



NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

111 South George Mason Drive
ARLINGTON VA 22204-1382

NGB-EDU-09-016

12 January 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR the ARNG Education and Incentives Personnel of all States, Puerto Rico, The Virgin Islands, Guam and the District of Columbia.

SUBJECT: Microsoft Certification Program

1. Introduction. The Army National Guard (ARNG) will offer Microsoft Certification exam vouchers for eligible ARNG service members beginning 9 January 2009. The DoD Personnel Certification Support System (DoD-PCSS) will be utilized to issue vouchers. PCSS 2.0 is a web-based, CAC enabled software package where service members can register, request and receive exam vouchers. State Education Services Officers will be the approving authorities and will be designated as Information Assurance Managers (IAM) in the PCSS system. This program will be managed by the Office of Primary responsibility Point of Contact (OPR POC) who is located within the ARNG Operations Branch-Education, Incentives, and Employment Division. Currently, Prometric is the sole vendor for Microsoft certification exam vouchers; therefore Prometric test centers will be utilized.

2. Microsoft Certifications. The new generation of Microsoft certifications consists of four series (Technology, Professional, Master, and Architect) and five credentials (Technology Specialist, IT Professional, Professional Developer, Master, and Architect).

There are currently more than 50 individual certifications based on technology and more than 100 exams. Typically a basic certification requires one to three exams.

3. Eligibility. Service members in Information Technology (IT)-related occupations and Soldiers who have gained IT-related experience through training or education are eligible to receive vouchers. Service members must have a minimum of 12 months remaining on their service contract to be eligible. Most certifications require multiple exams. One exam required for a certification will be funded for a service member. Retakes will not be funded. Missed exams will not be re-funded and circumstances may dictate recoupment for a voucher by the OPR POC.

4. Program details. The ARNG has purchased 128 vouchers which can be issued starting 2 January 2009. Each Education Services Officer will be the Information Assurance Manager (IAM) for their respective state or territory. IAMs can begin registering in the

DoD-PCSS system on 8 January 2009. Instructions for registration are included in the online demonstration. Each IAM must have completed the DANTES Examination & Credentialing Training Workshop for test control officers (TCO) or must be scheduled to attend. IAMs will be the approval authority for distribution of vouchers. State Education Services Officers may delegate this authority to alternate IAMs. Alternate IAMs must be an appointed TCO/ATCO at their respective state education office. All IAMs will be required to self-register on the PCSS. The OPR POC is the approving authority for IAM requests. Registration web site is located at: <https://pcss.dod.mil/arng>.

5. IAM/Service Member Responsibilities. Once recognized as an IAM, the ESO/TCO counsel Service members, verifies eligibility and have them register on the PCSS. Counseling notes titled, *IAM Counseling Notes* (MCP notes for state staff) are attached to assist the state staff in identifying applicants' eligibility for specific exams. Service Members must provide transcripts, certificates or letters of completion for IT-related training and/or provide proof of experience (letter from employer outlining experience in the area of certification pursued or equivalent) in an IT related occupation. Service Members will request vouchers through the PCSS and

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once approved, they will have 90 days to utilize the voucher. A voucher not used within 90 days will automatically be rescinded by the PCSS system and made available for redistribution. If a service member misses a scheduled exam, that voucher will be lost and can not be redistributed (see paragraph 3 regarding recoupment). Service members will be responsible for scheduling the exam as outlined in the PCSS. Specific details on how the PCSS works are outlined in the PCSS demonstration link listed below. In addition, the PCSS has a wizard-like interface that walks you through each task.

6. References.

Microsoft Certification Programs: <http://www.microsoft.com/learning/mcp/default.aspx>

PCSS Online Demonstration for IAMs: <http://www.jasztech.com/pcss20a/pcss20a.html>

ARNG PCSS Registration:

<https://pcss.dod.mil/arng>

Training and Practice Material for Service Members: <https://usarmy.skillport.com/SkillPortFE/login/usarmylogin.cfm>

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2 Encls

1. [EIOM 09-016 \(ED\)](#)
[\[attachment\] - MCP Notes for State Staff.doc](#)
2. [EIOM 09-016 \(ED\)](#)
[\[attachment\] - MCP Flyer.doc](#)