

SUBJECT: DoD Seal Infringement Reminder

Dear Participating Institution,

In our review of educational institutions for the Department of Defense Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), we found that several institutions appear to be displaying the “Official Seals” of the Department of Defense (DoD), the Military Departments (i.e., Army, Navy, Air Force, and the U.S. Marine Corps), on institution websites, and in various institution publications (e.g., catalog), advertisements, brochures, and billboards. We are presuming that the use of these official seals is intended to acknowledge support for our Service members and to advertise academic curriculum tailored to meet the needs of the military community. However, the use of these official seals is expressly prohibited. Consequently, the Department is concerned that this type of inappropriate use may create an appearance of endorsement or affiliation. For example, consumers could view the advertisement and assume the Department of Defense or a particular Military Department or other DoD entity endorses or favors the policies, programs and services offered by a particular institution over those of another; or that a DoD entity may be affiliated with a particular institution. As a Participating Institution, it is imperative that all Voluntary Education Partnership MOU signatories be in compliance with DoD policy.

As explained at <http://www.defense.gov/MEDIA/trademarks>, the Department of Defense and Military Department seals are protected by law from unauthorized use, and these seals may NOT be used for non-official purposes. In addition, institutions are encouraged to review the Government Website Public Use Notice of Limitations at <http://www.dimoc.mil/resources/limitations.html> regarding the use of visual information containing military persons, places, and things for commercial advertisement, marketing, promotion, solicitation or fundraising purposes.

We hope this information and the resources provided therein will inform current and future decisions concerning the use of any DoD official seals or other protected insignia. We respectfully request any use of the official seals or other insignia of DoD or DoD Components that are currently being used such as, but not limited to, in commerce, publications, advertisements, brochures, on billboards and websites be withdrawn promptly, except in cases where permission has been granted by the appropriate DoD Component.

Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

/signed/

Dawn A. Bilodeau  
Chief, DoD Voluntary Education  
Military Community and Family Policy