

Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 AVIATION COMMAND RETENTION BONUS
PROGRAM INFORMATION

1. Introduction. The Department of the Navy authorizes Aviation Command Retention Bonus (ACRB) in addition to the Aviation Department Head Retention Bonus (ADHRB) and Aviation Incentive Pay (AvIP) to enhance retention of career-minded aviation officers. The intent of the ACRB is to retain the invaluable and irreplaceable experience and skill sets of the Navy's cadre of Commander (O-5/CDR) commanding officers (COs) on active duty.

2. Highlights.

- Eligibility window: begins with NAVADMIN release and ends 31 August 2025.
- Eligibility criteria: upon selection for Aviation Command or prior to assuming aviation command.
- Options in contract length (two- or three-year obligations). The obligated service for each option starts at completion of 19 years commissioned service (YCS) or contract approval, whichever is later.
- ACRB rates and obligated service are as follows:
 - Two-year option - \$35K total (\$17.5K/year); obligation ending at completion of 21 YCS.
 - Three-year option - \$120K total (\$40K/year); obligation ending at completion of 22 YCS.
- Sea duty incentive: \$10K per year, for each year of the contract, for those who report to post-command orders to operational Carrier Strike Groups (CSG), Carriers (CVN), and Amphibious Assault Ships (LHA and LHD).

3. Contract Terms.

a. Base Contract Amounts. The ACRB offers eligible officers two options for contract lengths with associated bonus rates.

- 1) Two-year contracts will be paid at a rate of \$17,500 per year for a total contract amount of \$35,000.
- 2) Three-year contracts will be paid at a rate of \$40,000 per year for a total contract amount of \$120,000.

b. Sea Duty Incentive. In addition to the base contract amount listed in paragraph 3.a., any officer on an ACRB contract who is assigned to a post command tour on an operational Carrier Strike Group (CSG), Carrier (CVN), or Amphibious Assault Ship (LHA or LHD) will be paid an additional \$10,000 per year of their contract, not to exceed \$30,000. The sea duty incentive will not be paid until check-in to the PCC tour. Payment will be initiated when the service member emails PERS-435 with stamped orders. The service member will immediately be paid \$10,000 for each previous installment payment of the base contract already received. \$10,000 will be added to any remaining installment payments of the base contract.

c. **Obligation Start Date.** If a contract is approved by PERS-43, then that officer's ACRB obligation period will commence at completion of 19 YCS (or contract approval whichever is later).

d. **Post Command Commander (PCC) tours.** PCC tours require a post-command commander due to leadership experience. A full PCC tour is served to the prescribed projected rotation date (PRD) and not minimum time on station. A fellowship in and of itself is not a full PCC tour.

e. Two-year contracts will terminate upon the latest of these three dates:

- 1) Completion of 21 years of commissioned service
- 2) Two years after contract approval
- 3) Completion of a full PCC tour

f. Three-year contracts will terminate upon the latest of these three dates:

- 1) Completion of 22 years of commissioned service
- 2) Three years after contract approval
- 3) Completion of a full PCC tour

g. Members on ACRB contracts can apply to Defense Contract Management Agency or Major Program Manager but are required to complete a PERS-43 PCC tour to earn the ACRB. PERS-43 may require completion of a PCC Sea Duty or Sea-Duty equivalent tour prior to assignment to O-5 Acquisition Shore Commands. Failure to do so will be a breach of contract and full recoup.

h. No contract can exceed the 25th YCS anniversary. For contracts started after the 22nd YCS, the final year will be prorated as necessary for the contract to expire on the 25th anniversary of commissioned service.

i. The first installment payment will be issued immediately upon contract receipt and approval by PERS-43. The remaining installment payments will be paid on the anniversary of contract approval.

4. Eligibility.

a. ACRB applicants must be active duty unrestricted line aviators with a 1310 or 1320 designator, who screened for command during the Aviation Command Selection Board (ACSB), and must not have assumed command.

b. Eligible commands are those operational (OP), OP-Training (OP-T), and special mission (SM) O-5 commands for which the annual ACSB selects officers to serve as CO, excluding second-in-grade/sequential/bonus/Fleet Replacement Squadron (FRS) commands.

c. ACRB applicants who are under a current Aviation Department Head Bonus obligation may apply. However, contract payment and service obligation will not commence until

completion of all prior Aviation Career Continuation Pay (ACCP) or Aviation Bonus (AvB) obligations.

d. Reserve aviators who are recalled to active duty, mobilized reserve officers, and officers under Active Duty for Operational Support (ADOS) orders are not eligible to apply for ACRB.

e. An officer who has been selected for and has accepted transfer to another community is not eligible to apply for ACRB.

f. ACRB applicants must be a commander (O-5) at the time of entering the contract. Applicants may be in the status of selected for captain (O-6), but are ineligible if they have been promoted to captain (O-6).

g. All requirements for AvB participation delineated in SECNAVINST 7220.88 and OPNAVINST 7220.18A apply. Final determination of an officer's ACRB eligibility shall be made by PERS-43.

5. Prohibitions While Under ACRB Contract.

a. Lateral Transfer/Redesignation

(1) Aviation officers obligated by an ACRB contract are not eligible to apply for a lateral transfer/redesignation board or other programs that require a change of designator until they are within 12 months of ACRB obligated service expiration.

(2) If selected for lateral transfer, redesignation, or other programs that require a change of designator, redesignation of the officer to the new community will neither be executed, nor will the officer be released to the new community for duty, until completion of ACRB service obligation or PRD from current orders, whichever is later.

b. Separation/Retirement

(1) Aviation officers obligated by an ACRB contract are not eligible to apply for separation until they are within 12 months of ACRB obligated service expiration.

(2) Aviation officers obligated by an ACRB contract are not eligible to apply for retirement until they are within 12 months of ACRB obligated service expiration.

6. Repayment Policy.

a. In order to maintain ACRB eligibility while under contract, officers must remain on active duty in aviation service in their 1310 or 1320 designator, must maintain eligibility for Aviation Incentive Pay (AvIP), and continue to meet all eligibility requirements contained in U.S. Code Title 37, DoD Instruction 7730.67, SECNAVINST 7220.88, OPNAVINST 7220.18A, and this memo. Officers who fail to fulfill the terms of the contract will be subject to the repayment

stipulations delineated in the Department of Defense FMR Volume 7A Chapter 2, SECNAVINST 7220.88, and OPNAVINST 7220.18A.

b. A member who is detached for cause (DFC), relieved, or removed from an assigned billet for adverse reasons is no longer eligible for the ACRB. In these cases, scheduled future payments will be cancelled as of DFC date, relief date, or removal date. If ACRB eligibility is terminated for DFC or other adverse circumstances, eligibility for any future ACRB offering will not be reinstated for any reason. Additionally, the member will repay the unearned portion of the ACRB; this is the percentage of time remaining on the contract (i.e., time remaining on the contract divided by the total contract length, using the obligation start and end dates described in paragraphs 3.b through 3.e, as applicable) multiplied by the total contract amount. If a member received a sea duty incentive, the \$10,000 per year is earned evenly over the entire contract length, not just the time on sea duty.

- 1) Example 1: An officer selected for aviation command accepts a three-year contract at 16.5 YCS, starts command at 17.5 YCS and is DFC'd at 18.5 YCS. As the officer has not reached the start of the obligated service, none of the bonus is earned and all payments previously made will be recouped.
- 2) Example 2: An officer selected for aviation command accepts a three-year contract at 16.5 YCS, completes command at 18.7 YCS, reports to sea duty at 19 YCS and is detached for cause at 20 YCS, halfway through the sea tour. The obligation start date is completion of 19 YCS and the obligation end date is completion of 22 YCS. The officer served one year of the obligated service before becoming ineligible, so \$50,000 of the \$150,000 paid is earned and \$100,000 will be recouped. In this case, the officer would have received \$40,000 at 16.5 YCS, \$40,000 at 17.5 YCS, \$40,000 at 18.5 YCS and \$30,000 in sea duty incentive upon reporting to sea duty at 19 YCS.
- 3) Example 3: An officer selected for aviation command accepts a three-year contract at 16.5 YCS, completes command at 19 YCS and starts a three-year PCC shore tour at 19.5 YCS. The officer is detached for cause at 20 YCS. In this case, the obligated service was 3.5 years (from completion of 19 YCS to the expected completion of the three-year shore tour at 22.5 YCS) and one year was earned, so 28.57% of the bonus was earned. The other 71.43% of the \$120,000 received will be recouped. In this case, the officer would have received \$40,000 at 16.5 YCS, \$40,000 at 17.5 YCS, and \$40,000 at 18.5 YCS.

c. A member who resigns command is no longer eligible for ACRB future payments. A member may keep payments received if they fulfill a full PCC tour.

7. Application Procedures. Digital submissions are preferred. E-mail a signed copy of the ACRB contract to Ms. Melinda Weeden at melinda.s.weeden.civ@us.navy.mil (cc: the AvB program manager at avipandavb@navy.mil). If unable to send electronically, mail the original to Commander, Navy Personnel Command, PERS-435, 5720 Integrity Drive, Millington, TN 38055-4300. Applications must be received at PERS-43 no later than 20 September 2025. **The ACRB constitutes a binding legal contract, and will be considered binding as of contract approval date by PERS-43.** As such, applicants must sign and submit the ACRB contract exactly as written in the enclosure. Applications containing language or content deviations will be rejected. Please use the Microsoft Word template provided at:

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Career-Management/Detailing/Officer/Pers-43-Aviation/OCM/AvB-The-Bonus/>

8. PERS-43 is the program manager for all AvB program execution issues to include policy, eligibility, and termination. Upon acceptance of an officer's agreement by the program manager, the amount of the bonus becomes fixed and the officer will incur a firm service obligation.

9. Points of Contact. For application questions, please contact Ms. Melinda Weeden at melinda.s.weeden.civ@us.navy.mil. For policy questions please contact the AvB Program Manager at (901) 874-3484/DSN 882, or email avipandavb@navy.mil.