 20201(a) of this title to be made by and with the advice and consent of the Senate is not appointed to that grade under such section during the officer’s promotion eligibility period, the officer’s name shall be removed from the list unless as of the end of such period the Senate has given its advice and consent to the appointment.

(2) Before the end of the promotion eligibility period with respect to an officer under paragraph (1), the President may extend that period for purposes of paragraph (1) by an additional 12 months.

(3) In this subsection, the term “promotion eligibility period” means, with respect to an officer whose name is on a list of officers approved for promotion under section 20238(a) of this title to a grade for which appointment is required by section 20201(a) of this title to be made by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, the period beginning on the date on which the list is so approved and ending on the first day of the eighteenth month following the month during which the list is so approved.

(d) ADMINISTRATIVE REMOVAL.—Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Air Force, if an officer on the Space Force officer list is discharged or dropped from the rolls or