



@USNPEOPLE WEEKLY WIRE

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Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

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or find it online at www.navy.mil/cnp

1.) SAAPM 2016 – Eliminate Sexual Assault: Know Your Part, Do Your Part / 31 MARCH 16 [LINK](#)

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April 1 marks the start of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month. This week, we interviewed the Director of the 21st Century Sailor Office, and the Navy's SAPR Officer on the importance of Sailors turning knowledge into action during this awareness month. Rear Adm. Ann Burkhardt addressed the importance of looking out for our shipmates through intervention, speaking up when they see something's wrong, and using the resources across the fleet to stop sexual assault.

MC2 Burluson: Welcome. It's the beginning of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month, and joining me today is the Director of the 21 Century Sailor Office, and the Navy's SAPR Officer, Rear Admiral Burkhardt.

Rear Adm. Burkhardt: It's great to be here.

MC2 Burluson: Ma'am, so what do you want Sailors to know?

Rear Adm. Burkhardt: Well this is April; it's Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month, and the theme this year is "Eliminate Sexual Assault: Know Your Part and Do Your Part." What I want Sailors to know is what is sexual assault, what are ways to prevent it, and how they can participate in those prevention efforts. And if prevention fails, Sailors need to know how to report it.

MC2 Burluson: So ma'am with that knowledge, what do you want Sailors to actually do?

Rear Adm. Burkhardt: It is about knowledge and action. It's about awareness and then the prevention. So what I want Sailors to do is to be part of a team of professionals at a command that builds that command climate. Part of that is to not tolerate sexist behaviors, not tolerate sexual harassment, or sexual assault or hazing. It's also not to tolerate the misuse of alcohol. I really want Sailors to know that offenders victimize individuals under the influence of alcohol, so it's important to understand this approach and then be part of the intervention to prevent this from happening. That will go a long way in our efforts.

MC2 Burluson: As you know, SAAPM is only one month. How do we continue to move forward throughout the year?

Rear Adm. Burkhardt: Right, that's important. It is the knowledge and actions, awareness and prevention. It's really that every Sailor understands how to take that knowledge, and take those actions to be part of every Sailor, every day. Making a difference in our Navy to join as a collective team to eliminate sexual assault. It really is to know your part, and then do your part.

MC2 Burluson: Well Ma'am, thank you for joining us today, and thank you all for watching. Be sure to checkout the SAAPM toolkit at sapr.navy.mil to help you plan for SAAPM at your command.

2.) The Navy Just Approved the Military's Best Tattoo Rules / 31 MARCH 16

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The Navy is easing its tattoo policy in a bid to recruit and retain more sailors from the millennial generation, of whom more than 1 in 3 sport body art.

Sailors will be allowed to have neck tattoos, sleeves and even markings behind their ears under the new policy, the most lenient of any military service. Only their heads are off limits under the new policy, which the Navy's top sailor has called a reality check on the permanent art favored by sailors.

"We just got to the point where we realized we needed to be honest with ourselves and put something in place that was going to reflect the realities of our country and the needs of our Navy," Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (AW/NAC) Mike Stevens said in a March 30 interview. "We need to make sure that we're not missing any opportunities to recruit and retain the best and the brightest because of our policies."

The new rules, announced Thursday and taking effect April 30, will allow sailors to:

- Have multiple or large tattoos below the elbow or knee, including the wrists and hands, effectively allowing sleeve tattoos that can be seen even while wearing short sleeve uniforms.
- Have one tattoo on their neck, which includes behind the ear, and it may not exceed 1 inch in length or height in either or both directions.
- Sailors with visible tattoos will now be eligible for recruiting duty or leading recruits at boot camp in Great Lakes, Illinois. These tough assignments often give sailors a leg up to make rank.

The rules do not change the Navy's content guidelines that apply to body art "anywhere on the body," the policy says.

What do you think of the new tattoo rules and what other changes would you like to see to for permitted piercings, tattoos, and branding? Tell us at Navylet@navytimes.com.

The service reiterated these in the updated policy, banning "tattoos that are obscene, sexually explicit, and or advocate discrimination based on sex, race, religion, ethnicity, or national origin."

"In addition, tattoos that symbolize affiliation with gangs, supremacist or extremist groups, or advocate illegal drug use are prohibited — waivers will not be given for tattoos with prohibited content," the service said.

The updated tattoo policy does not apply to Marines, even ones serving at Navy commands, according to a spokesman for Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. Robert Neller. The Marines are easing their tattoo rules but do not allow sleeves, which would be visible with short-sleeved uniforms like PT uniforms.

In 2015, the Army updated its rules to allow sleeve tattoos, but it does not permit soldiers to have ink on their necks or hands, which would be visible in the Army Service Uniform.

Sailors tattoos must be documented in the administrative remarks section of their service record
Sailors found to have tattoos with prohibited content could face disciplinary action and even involuntary discharge. It's left up to commanding officers to decide what crosses the line. Typically, sailors are allowed to have tattoos removed or modified to eliminate any banned content before they are disciplined.

Beyond what's stated in the policy, don't expect a laundry list of do's and don'ts.

"There are just so many variables when you look at tattoo language and tattoo art that it's just not reasonable to try and identify a set list of what is and what isn't acceptable," Stevens said. "This is one of those areas where we trust this senior leadership, our triads, to be able to look at something in its context, using the chain of command and having discussions amongst themselves as to whether something is appropriate or not." Stevens said the changes came from sailors' feedback, with many complaining that their body art unfairly barred them from jobs like recruit division commanders that can help them get advanced.

Stevens said he believes that society is more accepting of tattoos, with some estimates that as much as nearly half of the demographic the military recruits from has tattoos.

"This isn't official, but in my research, I saw estimates that the percentage of people with tattoos in the 18 to 25 age group as being between 37 and 40 percent," he said. That's not an insignificant number."

That age group encompasses the majority of sailors in the fleet, Stevens said, and made the Navy's leadership realize a policy change was needed from the tougher rules enacted 13 years ago.

"It's a tough recruiting environment out there already and when you start putting up barriers that don't have any true rationale behind them, you create problems for yourself into the future," he said. "We've met [recruiting] goal for 105 straight months and our recruiting is strong, but you never want to get behind."

MCPON, who is wrapping up a 33-year career that is longer than most millennials' lives, would "neither confirm nor deny" when asked whether he has any tattoos.

3.) Fertility Benefit Coming to Active-Duty Personnel Oct. 1 / 30 MARCH 16 [\[LINK\]](#)

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Active-duty military personnel will be able to freeze their eggs or sperm under a fertility pilot program beginning Oct. 1, a senior defense official said earlier this month.

Brad Carson, an adviser to the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, said in a press release that Tricare will cover the services as part of under the Pentagon's Force of the Future initiative.

Gamete freezing is one of several family-planning benefits included in the initiative, an effort to realign military benefits to attract and retain troops. Force of the Future also includes plans to increase the number of rooms available for breast-feeding on DoD installations and keep military child-care centers open for at least 14 hours.

DoD already has extended maternity leave for personnel under the program.

"We hope that we can at least start the implementation of most of these reforms over just the next few months," Carson said. "So, for example, maternity leave will be almost immediate. Egg freezing will be on Oct. 1. ... It may take a few months or even a couple of years to fully implement, but we can start immediately and get the ball rolling."

According to a Defense Health Agency official, the demonstration would cover all costs associated with oocyte or sperm retrieval, cryopreservation and storage and handling for the duration of the demonstration, as long as the service member remains on active duty.

The project will not cover future thawing, in vitro fertilization or implantation and will only be available to active-duty personnel, DHA spokesman Kevin Dwyer said.

Defense Secretary Ashton Carter said in January the program will give troops who deploy "peace of mind," while providing "greater flexibility" for service members to decide when they want to start a family.

“For women who are midgrade officers and enlisted personnel, this benefit will demonstrate that we understand the demands upon them and want to help them balance commitments to force and family. We want to retain them in the military,” Carter said.

Most military personnel are in their prime child-bearing years: Nearly half of all enlisted personnel are under age 26, with the next largest group, 22 percent, being ages 26 to 30. More than 42 percent of officers are between the ages of 26 and 35, according to Defense Department data.

Women made up 15 percent of the active-duty force of 1.3 million in 2014.

Defense officials say the program would improve retention of women because so many female troops leave in their 20s and 30s to start families. The benefit would allow women to put off having a baby during the early years of a military career, when they are most likely to deploy or have less flexibility in their jobs or work schedule.

In addition, more than 1,300 veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan suffered injuries to their groin regions and genitalia that would require advanced reproductive surgeries to restore fertility.

This program would allow troops to freeze their sperm or eggs before a deployment, increasing their chances of having children if they suffer a pelvic injury in training or combat.

DHA will publish more information on the pilot program in the coming months. DHA spokesman Kevin Dwyer said the agency also is working on an estimate to determine the demonstration project's cost.

4.) Navy's Top Enlisted Leader Wraps up Controversial Job Title Review / 30 MARCH 16

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A week after announcing his retirement, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (AW/NAC) Mike Stevens hit the road again.

He says it's not his last ride as MCPON — not even close.

"It's important to start well, but it's also important to finish strong," Stevens said. "So whether I've got four years or five months left in the Navy, I owe our sailors and our Navy my very best, so I'm not going to slow down — I'm going to keep pushing right to the very end because they deserve that."

Stevens spoke to Navy Times on March 25 from the road between Jacksonville, Florida, and Cape Canaveral, where he was visiting the Naval Ordnance Test Unit.

It's all part of what he's calling his East Coast fleet engagement swing of 16 commands spread over 11 days and more than 2,000 miles, from Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, Virginia, to Naval Air Station Key West, Florida.

He aims to meet with thousands of rank-and-file sailors and hundreds of enlisted leaders.

One topic that's come up: the review he's leading that could strip the word "man" from rating titles, like corpsman, one of the 21 titles under scrutiny. This highly controversial topic came up at Camp Lejeune and Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point.

"They wanted to know how we were approaching it," he said. "I told them that I asked [the chief of naval operations] for the opportunity to lead this working group because I believe leaders don't run away from challenges."

"I tell them that what this boils down to is aligning their job titles with the work that they do — align it with industry while preserving as much history and tradition as possible," he said. "And oh, by the way, we'll look for the opportunity to replace the word 'man' with something else where it makes sense."

Many ratings titles have come and gone since the Navy's founding in 1775 and even since World War II, as technology has changed sailors jobs.

"Once they have some context and something to compare it to, they realize that maybe it's not something they need to get too worked up about," Stevens said.

Stevens says the review is nearly over and that he plans to brief it to the Vice Adm. Bill Moran, the chief of naval personnel, in coming days. Navy Secretary Ray Mabus ordered the review in January, which could dump age-old titles like seaman, fireman and hospital corpsman.

The fireworks from the gender-neutral review aside, Stevens said he's hearing less complaints lately about family problems and pay that have often led the list of sailor gripes.

That's not to say they don't have anxieties about their benefits, such as the new retirement plan. MCPON said they want information about whether they should opt into the new plan.

"I share with them that's written in the law that we are supposed to put together comprehensive training for all service members to help them make the right decisions for themselves and their families," he said.

Stevens said the only way to measure sailors' feeling on the deckplates is to get out and visit them.

"When I was Adm. [John C.] Harvey's fleet master chief, he used to always say that the only way to really and truly build trust with your people is to have face to face contact — to look them in the eye and have a conversation with them," Stevens said.

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