



DoD Installation Access Guidelines



Your visit to a DoD installation starts at the Visitor Control Center (sometimes called a Pass & ID Office). Many DoD installations have multiple gates, and not all gates have a Visitor Control Center. Follow signs for visitors. If you have a specific point of contact on the installation that you are visiting, that contact can help facilitate your visit.

There are generally two types of access to DoD installations: **escorted** and **unescorted**. To gain unescorted access to a DoD installation, all individuals must establish their identity, fitness and purpose to Visitor Control Center personnel:

- **Identity** – “who” the person is.
- **Fitness** – a determination, based on a review of historic and current information, that the person is likely not a risk to the safety, security, or efficiency of the installation or its occupants.
- **Purpose** – the person’s acceptable reason for seeking access to the installation at that point in time.

An individual who meets all three criteria and anticipates future visits to DoD installations may voluntarily **enroll** their identity and credential in DoD’s systems to facilitate future unescorted access.

Individuals who do not meet the three criteria for unescorted access but who are visiting for an official (i.e., DoD-requested) purpose may be escorted on the installation. Escorts must be provided by the organization the individual is visiting. Non-DoD personnel cannot escort others onto the installation.



Establishing Identity →

You will generally need to bring valid (unexpired) government-issued photo identification (a “credential”) to establish your identity. A credential associates a specific person with their identity information (e.g., name, date of birth, address), typically by means of a photograph or other biometric information. Examples include REAL ID-compliant driver’s licenses and passports.

A document without a photograph but that contains identity information, such as a birth certificate, is not a credential – anyone presenting it could claim to be that person.

Establishing Fitness

Fitness is typically established through an on-the-spot records (background) check of criminal and terrorism databases. You may be asked for more information or to fill out a form in order to complete this fitness check. An individual is typically fit if he or she has no outstanding warrants, terrorism connections, convictions for disqualifying offenses, or other disqualifying conditions (e.g., previous barment).

There are two types of disqualifying convictions: term and lifetime. Conviction for any felony will result in a term disqualification (typically 7 years), as will repeated misdemeanor convictions. Conviction for certain more serious felonies (e.g., homicide, sexual assault) result in lifetime disqualification from unescorted access.

Presently, each Service, the Defense Logistics Agency, and the Pentagon have their own standard for fitness, so it is possible to be fit at an installation in one but not at an installation in another. DoD is working to establish a DoD-wide fitness standard in 2023. Additionally, a small number of DoD installations require U.S. citizenship to be fit for unescorted access.

→ Establishing Purpose ↴

Acceptable purposes vary by installation, conditions, and even time. One installation may allow non-DoD personnel access to visit a public museum, while another may be highly restricted, and a purpose acceptable during business hours may not be acceptable overnight.

Enrollment ↓

Enrollment allows DoD to maintain a record of an individual’s established fitness and continuously update that fitness to simplify future access. Enrollment adds an individual’s identity, fitness, and credential information to the installation’s Electronic Physical Access Control System (ePACS). Once enrolled, you can go right to the gate, without having to revisit the Visitor Control Center, and present your enrolled credential. Enrollment is valid for a certain duration depending on your established purpose, the expiration date on your credential, and the frequency of your visits to the installation. When your enrollment expires you will need to reenroll the same way you did at your first visit through the Visitor Control Center.

Reciprocity →

Purpose is not reciprocally accepted and must be established at each installation. So, being granted access at one installation does not automatically provide access at other installations. Fitness determinations made at one installation are reciprocally accepted at other installations within the same Service.

An individual who has been granted unescorted access to, and enrolled at, one installation in a particular Service might not be granted access to another installation in:

- The same or different Service if:
 - That new installation requires U.S. citizenship and he or she has not established it.
 - His or her purpose is not valid at that new installation, or at that particular time.
- A different Service if:
 - He or she does not meet the new Service’s fitness criteria.

Redress and Appeal *

An individual who is determined to be unfit for unescorted access may seek redress or appeal, depending on the circumstances.

Redress occurs when the disqualifying information relates to another person with whom the individual is frequently or easily mistaken (such as two individuals with similar names, one with a criminal history and one without). Redress is a process for an individual to deconflict his or her identity with that of the other by providing additional biographic or biometric information, and allows the proper identity to be evaluated for fitness.

Appeal occurs when the disqualifying information is accurately associated with the individual seeking access, but the individual believes he or she has extenuating or mitigating circumstances that the installation commander may determine warrant being granted access anyway.

For questions or concerns regarding access to a particular installation, contact that installation’s commander through the installation security office.