



# A CALL TO SUPPORT MILITARY RECRUITING

## 2023 CONGRESSIONAL STATE/DISTRICT TOOLKIT

*To commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force and to ensure its future success*



For more information please contact:  
[osd.pentagon.oasd-la.mbx.constituent-inquiries@mail.mil](mailto:osd.pentagon.oasd-la.mbx.constituent-inquiries@mail.mil) or 703-697-6210

Our extraordinary men and women in uniform stand up to defend our democracy and make the world more secure. In return, the U.S. military has a solemn duty to take care of our service members and their families. That includes providing world-class training, competitive compensation and benefits, and the opportunity to make history and serve the country that we love.

This summer marks an important milestone for our armed forces. Fifty years ago, America stopped drafting citizens into service and instituted an All-Volunteer Force. Since ending conscription in the United States, more than 15 million service members have enlisted, and today, more than 2 million serve in uniform. The American patriots who selflessly choose to serve are the foundation of our unparalleled military strength.

In this anniversary year, we are seeking your partnership to reinvigorate a national call to service. To help in those efforts, we have put together this Call to Support Military Recruiting Toolkit.

In this toolkit, you will find samples for an op-ed piece and a public service announcement script, as well as draft social media posts. We have also included suggested talking points and informational resources that can be used to help draft speeches and newsletters. In addition, the toolkit offers ideas for state and district events to meet local military leaders and stakeholders, tour military facilities and recruiting centers, and highlight helpful resources. It also includes information on Congressional Military Service Academy nominations. From commencement speeches to summer holiday celebrations to social media engagements, we hope that you will take each opportunity to increase awareness of military service among America's youth.

The Department of Defense invests in the training, development, and well-being of those who choose to serve, because our people—our Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen, Guardians, and Coast Guardsmen—are our greatest asset. And the strength of our All-Volunteer Force depends on qualified young people stepping up to seize the extraordinary opportunities that military service provides.

We ask your assistance in communicating this vital message with your constituents, because every time a qualified American patriot raises their hand to serve, our nation becomes even safer and stronger.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lloyd J. Austin III".

Lloyd J. Austin III  
Secretary of Defense

A CALL TO ACTION

To join in **supporting** the recruitment campaign to ensure America’s youth are aware of the **value of service** and commemorating the **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force (AVF)**, consider incorporating the following suggestions into events and engagements.

- **Submit** an Opinion/Editorial regarding the ways to serve and the benefits of service
- **Record** a Public Service Announcement on the value of service and/or the AVF Anniversary
- **Initiate** a social media conversation to highlight the benefits of service
- **Host** meetings or roundtables with local military/veteran stakeholders and youth influencers
- **Invite influencers** to tour local military installations and/or recruiting centers
- **Shadow** a military recruiter/leader for a day and amplify the experience on social media
- **Speak** at a local commencement address or with youth about the value of service
- **Review and/or activate** a Congressional **Military Service Academy** nomination process
- **Visit** a **Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS)** and support an enlistment
- **Share** resources like **Today’s Military** content and distribute **FUTURES Magazine**

This toolkit contains templates for your use and various links to more information about the U.S. military. **Collective action now will impact the success of our All-Volunteer Force of the future.** For additional information and opportunities to engage, check <https://www.defense.gov/Spotlights/Value-of-Service/>.

CONTENTS

A Call to Action.....2

Opinion/Editorial Sample .....3

Public Service Announcement .....3

Social Media Sample Posts.....4

Talking Points.....5

State/District Events and Communication Opportunities.....6

Military Service Academy Nominations .....7

Military Entrance Processing Stations (MEPS) .....7

Today’s Military and *FUTURES Magazine* .....8

Our Forces and Ways to Serve.....9

Career Paths: Enlisted, Officers and Civilians ..... 10

Career and Employment Benefits..... 11

## OPINION/EDITORIAL SAMPLE

*Potential Title:* The Importance of an All-Volunteer Force to our Nation

The decision to serve is a personal one, whether it be in public service, national service, or military service. However, I know firsthand the fulfillment that comes from serving others. As a community leader, I want to ensure the next generation has the resources to fully consider the benefits and value of military service and encourage the decision to become part of the All-Volunteer Force legacy.

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force. To remain the most capable force in the world, our U.S. military recruits and retains the best of America. They continue to build pathways of opportunities for all qualified Americans who choose to serve.

The Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Space Force, and Coast Guard form the greatest fighting force ever assembled. Together, they offer a range of service options, in full or part-time capacities, and in more than 250 different occupations including advanced and special skills. Our military provides world-class training and infuses its service members with a sense of purpose which stems from belonging to something bigger than the individual.

The U.S. military provides a competitive salary, leadership opportunities, worldwide travel, tax-free allowances for food and housing, health care benefits, 30 days of annual paid vacation, retirement savings, and a vast amount of education benefits for college and beyond. The military forces also utilize and innovate the most advanced technology in the world. Equally as important, friendships and bonds cultivated with fellow service members will last a lifetime. *[If you have previous military service, this might be a great place to add what service has personally meant to you.]*

For the past 50 years, individuals have stepped forward to serve this great nation in times of peace and war. Through this spirit of selfless service, we built the world's most capable military. Thank you to all our service members, veterans, and their families for their dedication and commitment over the last 50 years.

Our nation is relying on the next generation of volunteers to make a positive impact on the world. Consider joining today by talking to your local recruiter.

This opinion is sponsored by and reflects the views of the Department of Defense.

## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

The decision to serve is a personal one, whether it be in public service, national service, or military service. I know firsthand the fulfillment that comes from serving others. As a community leader, I want to ensure the next generation has the resources to fully consider the benefits and value of military service and encourage the decision to become part of the All-Volunteer Force legacy.

2023 marks the 50th Anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force. Thank you to all our service members, veterans, and their families for their support.

To remain the most capable force in the world, we recruit and retain the best of America. The U.S. military has opportunities and flexibility for all qualified Americans who choose to join. The services offer competitive salaries, opportunities to travel, training, healthcare, and education benefits.

There are six branches of service, with more than 250 different occupations, and you can choose whether you want to commit to either a full or part-time option.

Our nation is relying on the next generation of volunteers. To learn more about great opportunities the U.S. military offers, please contact your local recruiter.

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## SOCIAL MEDIA SAMPLE POSTS

**Inspire others to serve** through digital engagement and conversation. Incorporate pictures and video from personal events or access the [DoD Photos](#) or [Defense Visual Information Distribution Service](#) websites.

- Follow and share **Today's Military** posts on Facebook and Instagram:
  - <https://www.facebook.com/todaysmilitary/>
  - <https://www.instagram.com/todaysmilitary/>
- **If a constituent expresses military interest, advise them to contact a recruiter.**
  - [Today's Military Contact the Services](#)

### 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force (1 July)

- 2023 marks the 50th Anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force. Service members stepped forward to serve both at home and abroad and made a positive impact in the world. #AVF50 #GoArmy #AmericasNavy #MarineCorps #AirForce #SpaceForce #CoastGuard #Veterans #TodaysMilitary
- Through the spirit of selfless service, we have built and maintained the world's most capable military. Share your positive military service story. #AVF50 #GoArmy #AmericasNavy #MarineCorps #AirForce #SpaceForce #CoastGuard #Veterans #TodaysMilitary
- **All those things you want to accomplish...YOU CAN.** Follow your passions and discover your purpose in today's military. Start your journey now – get the information you need to create the future you want at [todaysmilitary.com](#) #WhyWeServe #JoinLocalImpactGlobal #AVF50

### Military Careers & Benefits

- **If you have a calling, we have an answer!** The military is made up of six branches, each with its own specific mission. Together, they offer a variety of ways to serve and more than 250 different occupations. See your future at [todaysmilitary.com](#) #MilitaryCareers #GoArmy #AmericasNavy #MarineCorps #AimHigh #SpaceForce #CoastGuard #TodaysMilitary
- **Learn how the military can benefit you!** Service members are supported with a competitive salary, leadership opportunities, worldwide travel, tax-free allowances for food and housing, health care benefits, 30 days of paid vacation a year, retirement savings, and a wide variety of education benefits for college. Learn more at [todaysmilitary.com](#). #TodaysMilitary #CollegeTuition #WhyWeServe
- **Worried about college expenses?** Did you know the military's Tuition Assistance can cover up to 100% of tuition or expense for courses taken at accredited colleges, universities, junior colleges, or vocational schools? Learn more about educational benefits the military offers at [todaysmilitary.com](#) or speak with a military recruiter. #TodaysMilitary #PayingforCollege #CollegeBound #TuitionAssistance #WhyWeServe
- Take advantage of no-cost resources available to high school students. Access [march2success.com](#) for free online study materials, [asvabprogram.com](#) for the ASVAB Career Exploration Program and consider JROTC. #MilitaryReady #TodaysMilitary #WhyWeServe

## TALKING POINTS

Utilize the following talking points in all written materials or speaking engagements to highlight the **value of service** and commemorate the **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force (AVF)**.

### THE MISSION (WHO)

- The U.S. military's contributions to our nation and global society are broad, with service members involved in humanitarian aid, disaster relief and peacekeeping missions around the world.
- The U.S. military is constantly evolving and adapting to new threats and challenges. It is a dynamic organization committed to continuous improvement and innovation.
- Through a spirit of selfless service, the United States has built and maintained the world's most capable military.

### THE OPPORTUNITIES (WHAT)

- To remain the most capable force in the world, we must recruit and retain the best of America. We must continue to build pathways of opportunities for all qualified individuals who choose to serve.
- The U.S. military represents one of the most educated organizations in the world, across all ranks, and offers once-in-a-lifetime opportunities for funded education, in and out of the military.
- The Department of Defense has more than 250 occupations, with competitive pay and benefits, including housing options, home loans, travel, and health care.
- Service members gain experience in cutting-edge technologies and professional skills that allow them to transfer easily into civilian roles.
- The military provides career advancement and opportunities to achieve personal and professional growth through hands-on, in-field and school training to ensure service members are the most proficient they can be in their roles.

### THE VALUE OF SERVICE, MAKING A DIFFERENCE (WHY)

- It's the opportunity to serve the needs of others, to defend the freedoms we hold dear, and to make a positive impact on the world.
- 2023 marks the 50th Anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force: five decades of individuals stepping forward to serve both at home and abroad, making a positive impact in the world.
- Service is a fundamental aspect of our democracy and a core value that has defined our nation. Volunteerism stabilizes communities, contributing to community cohesion, increasing self-reliance.
- Service provides new perspective and a sense of purpose, the opportunity to think outside the box, take risks, and challenge the status quo.
- The military provides responsibility and the ability for service members to make an impact from a young age, on a level rarely seen in civilian world. Whether it be leading teams of their peers to overseeing millions of dollars of equipment, service members' experiences contribute to something bigger than themselves.

## STATE/DISTRICT EVENTS AND COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES

Support is needed to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force (AVF) and communicate the benefits and value of military service. Suggested events include:

- **Host Events with Constituents.** Host public events with service members, their families, friends, veterans, and local community members. Also invite ROTC, JROTC, and high school students to hear AVF messaging and personal stories of service.
- **Attend Service Days at Sporting Events.** Partner with professional sports teams, minor league sports teams, and high school teams to highlight the AVF.
- **Organize a Day of Service.** Organize a “day of service” around the **1 July** AVF anniversary. Engage constituents and local military leaders to participate in public service activities.
- **Attend Swearing-In Ceremonies.** Schedule a visit with the MEPS and or/attend Oaths of Enlistment. Contact USMEPCOM Public Affairs to schedule a visit. [osd.north-chicago.usmepcom.mbx.public-affairs@army.mil](mailto:osd.north-chicago.usmepcom.mbx.public-affairs@army.mil)
- **Offer Commencement Addresses.** In graduation remarks, highlight benefits and opportunity of military service.
- **Participate in Media Interviews.** Pursue media interviews with popular outlets, including radio/television/print publications, local news stations, or sports and entertainment focused media (health and wellness, fitness, cooking shows, movies, etc.) to share AVF messaging.
- **Commemoration at Holiday Events.** Attend or sponsor Independence Day celebrations in local communities across the United States and through remarks highlight the importance of military service or spotlight local service members/veterans.
- **Host Service Roundtable.** Convene veterans and current service members across different age brackets for a dialogue around service. Include high school students, coaches, local leaders, or other influencers to further amplify.
- **Testimonials.** Members of Congress could share personal testimonials of military/public service, through floor statements, special order hours, or on social media.
- **Partnerships.** Conduct or attend local and regional events in partnership with relevant Military Service Organizations and Veteran Service Organizations. Reach out to [osd.pentagon.oasd-la.mbx.constituent-inquiries@mail.mil](mailto:osd.pentagon.oasd-la.mbx.constituent-inquiries@mail.mil) for partnership assistance.
- **Military Spotlight: “A Day in the Life/In Their Shoes.”** Highlight current service members through traditional media interviews, recognize recruiters, and/or create community outreach with National Guard and Reserve units.
- **Amplify Efforts on Social Media.** Recap and amplify on social media with photos/videos/tags to raise awareness of individuals, value of service, and inspire others to serve.
- **Observances.** November is National Veterans and Military Families Month. For future observances, May is the National Military Appreciation Month and encourages U.S. citizens to observe the month as a symbol of unity. Public Service Recognition Week is celebrated the first week of May (beginning on the first Sunday of the month) to honor the people who serve our nation as federal, state, county, local and tribal government employees.

## MILITARY SERVICE ACADEMY NOMINATIONS

- To be offered an Appointment to the **U.S. Military Academy** (West Point), **U.S. Naval Academy**, or **U.S. Air Force Academy**, an applicant must meet certain eligibility requirements and receive a Nomination.
  - **Congressional** Nominations and Allocations **are governed by law**.
  - **Members of Congress** (and staff) interface directly with the Military Service Academies on Nomination availability and process.
- Each Member of Congress has a maximum number of 5 cadets and midshipmen that can be enrolled at each Military Service Academy at any one time (“slots”).
  - Enrolled cadets and midshipmen are charged against this number, while graduation, transfer, or disenrollment frees up a slot.
  - For each slot, members of Congress may nominate up to 10 applicants, using 1 of 3 methods: ranked in order of preference; principal and unranked alternates; or all unranked applicants.
- Congressional offices manage the apportionment of their own slots and have an application process largely independent of the Military Service Academies’ applications.
- The **U.S. Coast Guard Academy** is another commissioning source but does not require a Nomination.

## MILITARY ENTRANCE PROCESSING STATIONS (MEPS)

- The MEPS is a Joint Service organization that determines an applicant's physical qualifications, aptitude and conduct qualifications as set by each branch of military service. There are MEPS locations all over the country and Puerto Rico.<sup>1</sup>
- Visit a MEPS to connect with applicants who are enlisting into the military. Contact **USMEPCOM Public Affairs** to schedule a visit.
  - [osd.north-chicago.usmepcom.mbx.public-affairs@army.mil](mailto:osd.north-chicago.usmepcom.mbx.public-affairs@army.mil)
- Access the [USMEPCOM website](#) for an interactive map with contact information/addresses.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.todaysmilitary.com/joining-eligibility/enlisting-military>, accessed 24 April 2023

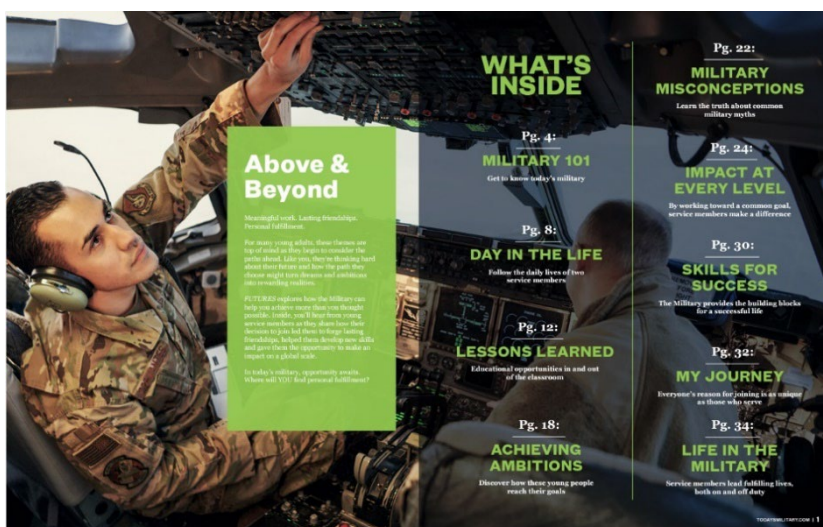


## TODAY'S MILITARY

- **Today's Military** is a website produced by the United States Department of Defense, Joint Advertising Market Research and Studies program. With cooperation from the Service branches, the goal of Today's Military is to provide an accurate picture of what it's like to **work, live and serve** in today's military.
- **Today's Military** is a robust repository of information on military opportunities and benefits and provides many ways to connect with the services for branch-specific information.
  - Life in the Military
  - Ways to Serve
    - Full and Part-Time Options
    - Enlisted and Officer Paths
  - Joining & Eligibility
  - Careers & Benefits
  - Education & Training
  - Information for Parents and Educators
- Refer to the **Today's Military** website when communicating the benefits of service and include the link in **social media posts** related to this initiative as an easy-to-use reference for more information.

## FUTURES MAGAZINE

- **FUTURES** magazine is a DoD annual publication that provides an in-depth look at life in the military. From careers and education benefits to details on how service members spend their downtime, **FUTURES** provides a 360-degree view of military life.
- **Support Military Recruiting** and raise awareness of military life by **ordering and distributing FUTURES magazine throughout your state/district** at high schools, colleges, community centers, public offices, and events attended by young adults 18-35 and personal influencers (parents, coaches, mentors, veterans, etc.).
  - **Download the Current Issue**
  - Order complementary copies by contacting Heather Pope at the Office of People Analytics Public Affairs: [heather.d.pope.civ@mail.mil](mailto:heather.d.pope.civ@mail.mil)



## OUR FORCES

- The military is made up of **six branches**, each with its own specific mission. Together, they offer a variety of ways to serve and more than **250 different occupations**.<sup>2</sup> Access the [U.S. Department of Defense Our Forces](https://www.defense.gov/About/our-forces/) webpage to learn more about each branch.<sup>3</sup>



### Army

The largest and oldest service in the U.S. military, the Army provides the ground forces that protect the United States.



### Marine Corps

A component of the Department of the Navy, the Marine Corps maintains amphibious and ground units for contingency and combat operations.



### Navy

On, above and below the water, the Navy is America's forward-deployed force and is a major deterrent to aggression around the world.



### Air Force

The Air Force provides a rapid, flexible, and lethal air and space capability that can deliver forces anywhere in the world within hours.



### Space Force

The Space Force organizes, trains, and equips space forces in order to protect U.S. and allied interests in space and to provide space capabilities to the joint force.



### Coast Guard

The Coast Guard provides law and maritime safety enforcement, marine and environmental protection and military naval support. Part of the Department of Homeland Security during peacetime, the Coast Guard operates under the Navy during times of war.

## WAYS TO SERVE<sup>4</sup>

The military offers **flexible service commitments**, from Active Duty to the Reserve or National Guard. A common misconception is that there is no work-life balance in the military.

- **Active Duty (Full-Time)**
  - Active Duty service members are full-time members of the military.
- **Reserve (Part-Time)\***
  - Members of the Reserve are part-time service members, allowing them time to pursue a civilian career or college education while simultaneously serving their country.
- **National Guard (Part-Time)\***
  - The National Guard consists of the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard. The Guard's focus is on homeland security and humanitarian relief.

*\*Minimum: One-Weekend-a-Month Military Drill and Two-Weeks-a-Year Military Training*

<sup>2</sup> FUTURES Magazine, 2022, page 4, <https://www.todaysmilitary.com/life-in-the-military/futures-magazine>, accessed 24 April 2023

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.defense.gov/About/our-forces/>, accessed 24 April 2023

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.todaysmilitary.com/ways-to-serve/full-part-time-options>, accessed 24 April 2023

## CAREER PATH: ENLISTED

- **Enlisted** roles require a high school diploma or GED. There are a variety of enlisted careers, most of which involve hands-on training that transfers well to the civilian world.<sup>5</sup>
  - Connecting with a recruiter is the first step to enlist in the military.
- Access [Today's Military Contact the Services](#) page to find phone numbers and links to connect with Recruiters from each branch of service.



## CAREER PATH: OFFICERS

- **Officers** are the managers of the military, acting in roles that include planning, directing operations and making critical decisions. Positions require a college degree or an equivalent.
  - An individual can become an officer by earning a commission through enlisted service, completing Officer Candidate School (OCS), attending one of the highly competitive Military Service Academies or participating in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program.<sup>6</sup>
  - For certain specialized career fields such as medical, legal, and chaplain corps there are direct commissioning options, which can be discussed with an Officer Recruiter.
- Access [Today's Military Becoming an Officer](#) for more information on the pathways to become an officer and contact information for the various programs.

## CAREER PATH: CIVILIANS<sup>7</sup>

- The Department of Defense (DoD) employs **950,000 civilians**, critical to mission readiness of the Total Force. There are a multitude of opportunities requiring a diverse range of skills.
  - Positions offer competitive salary, great benefits, unsurpassed training, and the pride of defending our national interests.
  - Civilians in the DoD play an important role in the defense of our Nation and in supporting our Armed Forces. The Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, and other DoD Agencies have civilian positions in nearly **675 occupations**.
- [USAJOBS](#) connects job seekers with federal employment opportunities across the United States and around the world.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> FUTURES Magazine, 2022, page 5. <https://www.todaysmilitary.com/life-in-the-military/futures-magazine>, accessed on 24 April 2023

<sup>6</sup> FUTURES Magazine, 2022, page 5. <https://www.todaysmilitary.com/life-in-the-military/futures-magazine>, accessed on 24 April 2023

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.dodciviliancareers.com/whyworkfordod>, accessed on 24 April 2023

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.usajobs.gov/>, accessed on 24 April 2023

## CAREER BENEFITS

- Military careers are **multi-dimensional**, offering not only a variety of **diverse career paths** but also depth in specific fields.
- Military Career Opportunity Resources:
  - **Today's Military** provides a searchable tool that highlights the various career fields that are available in the military.
  - **Careers in the Military** offers a guided exploration tool where answers to questions make career field recommendations.
  - **DoD Face of Defense** highlights career spotlights, providing personal stories of our service members and their careers.

Career Field Links	
<a href="#">Agriculture, Food &amp; Natural Resources</a>	<a href="#">Hospitality &amp; Tourism</a>
<a href="#">Architecture &amp; Construction</a>	<a href="#">Human Services</a>
<a href="#">Arts, Audio/Video Technology &amp; Communications</a>	<a href="#">Intelligence, Combat and Readiness</a>
<a href="#">Business Management &amp; Administration</a>	<a href="#">Law, Public Safety, Corrections &amp; Security</a>
<a href="#">Cybersecurity and Information Technology</a>	<a href="#">Manufacturing</a>
<a href="#">Education &amp; Training</a>	<a href="#">Marketing</a>
<a href="#">Finance</a>	<a href="#">Science, Technology, Engineering &amp; Mathematics (STEM)</a>
<a href="#">Health Science</a>	<a href="#">Transportation, Distribution &amp; Logistics</a>

## EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Taking care of service members and their families is a **DoD Priority**. A military career offers highly **competitive Employment Benefits** including:

- **Salary and Compensation**
- **Health Care Benefits**
- **30 Days Paid Vacation**
- **Life Insurance**
- **Retirement Savings**
- **Thrift Savings Plan**
- **VA Benefits**
- **Education Benefits**
- **Leadership Opportunities**







**Thank you for  
your participation.**

**Collective action now will  
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All-Volunteer Force  
of the future.**

