2021 Portrait of Black / African American Active Duty Service Members

Air Force 48,937
- Almost 15 out of every 100 Airmen are Black / African American

Army 102,134
- More than 21 out of every 100 Soldiers are Black / African American

Marine Corps 19,210
- More than 10 out of every 100 Marines are Black / African American

Navy 58,366
- More than 17 out of every 100 Sailors are Black / African American

By the end of the Civil War, approximately 19,000 Black / African American men were serving in the Navy.

Retired Lieutenant General Nadja West became the first Black / African American surgeon general of the U.S. Army in 2015.

In 2020, General Charles Q. Brown became the first Black / African American person to serve as a Military Service chief, representing the U.S. Air Force.

The percent of enlisted Service members with a master’s degree or higher that are Black / African American - 29%

The percent of Black / African American commissioned officers who are graduates of a Service academy - 13.1%

Department of Defense Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Fiscal Year 2020 Military Data Source: Defense Manpower Data Center
2021 Portrait of Black / African American DoD Government Civilians

Post-Civil War

1990s

2010s

2021

Air Force Civilian 21,461

Almost 13 out of every 100 Air Force civilians are Black / African American

Army Civilian 40,249

16 out of every 100 Army civilians are Black / African American

Marine Corps Civilian 3,403

More than 18 out of every 100 Marine Corps civilians are Black / African American

Navy Civilian 26,279

13 out of every 100 Navy civilians are Black / African American

DoD Agencies & Activities 24,502

Almost 22 out of every 100 DoD Agencies & Activities Civilians are Black / African American

Togo D. West served as both Secretary of the Army (1993 - 1998) and Secretary of Veterans Affairs (1998 - 2000).

Essye Miller served as the Defense Department’s first Black / African American female principal deputy Chief Information Officer.

Retired Army General Lloyd J. Austin III became the 28th Secretary of Defense in January 2021, serving as the first Black / African American person to hold the position.

Top 10 GS-1 to GS-14 Civilian Career Fields

Male = Female =

General Administrative, Clerical & Office Services 9,033 10,349

Business & Industry 3,768 4,887

Medical, Hospital, Dental & Public Health 1,788 6,114

Accounting & Budget 2,408 5,488

Human Resources Management 2,207 4,151

Supply 2,838 2,232

Information Technology 3,471 1,507

Misc. Occupations 3,766 619

Engineering & Architecture 2,637 648

Education 1,437 1,484

Top 10 GS-15 / SES Civilian Career Fields

General Administrative, Clerical & Office Services 234 160

Accounting & Budget 68 99

Information Technology 63 33

Human Resources Management 29 51

Business & Industry 33 30

Legal & Kindred 27 30

Engineering & Architecture 35 12

Inspection, Investigation, Enforcement & Compliance 17 5

Misc. Occupations 12 5

Mathematical Science 15 1

55.8% The percent of Black / African American DoD civilians who are military veterans.

6.3% The percent of SES positions held by Black / African American civilians in Fiscal Year 2020.

Department of Defense Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Fiscal Year 2020 DoD Civilian Data Source: Defense Civilian Personnel Data System