

The National Guard Senior Enlisted Leadership Bench Program



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

National Guard Senior Enlisted Leadership Bench Program

- *What governs the National Guard Senior Enlisted Leadership Bench Program (Senior Enlisted Bench)?*
 - The National Guard Bureau Instruction 0160-00, *National Guard Senior Enlisted Leadership Career Management Bench Program* establishes a process for identification and selection of E9s to compete for select National level Title 10 E9 positions, as well as professional development courses.
- *When will the Senior Enlisted Bench be open for applications?*
 - Calendar Year 2025–2026 (CY25-26) National Guard Senior Enlisted Leadership Bench will open July 2025, and packages will be due on Monday, 30 September 2025.
- *Who is eligible to apply for the Senior Enlisted Bench?*
 - National Guard E9s who are interested in being considered for inclusion in the CY25-26 Senior Enlisted Bench.
 - The Senior Enlisted Bench provides Army National Guard (ARNG) and Air National Guard (ANG) E9s the opportunity to apply for assignments and executive-level education opportunities to enhance their professional development.
- *What are the options when applying for the Senior Enlisted Bench?*
 - National Guard E9s have **two** options: 1.) Apply for assignments and executive-level education opportunities; or, 2.) Executive-level education opportunities only. When you apply for assignments, you are automatically enrolled in executive-level education opportunities.
- *I accepted an assignment through the Senior Enlisted Bench program, and currently sit in a position on the Senior Enlisted Bench; do I have to submit another package to be considered for assignments and executive-level education opportunities?*
 - All senior enlisted leaders who occupy a position on the Senior Enlisted Bench Position Listing are automatically considered for executive-level education opportunities. If you are interested in a follow-on assignment, you must submit another package.
- *What positions are hired through the Senior Enlisted Bench?*
 - Title 10 ARNG and ANG E9 positions that report directly to a general officer (including O7 and above) and Senior Executive Service (Level 1 and above), and other critical E9 positions as designated by Chief, National Guard Bureau (CNGB) will be managed by the Senior Enlisted Bench. This includes, however is not limited to, Senior Enlisted Leader/Advisor to the Chairman (SEAC) positions, National Guard Bureau (NGB) positions within the NGB Joint Staff, the ARNG and ANG staffs, and 1st Air Force.
 - Refer to ‘CY25-26 Senior Enlisted Bench Position Listing.’
- *How are decisions made regarding the selection process?*
 - The Command Senior Enlisted Leader Advisory Board (CSELAB) convenes monthly or as directed by CNGB. The CSELAB nominates Senior Enlisted Bench candidates for assignment as required. Selection is based on talents, capabilities, and qualifications (i.e. knowledge, skills and behaviors) to the position, as well as the individual’s ability to maximize the National Guard’s contributions to execute the National Defense Strategy.

- *Who is on the CSELAB?*
 - The CSELAB is chaired by the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the CNGB, and includes the following members:
 - Senior Enlisted Advisor to the CNGB (Chair).
 - Senior Enlisted Advisor John T. Raines
 - Command Sergeant Major (CSM) to the Director, Army National Guard.
 - Command Sergeant Major James B. Kendrick
 - Command Chief Master Sergeant (CCM) to the Director, Air National Guard
 - Command Chief Master Sergeant Joshua D. Moore
 - Joint Senior Enlisted Leader to the Director of the Joint Staff.
 - Chief Master Sergeant Kelly B. Reich
 - Utah National Guard Command Senior Enlisted Leader
 - Command Sergeant Major Spencer D. Nielsen
- *How are Bench packages tracked, processed, and graded?*
 - All complete packets should be emailed to Senior Leader Management (NGB-SL).
 - NGB-SL will send detailed application instructions and requirements (refer to 'CY25-26 Senior Enlisted Bench – Announcement').
 - NGB-SL will QC all packages and create a spreadsheet of all interested candidates.
 - The Senior Enlisted Bench Review Panel (SEBRP) will consider all nominations to the Senior Enlisted Bench and compile an Order-of-Merit Listing (OML) using a scoring system approved by CNGB. SEBRP members will be appointed by CNGB and consist of a diverse group of ARNG and ANG senior enlisted leaders, primarily Title 32 and one Title 10.
 - The SEBRP will recommend for CNGB approval a cutoff line to identify best qualified E9s who should be managed by the Senior Enlisted Bench.
- *What if I am selected for a position, and decide to turn it down?*
 - Nominees who no longer wish to participate, or The Adjutant General (TAG)/Commanding General (CG)/Deputy Director (DD) (or designated representative) no longer supports the members' inclusion, must submit a memorandum requesting the member be removed from consideration.
 - If nominee declines a nomination or selection, the CSELAB may remove the member from Bench for consideration with a majority vote.
- *How long is the established list effective?*
 - The current Bench remains in effect until CNGB approves new list.
- *What if there isn't anybody on the OML that meets the criteria for a specific position? Will it be reopened to the field?*
 - If the Bench does not have a qualified candidate, the Bench has the flexibility to create a 30-Day Target Vacancy Announcement to fill that specific position.
- *What if I missed the deadline to apply for the National Guard's Senior Enlisted Leader Bench Program?*
 - You can request an out-of-cycle Bench package through your respective TAG/CG/DD to the NGB-SLD office. There must be a solid justification regarding why you were not able to meet the initial suspense.

- *Can I receive feedback regarding my stratification on the 'Selection Announcement,' as well as areas to improve upon?*
 - TAGs/CGs/DDs and respective state Command Senior Enlisted Leaders will be notified of your stratification (Top, Middle, and Bottom).
 - CSELAB and Senior Leader Management (NGB-SL) built a feedback system for Senior Enlisted Bench Development. Refer to, '*Senior Enlisted Bench Feedback Session.*'
- *How does stratification (Top, Middle, and Bottom) affect my chances for an Assignment or Executive-Level Education opportunities?*
 - The stratification tiers are a result of like traits, skills, knowledge, experience, etc. amassed during one's career, and does not singularly impact an applicant's chance for selection. In all cases, skills and talent are matched to the needs of the organization and position.
- *Can I apply for a specific Bench position?*
 - Applicants may specify the position(s) of interest under 'Special Considerations' of the '*CY25-26 Senior Bench Application,*' as well as on the '*Letter of Intent.*' Regardless, if you are selected for inclusion on the Senior Enlisted Bench, you will be considered for all available slating opportunities available within CY26. Selection is based on talents, capabilities, and qualification (i.e., knowledge, skills, and behaviors) to the position, as well as the individual's ability to maximize NGB contributions to execute the National Defense Strategy.
- *Can I apply for a specific Executive-Level Education opportunities?*
 - Applicants may specify the executive-level education course(s) of interest under the 'Special Considerations' of the '*CY25-26 Senior Enlisted Bench Application,*' as well as on the '*Letter of Intent,*' however, if you are selected for inclusion on the Senior Enlisted Bench, attendees are selected through the CSELAB that manages their respective senior enlisted leader population. The CSELAB targets senior leaders for the right development opportunities at the right time in their careers to meet the current and future needs of the Department of the Army, the Department of the Air Force, and the National Guard Bureau.
- *What will happen after my Bench assignment?*
 - Upon acceptance of an ANG Statutory Tour, member must acknowledge in writing via the '*Senior Enlisted Leader Bench Statement of Understanding*' that they will not be reviewed through the Force Management and/or Retention Process. All tour lengths are determined by NGB-SL. ARNG and ANG E9s assigned to Bench positions who are not slated for a follow-on assignment will be returned to state at the completion of the identified tour length. Members are encouraged to continue to apply and compete for follow-on assignments through the bench and/or their state development programs.
- *What developmental educational opportunities are managed by The Bench?*
 - Please refer to the '*CY25-26 Senior Enlisted Bench Executive-Level Education Portfolio*' for additional course information. NGB-SL and CSELAB continue to work towards cultivating and broadening this portfolio to better serve tomorrow leaders.

- *What is my status while on an assignment with the Bench?*
 - Army National Guard: Title 10
 - One Time Occasional Tour (OTOT)
 - Exception to Policy (ETP) required if you are currently serving on an OTOT
 - Air National Guard: Title 10
 - Statutory Tour
- *Will a permanent change of station (PCS) be authorized if selected for an assignment?*
 - Yes.