

PAY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

SPECIAL DUTY ASSIGNMENT PAY (SDAP)

JULY 2010

BRIEF OVERVIEW

SDAP is a monthly special pay that is used to induce enlisted members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard* to qualify for and serve in designated assignments or specialties where the *duties are extremely difficult* or involve an *unusual degree of responsibility*. The incentive serves to assist military manpower and personnel managers in meeting their distribution/assignment, and to a lesser extent retention, needs. SDAP is taxable and is payable in addition to all other pays and allowances.

Each of the military services designates SDAP-qualifying assignments and specialties and the associated SDAP pay level (see monthly rates at right). Some assignments (and the SDAP rate), such as those at the White House Communications Agency, are designated by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and apply DoD-wide.

Military services must announce 60 days in advance their intent to reduce SDAP rates or eliminate it altogether from assignments or specialties. Members arriving in such assignments, or qualifying for specialties, after the 60 days have expired receive SDAP at the new lower rate (or not at all). Incumbents in assignments/specialties targeted for elimination of SDAP, continue to receive it at ½ the previous rate for 1 year from the effective date of the elimination, or until they leave the assignment/specialty, whichever is earlier.

Generally, members continue to receive SDAP while on leave, temporary duty (TAD/TDY for 90 days or less & not performing the SDAP-qualifying duties), in the hospital, or in a patient status. However, special rules may apply, especially in the case of members eligible for Pay & Allowance Continuation (PAC), so Service directives should be consulted.

* Coast Guard SDAP is administered by the Department of Homeland Security, not the Department of Defense.

WHO CAN QUALIFY

Only enlisted personnel can be paid SDAP. They must meet all of the following criteria to qualify for the pay:

1. Be in pay grade E-3 or above;
2. Be on active duty and entitled to basic pay, or, for reservists performing inactive duty training (IDT), be entitled to "drill pay";
3. Have completed any special schooling or on-the-job training (OJT) required for the special duty assignment/specialty [Note: OJT has to be at least as long as the school's course of instruction and must result in the member being fully qualified for the assignment/specialty];
4. Have been certified (and recertified annually) as qualified for and are actually serving in the special duty assignments or specialties in either a permanent duty or temporary duty status; and
5. Meet any other eligibility criteria set by the military service of the member.

REFERENCES:

- a. Title 37, United States Code, Section 307
- b. Department of Defense Instruction 1304.27
- c. DoD Financial Management Regulation (DoDFMR, DoD 7000.14-R), Volume 7A, Chapter 8
- d. Military Branch of Service issued directives/guidance (e.g., regulations, orders, manuals, instructions, SDAP award plans, etc.)



NAVY SAR SWIMMER YN3
DEGOLLADO IS HOISTED ABOARD
USS HARPERS FERRY (LSD 49)

MONTHLY RATES

SDAP is broken into six levels with pay rates ranging from \$75 to \$450 per month. Each military service assigns a level of SDAP to specific duty specialties and assignments. The current monthly rates are:

<u>Special Duty Level</u>	<u>Monthly Rate</u>
SD-1	\$ 75
SD-2	\$150
SD-3	\$225
SD-4	\$300
SD-5	\$375
SD-6	\$450

Reservists performing Inactive Duty Training (IDT) in a pay status who are eligible for SDAP are paid in accordance with the so-called $\frac{1}{30}$ th rule. This means they receive $\frac{1}{30}$ th of the applicable monthly SDAP rate for each qualifying drill period.

CAVEATS: This article provides only a brief summary of the policies governing entitlement to Special Duty Assignment Pay. It is not a substitute for reading and becoming familiar with the laws, regulations, and policy documents under which the pay is administered. Additionally, it is not intended to address individual circumstances. Specific questions/concerns should be addressed to the individual military service's pay and/or personnel office and/or manager.