



2024-092 Pay and Benefits, Mess membership and mess dues payment

Mess membership and mess dues payment

Case summary

F&R (Findings and recommendations) Date: 2025-07-02

The grievor disputed the denial of her request to opt out of mess membership, stating that mess membership is not beneficial to the well-being of everyone and should be made voluntary. The grievor cited the 2018 Survey of Sexual Misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF (Canadian Armed Forces)) which found that messes were the second most common location of sexual assault. As redress, the grievor requested that mess membership be made voluntary.

The Initial Authority (IA (Initial Authority)) denied redress, explaining that messes are the only establishment where CAF (Canadian Armed Forces) members can meet socially and network with their peers in a private setting. The IA (Initial Authority) stated that mess membership is required except when no mess exists or when a member is on extended leave, citing chapter 9-1 of the Personnel Support Programs Policy Manual. The IA (Initial Authority) further stated that the survey on Sexual Misconduct identified that the people who committed misconduct were responsible rather than the mess itself.

The Committee noted that the grievor is not forced in any way to attend mess events or subject herself to what she believes is an unsafe environment. The Committee found that while Canadian Forces Administrative Order 27-1, Messes, directs that every member shall belong to a mess, it was cancelled in 2014 and replaced by Defence Administrative Orders and Directives 5045 which does not state that mess membership is a requirement. As such, the Committee found that the grievor is free to opt out of the mess and recommended that the Final Authority grant redress in addition to a reimbursement of mess dues paid since the grievor's request to opt out.

Date modified: 2026-03-03