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**A WARM WELCOME TO MOAA's GC!**

February is full of many big events. This month we celebrate Black History Month and remember the many contributions and sacrifices made by African Americans in our JAG Corps and nation's history. Valentines Day and Presidents Day also mark important moments to remember our loved ones and the examples of Washington and Lincoln.

MOAA marks the well-earned retirement of Maj. Gen. Joe Lynch as General Counsel and Corporate Secretary. Maj. Gen. Lynch's decades of experience in the Air Force JAG Corps, Navy General Counsel's Office and at MOAA Headquarters provided outstanding leadership to our national organization.

MOAA welcomes Mr.



Photo courtesy of Brooks Rose

Douglas Sanders as General Counsel and Corporate Secretary. Mr. Sanders is an Air Force Judge Advocate with over twenty four years of experience in the JAG Corps and General Counsel's Office. Before joining MOAA's leadership team, Mr. Sanders

served as the principal deputy general counsel of the Air Force, the senior career civilian role in the General Counsel's office. We look forward to welcoming Mr. Sanders to our virtual chapter as one of our February General Meeting speakers.



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Sept. 14-21, 2025

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**FEBRUARY 25, 2025 CHAPTER MEETING**

Our next chapter meeting will be Tuesday 25 February at 8pm EST/ 7pm CST/ 6pm MST/ 5pm PST on Zoom.

We will welcome Mr. Douglas Sanders, MOAA General Counsel and CAPT. Jim Carman, MOAA Vice-President of Council and

Chapter Affairs to discuss their roles on MOAA's national leadership team and the advocacy opportunities and other services MOAA provides for the military, veteran, and military family communities. We look forward to seeing you there!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85321770049?pwd=wfPOMb0QPbpbAxXdnsXA4fHnVmDek0.1>

Meeting ID: 853 2177 0049  
 Passcode: 441759



The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is the country's leading nonpartisan organization protecting the rights of military servicemembers and their families.

To them, we have made the same promise that they have made to their country:

*Never Stop Serving.*

Join MOAA at:

<https://www.moaa.org>

Want to take action? Do it with a mouse click at:

[www.moaa.org/takeaction](http://www.moaa.org/takeaction)

## After Two Days of Confusion, Federal Funding Freeze Put on Ice

By: MOAA Staff

A Jan. 27 [memorandum from the Office of Management and Budget](#) instituting a temporary pause of all federal agency grant, loan, and financial assistance programs [was blocked by a federal judge Jan. 28](#) and then [rescinded Jan. 29](#) before MOAA and fellow advocacy groups could fully ascertain its potential effects on the military and veteran community.

MOAA continuously monitors for threats to service-earned benefits as part of its work on behalf of those who serve and have served, their families, and their survivors. We will take action against any proposals that would diminish these earned benefits.

Prior to the Jan. 28 ruling and subsequent policy reversal, the VA made clear the memo would “have no impact on VA health care, benefits, or beneficiaries,” [according to a Jan. 28 statement](#) from Acting VA Secretary Todd

Hunter. This included GI Bill benefits, which were to continue to both students and schools.

As outlined in the original memo, the freeze would not have impacted military pay, retired pay, survivor annuities, disability compensation, or Dependency and Indemnity compensation (DIC). There was no indication that TRICARE benefits would be affected, and administration officials stated Medicare and Social Security payments would continue.

Should the federal government reinstate the freeze as initially outlined in the Jan. 27 memo, these VA-based programs are assessed to be potentially at risk:

Veteran suicide prevention grants

Job assistance for veterans and spouses

VA home loan benefits

Grants to support and

house homeless veterans

Veteran legal services

Programs ensuring veterans are honorably memorialized

State veterans' homes

Services to help rural veterans access care

Recreational programs for disabled veterans

Veteran-specific job search programs and employment services for homeless veterans provided by the Labor Department also may be at risk, as are veterans treatment courts administered by the Justice Department.

MOAA will keep our membership informed of any updates on federal spending policy, along with any changes to your earned benefits stemming from new federal policy. Visit [MOAA's news page](#) for the latest details.

## SPOTLIGHT: HELMETS TO HARDHATS (H2H)

H2H is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that connects transitioning military members and veterans with skilled training and quality career opportunities in construction industry. Since 2003, they have helped over 40,000 military personnel success-

fully transfer into civilian careers in the construction trades.

H2H partners with 15 international construction trade unions like the IBEW and SMART. H2H also educates service members on how to use

G.I. Bill benefits to supplement their incomes during their apprenticeship and into well-paying careers in the trades.

To learn more, visit:

[www.helmetstohardhats.org](http://www.helmetstohardhats.org)

## Urge Your Lawmakers to Secure Federal Job Protections for Military Spouses

By: Jen Goodale

Military spouses working for the federal government provide more than just an often-untapped skill set for their agency or department – their careers make it more likely for a service-member to remain in uniform, despite frequent moves and other potential professional derailments.

For this reason, MOAA welcomes recent guidance from the VA and other federal agencies designed to exempt military spouses on PCS orders from recent Office of Personal Management (OPM) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) directives regarding a federal hiring freeze, a return to in-person work for federal employees, and changes to probationary periods and administrative leave policies.

But not all agencies are making such exemptions part of their policies. And while some lawmakers are weighing in with letters to OPM and OMB urging consideration of exemptions for military spouses, they need to hear from you about how important this issue is to the financial wellbeing of military families, and to the health of the all-volunteer force.

Without this protection, the new guidance could negatively impact military spouses who have been offered federal positions, are in a probationary hiring status, or are currently working for the federal government.

### Recognizing the Need

Three executive orders

(EOs) in the past 17 years recognized and addressed persistent un- and under-employment challenges military spouses face:

[EO 13473](#), To Authorize Certain Noncompetitive Appointments in the Civil Service for Spouses of Certain Members of the Armed Forces (President George W. Bush)

[EO 13832](#), Enhancing Non-competitive Civil Service Appointments of Military Spouses (President Donald Trump)

[EO 14100](#), Advancing Economic Security for Military and Veteran Spouses, Military Caregivers, and Survivors (President Joe Biden)

These orders established and enhanced the federal noncompetitive hiring authority to [support military spouse employment](#). Provisions in the last five National Defense Authorization Acts (NDAAAs) extended the hiring authority in recognition of the continued high unemployment rate – 21%, according to the most recent DoD data – and also expanded it to include DoD civilian spouses, State Department spouses, and intelligence community spouses.

The FY 2024 NDAA further clarified the importance of expanding remote and telework options for federally employed military spouses.

A VA memo issued Jan. 24 notes that the new federal policy “allows for exceptions for military spouses with permanent change of

station orders. Current arrangements to include Domestic Employee Teleworking Overseas (DETO) arrangements will not be modified unless there is a basis for revisiting or revising the arrangement.” This memo should be a model for other agencies moving forward.

The same day, the Department of Health and Human Services issued an agency exemption to military spouses with permanent changes of station, noting, “Current Workplace Flexibility Agreements will not be modified unless there is a basis for revisiting or revising the arrangements.”

However, other department-wide guidance such as that issued by DoD and the Labor Department lacked similar provisions.

[Additional OPM and OMB guidance](#) on return-to-office plans issued Jan. 27 included language in a footnote exempting military spouses working remotely under language in the FY 2024 NDAA. However, without more specific direction from OPM and OMB, there are significant concerns military spouses on the move could face additional difficulties keeping, or securing, federal positions despite their qualifications.

Visit MOAA’s Legislative Action Center and [ask your lawmakers to urge OPM and OMB to establish exemptions for military spouses](#) to ensure they can continue to make their valuable contributions to our federal workforce while helping support their families.

*“But not all agencies are making such exemptions part of their policies. And while some lawmakers are weighing in with letters to OPM and OMB urging consideration of exemptions for military spouses, they need to hear from you about how important this issue is to the financial wellbeing of military families, and to the health of the all-volunteer force.”*

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Chapter Website  
<https://moajavc.org>

### *Who We Are*

*We provide opportunities for career networking, professional education, and advocacy. Our organization is non-geographic and can go with you worldwide anywhere you are stationed.*

*The Military Officers Association of America Judge Advocate Virtual Chapter is here for you. Membership is free and is open to current and former judge advocates on Active Duty, Reserve, Guard, Retired, or Honorably Separated.*

*As an affiliate of the nationwide MOAA organization, we actively participate in non-partisan advocacy on issues of key importance to military members, veterans, and their families.*

*Join us at:*

*MOAAJAVC@gmail.com*

## AFTER THE JAG CORPS: Navigating Your Career Progression

*After The JAG Corps: Navigating Your Career Progression*, is a podcast for separating and retiring Judge Advocates. CAPT Tom Welsh talks to former Judge Advocates and others to learn about their respective career journeys after military service and gain insights into marketing the skills developed while in uniform. The Podcast is available on Apple, Google, and Spotify and is published each Saturday morning. This week, CAPT Welsh welcomes Dan Maurer to discuss transitioning from the military to civilian world.

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/141-dan-maurer-sometimes-you-do-not-need-to-choose/id1602234623?i=1000690267419>



## UPCOMING EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

### What's New for the Upcoming Tax Season

19 February 2025

2-3pm Online

Preparing to file this year's tax return? Join MOAA's financial professional Capt. Paul J. Frost, USN (Ret), AFC®, along with special guest and tax expert (and MOAA Life member) Dr. Kevin Matthews, for an open discussion reviewing [tax code changes](#) introduced since last year as well as other financial topics.

Matthews, a former Navy officer, is a full-time assistant professor at George Mason University, a Certified Public Accountant, and the owner of Beta Solutions CPA, LLC.

To sign up please register at:

<https://www.moaa.org/content/events/finance/whats-new-for-the-upcoming-tax-season-2025/>

### MOAA's Executive Career Transition Seminar

28 February 2025

8:30am—3:30pm

MOAA HQ with virtual options

MOAA's Executive Career Transition Accelerator seminar prepares transitioning servicemembers, veterans, military spouses, and surviving spouses for a successful military-to-civilian transition, and for advancement in their professional careers.

The interactive seminar -- which can be attended virtually or in-person -- begins with an instructional block on how to activate a resilient mindset that will serve you throughout the ups and downs of your transition (and any other life circumstance!).

With guidance from MOAA experts, you will learn how to:

- Build a stronger and broader network to accelerate your job search.
- Employ the best strategies for using recruiters and executive search firms.
- Maximize your self-marketing tools, including your résumé and LinkedIn profile.
- Prepare for your next interview, or your next salary and benefits negotiation.

You will also have the chance to practice your 30-second elevator pitch, and to participate in a mock interview.

During a working lunch, attendees will hear from a panel of successfully transitioned senior officers and talent acquisition professionals from a range of industries and sectors who share their experiences and insights. Register at:

<https://www.moaa.org/content/events/transition-and-career/accelerator-career-seminar/>



Come River Cruising with MOAA's President & CEO Lt Gen Brian "BK" Kelly, USAF (Ret), his wife Garrety and your fellow MOAA members for a vacation to remember.

## 2025 MOAA SIGNATURE GROUP

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Our home during this cruise is Uniworld's Super Ship vessel, the *S.S. Catherine*. Uniworld is committed to building a fleet of ships that represents the absolute best in luxury river cruising, combining quality craftsmanship with high-tech innovations and custom-designed interiors. *Catherine* continues this proud tradition of excellence with sumptuous materials and meticulous attention to detail. The vessel's opulent interiors include a two-story lobby with a specially commissioned Murano glass chandelier and whimsical life-size glass horse.

**Save \$570 per person PLUS \$150 per person Onboard Credit. We hope you can join us!**

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For complete details, including detailed day-by-day itinerary, please visit us online