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If Veterans don't help Veterans, who will?

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DoD Military & Discharge Records

Vet Review Policy

The Department of Defense on 30 DEC announced a renewed effort to ensure veterans are aware of the opportunity to have their discharges and military records reviewed. Through enhanced public outreach, engagement with Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), Military Service Organizations (MSOs), and other outside groups, as well as direct outreach to individual veterans, the department encourages all veterans who believe they have experienced an error or injustice to request relief from their service's Board for Correction of Military/Naval Records (BCM/NR) or Discharge Review Board (DRB). Additionally, all veterans, VSOs, MSOs, and other interested organizations are invited to offer feedback on their experiences with the BCM/NR or DRB processes, including how the policies and processes can be improved.

In the past few years, the department has issued guidance for consideration of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as well as the repealed "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and its predecessor policies. Additionally, supplemental guidance for separations involving victims of sexual assault is currently being considered. The department is reviewing and consolidating all of the related policies to reinforce the department's commitment to ensuring fair and equitable review of separations for all veterans. Whether the discharge or other correction is the result of PTSD, sexual orientation, sexual assault, or some other consideration, the department is committed to rectifying errors or injustices and treating all veterans with dignity and respect. With this announcement, the department is reaffirming its intention to review and potentially upgrade the discharge status of all individuals that are eligible and that apply.

Veterans who desire a correction to their service record or who believe their discharge was unjust, erroneous, or warrants an upgrade, are encouraged to apply for review.

- For discharge upgrades, if the discharge was more than 15 years ago, the veteran should complete DD Form 293 (<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/forms/eforms/dd0293.pdf>) and send it to their service's DRB (the address is on the form).
- For discharges over 15 years ago, the veteran should complete the DD Form 149 (<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/forms/eforms/dd0149.pdf>) and send it to their service's BCM/NR (the address is on the form).
- For corrections of records other than discharges, veterans should complete the DD Form 149 and submit their request to their service's BCM/NR (the address is on the form).

Key information to include in requests: There are three keys to successful applications for upgrade or correction. First, it is very important to explain why the veteran's discharge or other record was unjust or erroneous—for example, how it is connected to, or resulted from unjust policies, a physical or mental health condition related to military service, or some other explainable or justifiable circumstance. Second, it is important to provide support, where applicable, for key facts. If a veteran has a relevant medical diagnosis, for example, it would be very helpful to include medical records that reflect that diagnosis. Third, it is helpful,

but not always required, to submit copies of the veteran's applicable service records. The more information provided, the better the boards can understand the circumstances of the discharge.

BCM/NRs are also authorized to grant relief on the basis of clemency. Veterans who believe their post-service conduct and contributions to society support an upgrade or correction should describe their post-service activity and provide any appropriate letters or other documentation of support.

Personnel records for veterans who served after 1997 should be accessible online and are usually retrievable within hours of a request through the Defense Personnel Records Information Retrieval System (DPRIS). To obtain one's personnel records from DPRIS, go to <https://www.dpris.dod.mil/>, then select "Individual Veteran Access" on the left side of the website and follow the instructions. Veterans will need to register for a logon and verify their current mailing address before requesting records. The whole process usually takes less than 10 minutes. Those who served prior to 1997 or for whom electronic records are not available from DPRIS, can request their records from the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) using the eVetRecs website at: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records>.

To submit feedback on policies or processes: Send an e-mail to osd.pentagon.ousd-p-r.mbx.legal-policy@mail.mil, or mail your feedback to Office of Legal Policy at: Office of Legal Policy, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness), 4000 Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-4000

For other information or assistance:

- Air Force BCMR: Website: <http://www.afpc.af.mil/board-for-correction-of-military-records> | Phone: [240-612-5379](tel:240-612-5379) | E-mail: usaf.pentagon.saf-mr.mbx.saf-mrbc@mail.mil
- Air Force DRB: Website: <http://www.afpc.af.mil/board-for-correction-of-military-records> | Phone: [240-612-0995](tel:240-612-0995) | E-mail: usaf.pentagon.saf-mr.mbx.saf-mrb@mail.mil
- Army BCMR: Website: <http://arba.army.pentagon.mil> | E-mail: army.arbainquiry@mail.mil
- Army DRB: Website: <http://arba.army.pentagon.mil> | E-mail: army.arbainquiry@mail.mil
- Navy BCNR: Website: <http://www.secnav.navy.mil/mra/bcncr/Pages/home.aspx> | Phone: [703-607-6111](tel:703-607-6111) | E-mail: BCNR_Application@navy.mil
- Navy DRB: Website: <http://www.secnav.navy.mil/mra/CORB/Pages/NDRB/default.aspx> | Phone: [202-685-6600](tel:202-685-6600) | E-mail: NDRB@navy.mil

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