

United States Army Sergeants Major Academy Ethics Paper

How Ethical Is “MyPay”?

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## HOW ETHICAL IS “MYPAY”?

Does the leave and earning statement reflect what a Command Sergeant Major (CSM) and Sergeant Major (SGM) should earn? At the level of CSM and SGM, the noncommissioned officer has reached the top of his or her career. This rank represents the epitome of the backbone of the Army. Does the Army really compensate Sergeant Majors for all of their knowledge, experience, years of service, and the number of personnel he or she leads, supervises, and manages?

According to FM 7-22.7, *The Noncommissioned Officer Guide*, the Command Sergeant Major is the senior noncommissioned officer (NCO) of the command at battalion or higher levels. The CSM carries out policies and standards on performance, training, appearance and conduct of enlisted personnel. The CSM and commander jointly coordinate and develop the unit's Mission Essential Task List (METL) and individual training tasks to create a team approach to battle-focused training. The Sergeant Major (SGM) is often the key enlisted member of the staff elements at battalion and higher levels.

A company, battery or troop usually consists of three or four platoons with an average of 100 to 130 soldiers. A company commander usually a Captain (O-3) and the First Sergeant (E-8) lead the company. Effective 1 January 2006, the base pay for a Captain with ten years of service is \$4,875.30. A Sergeant Major with the same amount of service will earn \$4,022.10. This amount is for commissioned officers without more than four years of active duty as an enlisted member or warrant officer. A Sergeant Major must have 22 years of service to earn \$4,902.30.

A battalion or squadron usually consists of two to six companies and roughly 300 to 1000 soldiers. A Lieutenant Colonel (O-5) and the Command Sergeant Major (E-9) command the battalion. A Lieutenant Colonel with less than two years of service earns \$4,246.00. A Command Sergeant Major must have 16 years in service to earn \$4,343.50. A Brigade, group or regiment is composed of typically three or more battalions, and led by a Colonel (O-6) or Brigadier General (O-7) and the Command Sergeant Major. The base pay for a Colonel with less than two years is \$5,094.00, for a Brigadier General, \$6,872.70. It is not possible for an enlisted soldier to obtain the rank of Sergeant Major with less than two years, even with a Doctorate Degree. A Sergeant Major must have committed 24 years of service to earn \$5,097.00.

The division usually commanded by a Major General (O-8) and the Command Sergeant Major. A division usually consists of around ten to fifteen thousand Soldiers. A Major General with less than two years earns \$8,271.00. Based on the current pay chart from the Defense Department, a Sergeant Major will never see that amount. A corps consists of two or more divisions and organic support brigades. The commander is most often a Lieutenant General (O-9) and the Command Sergeant Major. A Lieutenant General with 20 years of service earns \$11,689.50. Sergeant Majors will not see a five-figure salary.

All other organizations larger than a Corps are generically termed "army." An Army has three levels. These levels are a "Theater Army," a "Field Army," and an "Army Group." An Army is normally commanded by a General (O-10) and assisted by the Command Sergeant Major. A General with 20 years will earn \$12,818.70. After 30

years of service a Command Sergeant Major/Sergeant Major will not see five figures. How is it that the Command Sergeant Major is the senior advisor to the commander and his or her staff, and oversees the mission and welfare of soldiers anywhere from 300 to 60,000 soldiers earns less money than a Company Commander?

Officers that attend and graduate from the United States Military Academy are awarded a Bachelor of Science degree and commissioned as Second Lieutenants. They must serve a minimum of five years on active duty followed by three years in the Reserves. A graduate of the United States Sergeants Major Academy is not awarded a degree, but must attend college courses in addition to completing the Academy curriculum. Sergeants attending the Sergeants Major Academy have already served over 10 years of service, many attending have over 20 years of service. Because of their dedication to duty and service, the needs of their soldiers and their families were placed before college. Many attend school trying to complete an Associates Degree.

Is this a reason for the difference in pay? Regardless of obtaining a college degree, Soldiers are paid for their rank and their years of service. What makes officers with 2 to 12 years earn more than senior NCOs with over 20 years of service, never to earn more than \$5,394.00 after 26 years of service? Ask a platoon leader who kept him or her out of trouble and showed him or her the ropes, an NCO. Ask a commander who assisted him or her preparing the quarterly training brief slides, 1SG or the CSM. How did the command complete what was recorded on the slides? Soldiers completed missions by the successful training, leadership and guidance of the senior NCO.

A Command Sergeant Major that knows and understands his or her commander will have a commander that knows and understands his or her command. This relationship allows the commander to develop effective policies and procedures to govern his or her command. The Command Sergeant Major ensures leaders and Soldiers adhere to these policies and procedures through his or her leadership, management and guidance. The Command Sergeant Major should be compensated for his or her knowledge, skills and abilities, and years of selfless service that continues to lead, train, and mold every Soldier from the Private to the General of the United States Army. ULTIMA!