



AIMS TOOLBOX

This document is intended to provide some ideas that may be helpful in telling the Air & Space Forces story. Use any or all of it, and feel free to improve it. Please contact the POC with updates and suggestions.

Topic/Title: Why Join the Air & Space Forces – Ask Your Employer to Match This

Point of Contact: Vance Clarke/John Campbell

Email: vanceclarke1@gmail.com

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Ask Employer to Match This

The "Unbeatable Offer" Challenge. *Hand this list to a potential recruit and say: "Before you sign with a civilian company, ask them to match this."*

1. The Starting Salary & Guaranteed Raises Ask for a starting salary of at least **\$2,100.00 a month** (Base Pay) with a contractually guaranteed raise every year and a promotion track that increases your pay by 10-15% within the first 12–18 months.

- *2026 Context: An E-1 (Private/Airman/Guardian) now starts at approximately \$2,017–\$2,150 depending on time in service.*

2. Paid-to-Learn Training Insist they hire you with **zero experience** and provide you with world-class, college-accredited technical training while paying you your **full salary** from day one of orientation.

3. The Housing & Subsistence Package Demand a **rent-free** apartment (or a tax-free housing allowance if living off-base) with all utilities paid, plus a monthly tax-free stipend for meals (BAS).

4. Unrivaled Time Off Insist on **30 days of PAID vacation** per year, plus weekends and all **12 Federal Holidays** (including Juneteenth).

5. The Wardrobe Allowance Ask them to provide your professional work attire for **FREE**, plus a yearly cash allowance to maintain and replace it.

6. "Platinum" Healthcare Demand **TOTAL medical, dental, and vision coverage** with \$0 premiums, \$0 deductibles, and \$0 co-pays for you (and low-cost for your family), plus unlimited paid sick leave.

7. 100% Tuition Assistance Tell them you plan to attend college while working for them, and they must pay **100% of your tuition** upfront so you never see a bill.

8. Elite Fitness & Wellness Insist on a free membership to a **state-of-the-art fitness facility** and the contractual right to work out during your paid duty hours.

9. Global Travel (Space-A) Demand access to a private global transit network that allows you to fly for **free or near-zero cost** to hundreds of worldwide locations and vacation hotspots.

10. Tax-Free Shopping Insist on access to exclusive department and grocery stores where you pay **zero state or local sales tax** on almost every purchase.

11. High-Value Life Insurance Demand a life insurance package of **\$500,000** for just about \$31 a month, regardless of your job's "risk level."



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12. The Wealth-Builder (BRS) Insist on a retirement plan that gives you an **automatic 1% contribution** even if you put in nothing. Then, ask them to match your contributions up to an additional 4%.

- *Fact: Under the Blended Retirement System, if you contribute 5%, your employer is effectively putting in 10%.*

13. The "Exit Strategy" (The GI Bill) Tell them that even if you leave after only 4 years, you expect an "education severance" worth over **\$100,000**.

- *The 2026 GI Bill: Covers 100% of in-state tuition, provides a **Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA)** based on the local cost of living, and a stipend for books and supplies.*

14. The 20-Year Retirement If you choose to stay, insist on the right to **retire at age 38 or 40** (after 20 years of service) with a lifetime monthly pension and continued healthcare benefits.

- Retired pay equal to 2% times the number of years of service, times your retired base pay. If you retire at 20 years service, you get 40% of your final base pay. See *the Blended Retirement System Paper in the tool box* or <https://militarypay.defense.gov/blendedretirement/>

The Reality Check for the Recruit:

"If your potential employer laughed at that list, it's because only **one** organization on Earth can actually fulfill those demands: **The United States Armed Forces**. In the Air Force or Space Force, these aren't 'special requests'—they are your **legal entitlements** from the day you swear in. You aren't just getting a job; you're securing your future."

Summary of Updates Made:

- **Salary:** Updated to reflect 2025/26 pay projections (E-1 over 4 months).
- **Holidays:** Updated to 11/12 to account for Juneteenth as a standard federal holiday.
- **SGLI:** Updated life insurance to the current **\$500,000** max (raised from \$400k in 2023).
- **GI Bill Value:** Adjusted the estimated value of the GI Bill + Housing Allowance to reflect 2026 tuition and rental market rates (now often exceeding \$100k-\$120k total value).
- Updated to reflect the Blended Retirement System