



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL
5720 INTEGRITY DRIVE
MILLINGTON TN 38055-0000

BUPERSINST 1401.4G
PERS-47
4 May 2026

BUPERS INSTRUCTION 1401.4G

From: Chief of Naval Personnel

Subj: ASTRONAUT CANDIDATE SELECTION PROGRAM

1. Purpose. To provide information and procedures for application to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Astronaut Candidate Selection Program. Major revisions include updating the qualification requirements for the astronaut program and inserting a hazardous environment notification.
2. Cancellation. BUPERSINST 1401.4F.
3. Scope and Applicability. This instruction is applicable to all U.S. Navy personnel.
4. Background. NASA will periodically select astronaut candidates for future space flight missions. In a memorandum of agreement between the Department of Defense and NASA, a provision was made for highly qualified Navy personnel to participate in the nationwide Astronaut Candidate Selection Program. Successful applicants will be assigned to positions located at Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas and be involved in a 2-year training and evaluation program after which they will enter the Astronaut Corps and be eligible for assignment as astronauts on future missions.
5. Application Process. Interested personnel who desire to become an astronaut candidate and meet selection criteria are encouraged to apply via the NASA vacancy announcement posted at: <http://www.usajobs.gov>. All application materials must be submitted electronically by the closing date of the announcement. The application process is vetted entirely through the USAJOBS Web site.
5. Astronaut Candidate Qualification Requirements. U.S. Navy applicants for the Astronaut Candidate Selection Program must meet the following minimum qualifications:
 - a. Be a U.S. citizen
 - b. Astronaut Candidates will be required to pass a swimming test during the first month of training.

4 May 2026

c. Have a minimum of 3 years of related professional experience obtained after degree completion (or 1,000 pilot-in-command hours with at least 850 of those hours in high performance jet aircraft for pilots). For medical doctors, time in residency may count towards experience and must be completed by June 2025.

d. Be able to successfully complete the NASA long-duration flight astronaut physical.

e. Have a master's degree in a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics field including biological science, physical science, computer science from an accredited institution, requirements may also be met by:

(1) Two years of work towards a doctoral program in a related science, technology, engineering, or math field.

(2) Completed Doctor of Medicine, Osteopathic Medicine, or related medical degree.

(3) Completion (or current enrollment that will result in completion by June) of a nationally recognized test pilot school program.

6. Additional Requirements. Astronaut candidates must also have skills in leadership, teamwork, and communications. Artemis generation astronauts will explore and conduct experiments where humans have never been to the lunar South Pole. NASA's astronaut selection board reviews the applications and assesses each candidate's qualifications. The board then invites a small group of the most highly qualified candidates for interviews at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. Of those interviewed, about half are invited back for second interviews. From that group, NASA's new astronaut candidates are selected. They report for training at Johnson and spend the next 2 years learning basic astronaut skills like spacewalking, operating the space station, flying T-38 jet planes, and controlling a robotic arm. With NASA's plans for the future of exploration, new astronauts will fly farther into space than ever before on lunar missions and may be the first humans to fly on to Mars.

7. Hazardous Environment. Due to the strenuous nature of astronaut duties and the associated training programs, selected candidates will be exposed to physically taxing activities (e.g. being in confined spaces, being under water for extended periods of training, and working in potentially dangerous situations).

8. Space Application Procedures. The Astronaut Candidate Selection Program is conducted at NASA's discretion and will be advertised via naval administrative message (NAVADMIN). Commanders are encouraged to ensure widest dissemination of this program.

a. All applicants must apply for astronaut candidate selection on the USAJOBS Web site at: <http://www.usajobs.gov> during the specified timeframe. Candidates will have to create a USAJOBS account and apply for the vacancy by building an electronic resume. Applications will not be accepted via U.S. Postal Service, FedEx, United Parcel Service, DHL, or fax. Please contact Astronaut.Selection@NASA.GOV for future updates.

4 May 2026

b. Applicants will list their commanding officer as a reference on their electronic USAJOBS resume. Command endorsement of applicants is required. Commanders will be contacted for a personal assessment of applicants as a prospective astronaut and for a recommendation for the requested duty.

9. Records Management

a. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned for the standard subject identification codes (SSIC) 1000 through 13000 series per the records disposition schedules located on the Department of the Navy/Assistant for Administration (DON/AA), Directives and Records Management Division (DRMD) portal page at: <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this instruction or the records disposition schedules, please contact your local records manager or the DON/AA DRMD program office.

10. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, PERS-47 will review this instruction annually around the anniversary of its issuance date using OPNAV 5215/40 Review of Instruction. This instruction will be in effect for 10 years, unless revised or cancelled in the interim, and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph 9.



K. M. KENNEDY

Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel

Releasability and distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically only via the MyNavy HR Web site, <https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/References/BUPERS-Instructions/>