

[IAVA Rejects Department of Defense Reduction in Maternity Leave](#)

Post-9/11 vets call for DoD to reverse decision and match current 18-week leave policy of Navy and Marines for all services

Washington, D.C. (January 28, 2016) – Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), the largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization representing post-9/11 veterans and their families, was disappointed in today’s announcement by the Department of Defense (DoD) setting a blanket policy across all armed services for a 12-week maternity leave standard. The DOD announcement, while an increase for members of the Army, Air Force and Coast Guard, is a reduction from 18 weeks to 12 weeks for members of the Navy and Marine Corps.

“Support for military families forms the fabric of military communities,” said Matt Miller, Chief Policy Officer for IAVA. “As a former Naval officer and a parent, I am particularly disappointed by this six-week loss in maternity leave for Marines and Sailors. It’s critical that the DoD preserves and improves the system of support for military families, and those who continue to face challenges in finding and paying for quality child care.”

This new policy breaks faith with female Marines and Sailors who are serving their nation, and IAVA calls on the DoD and the President to take immediate corrective action in order to ensure women serving in the armed forces have adequate care.

In its recent [Policy Agenda](#), IAVA called on the DoD to establish maternity leave policies across all military branches to match those set out by the Navy Secretary in July 2015. This policy provides 18 weeks of maternity leave for women in service to use in the first year of her child’s life.