

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY PROTOCOL PRECEDENCE LIST

as of 8 April 2003

Notes:

1. Within a group listed on a line under a code, precedence for Senate confirmed positions is established by date of appointment.
2. **Combatant Commanders/Retired Combatant Commanders-** At Multi or Joint service events ONLY, order is by date of appointment; for Commanders who previously held a confirmed position (i.e. CJCS, VCJCS, Service Chief, or previous Combatant Command) use the initial date of appointment to that position. At Army-exclusive events, Army Combatant Commanders are ranked by date of rank with other Army 4-Stars.
3. For non-statutory positions within a group, precedence is by date of assigned to the position.
4. Precedence for Defense Agency Directors is determined by the date establishment date of the organization.
5. **The Director of the Army Staff, Sergeant Major of the Army, and other service equivalents:** Within the Army, the DAS and SMA are accorded special status. In the NCR, the DAS and SMA have precedence over all other LTGs, and outside the NCR, the DAS is ranked with LTGs while the SMA may be positioned after the senior general officer present. Former Service Senior Enlisted Advisors are ranked immediately following the currently serving Service Senior Enlisted Advisors at Army exclusive events ONLY. Former Service Senior Enlisted Advisors should be placed in front of other retired members of the same grade (E-9) at Multi or Joint service events.
6. **Assistant Secretaries of the Army** are ranked above **4-Star General Officers** for Army exclusive functions ONLY. At Multi or Joint service events 4-Star Flag Officers precede Assistant Service Secretaries as reflected in the current order of precedence established by the President and used by the State Department and OSD for protocol purposes.
7. **SES** precedence is established by the position held. SES pay does not affect precedence. For those members not in positions identified in the precedence list, contact the Army Protocol Office, DSN 227-0692 or the SES Office at DSN 227-3549. For non-Army SES members, contact the member's agency/office for precedence.
8. **FORMER and RETIRED** officials are normally placed with BUT after the actively serving officials of the same position, UNLESS their precedence is separately listed on the Precedence List. For example, Presidents of the United States and Retired Chief Justices of the Supreme Court are listed separately. The accepted way to rank several of these former officials is by most recent. This means that each official is placed ahead of his or her predecessor. There may be reason to do it the other way with the "oldest" outranking the "youngest", but we follow the norm set by the State Department for handling Former Presidents. DOD Regulation 4515.13R, para. 2-4W, defines "retired military" as holding a DD Form 2 (blue or gray) and eligible for retired or retainer pay.
9. **STATE and LOCAL** officials are difficult to rank. There are no fixed rules, but McCaffree and Innis in their book *Protocol*, state that in "planning a seating arrangement [you] should consider the purpose of the function, the level of all guests, and any political significance." Simply try to apply the basic rules of precedence demonstrated in the preceding list and notes, and be consistent.

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10. **ORDER OF PRECEDENCE – ARMED FORCES.** (Title 10, United States Code 113b; DOD Directive 1005.8 dated 31 Oct 77 and AR 600-25, when in formation and for flags displayed together)

Cadets, US Military Academy
Midshipman, US Naval Academy
Cadets, US Air Force Academy
Midshipman, US Merchant Marine Academy
United States Army
United States Marine Corps
United States Navy
United States Air Force
United States Coast Guard
Army National Guard of the United States
Army Reserve
Marine Corps Reserve
Naval Reserve
Air National Guard of the United States
Air Force Reserve
Coast Guard Reserve
Other training organizations of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard in that order.

Provided that during any period when the United States Coast Guard shall operate as part of the Navy; the Cadets, United States Coast Guard Academy, the United States Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Reserve shall take precedence after the Midshipmen, United States Naval Academy; the United States Navy; and Naval Reserve.

11. **SOURCES** for the Precedence List. This precedence list is based on the previous edition dated June 1996; The Department of Defense Table of Precedence dated 1 APR 94; Protocol: *The Complete Handbook of Diplomatic, Official, and Social Usage*, Revised Edition 1985, by Mary Jane McCaffree and Pauline Innis; and *Service Etiquette*, Fourth Edition 1988 by Oretha D. Swartz. Precedence Lists are inherently “unofficial” and subject to change.