



February 21, 2025

Mr. Charles Ezell
Acting Director
Office of Personnel Management 1900 E St, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20415

Dear Mr. Ezell,

The National Military Family Association (NMFA) is deeply concerned about the impact that ongoing widespread terminations of probationary federal workers will have on America's military families.

Military spouses seek federal employment as a steady career choice that fits well with military life because of the portability, wide range of opportunities, and hiring preference for military spouses in federal jobs. Newly transitioned veterans making the adjustment to civilian life after years of military service seek federal employment as a way to continue their service to our country with an employer that values their skills and sacrifice.

Defense Secretary Hegseth has declared that his leadership at the Department of Defense will mark a return to lethality, readiness, and warfighting. A service member cannot focus on lethality when they're worried about making ends meet. Laying off military-connected federal employees rolls back the progress that multiple Administrations, including the Trump administration, have made for the financial security of our military community.

Like their civilian counterparts, military families depend on two incomes to get by, but military spouses face unemployment rates five times the national average—due to frequent military-mandated moves, deployments, and the unpredictable nature of military life. For decades, the federal government has positioned itself as the employer of choice for military spouses, offering them stability in an otherwise volatile career landscape. Under the [President's Implementation of the "Department of Government Efficiency" Workforce Optimization Initiative](#), **military spouses could be disproportionately impacted by these targeted terminations because the military lifestyle frequently places them in probationary status.**

Many of these military spouses are not new hires. They are long-serving federal employees who have moved with the military and obtained new federal jobs at their next location, moved between agencies, or been promoted into a new position — each case making them vulnerable to job loss.

Transitioning veterans, who are also often in a probationary status, are also at risk. For the thousands of veterans transitioning out of uniform and into civilian life with new jobs in the federal workforce, these probationary firings are a threat to their financial security, well-being, and mental health. Veteran suicide is most prevalent in the first year after leaving service. While programs at the VA and across government have made strides toward ending the veteran suicide crisis, it is also true that stable employment – often in the federal government – provides a vital source of stability during this critical time.

We are grateful that President Trump has excluded military spouses from the return-to-work mandate, and we hope that the Administration will ensure that military families can continue to count on his support. To that end, we urge you to take immediate action to protect military spouses and transitioning veterans from these terminations and restore those already affected.

Specifically, we call for:

1. Active-Duty Military Spouses to have:

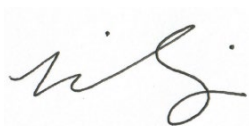
- Categorical exemption from the [Return to Office \(RTO\) policy](#) for military spouses with existing telework or remote work agreements. [Current OPM guidance](#) only protects remote workers, and this must be expanded to include military spouses who previously held telework agreements as well.
- Categorical exemption from termination based on probationary status, as military spouses are frequently placed in perpetual probation due to relocations.
- Immediate reinstatement, with no loss of service time or benefits, for all military spouses who have been terminated from federal employment due to their probationary status.

2. Veterans Within Two Years of Transition from Military Service to have:

- Categorical exemption from termination based on probationary status.
- Immediate reinstatement, with no loss of service time or benefits, for all recently transitioned veterans who have been terminated from federal employment due to their probationary status.

Retaining military spouses and veterans in stable, meaningful employment is a national imperative that strengthens our military families, ensures the warfighter stays mission-focused, and provides critical security and stability to veterans in transition and their families. Their dedication to America is unmatched, and their futures are in your hands. We appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to share what we're hearing from military families and facilitate our joint support for America's warfighters in this process.

Sincerely,



Besa Pinchotti
CEO, National Military Family Association