



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

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MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS

SUBJECT: Correction of Military Records for Service Members Involuntarily Separated for Refusal to Comply with Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccination Requirements

As directed by the Secretary of Defense, the Department of Defense shall take all actions necessary to make reinstatement available to all members of the military (Active and Reserve Components) who were discharged solely for refusal to receive the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) vaccine and who request to be reinstated, in accordance with President Trump's Executive Order (EO) 14184, "Reinstating Service Members Discharged Under the Military's COVID-19 Vaccination Mandate," January 27, 2025. This memorandum provides the procedures (attached) by which the Secretaries of the Military Departments will process reinstatements for individuals either involuntarily discharged or those who voluntarily left the service or allowed their service to lapse, rather than be vaccinated under the vaccine mandate.

In cases where the Service member was involuntarily separated (EO, sec. 2(a) and (b)), the Secretaries of the Military Departments will contact such Service members and make available to them reinstatement via the Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records (BCM/NRs) process. The BCM/NRs should exercise their broad discretion to order all appropriate retroactive corrections of the Service member's record as described in the attached memorandum.

In cases where members voluntarily left the service or allowed their service to lapse (EO, sec. 2(c)), the Secretaries of the Military Departments will broadly communicate (e.g., via social media, external web sites, newsletters) information to inform these members about the process to return to service. Should those individuals elect to return to service, then they must present a written statement attesting that they chose to leave the service or allowed their service to lapse, rather than be vaccinated under the vaccine mandate. The Secretaries of the Military Departments will then provide an accelerated process for the member to return to service.

Beginning 30 days after the date of this memorandum, and every 30 days thereafter for 13 months, each Secretary of a Military Department will report on their progress to reinstate those Service members voluntarily and involuntarily separated solely due to the refusal to comply with the COVID-19 vaccination requirements. My point of contact is Mr. Kent Bauer at (703) 693-4204 or kent.p.bauer.civ@mail.mil.

Darin S. Selnick

Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of
Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Attachments:
As stated

COVID-19 REINSTATEMENT GUIDANCE

REFERENCE: Executive Order (EO) 14184, "Reinstating Service Members Discharged Under the Military's COVID-19 Vaccination Mandate," January 27, 2025.

I. GENERAL:

The Secretaries of the Military Department will:

- A. Implement a public information outreach program: (1) inviting former Service members discharged based solely on a refusal to comply with the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) vaccination mandate to seek reinstatement; and (2) inviting former Service members who voluntarily left the service or allowed their service to lapse in accordance with appropriate procedures to return to service within 60 days of this memorandum.
- B. Implement a screening process to identify those former Service members that were involuntarily separated based solely on their refusal to comply with the COVID-19 vaccination requirement within 30 days of this memorandum.
- C. Implement an eligibility assessment process to pre-screen interested former Service members for eligibility for reinstatement or re-accession, as appropriate, utilizing retention standards. The eligibility assessment process will maximize the usage of waivers.
- D. Implement a process to facilitate expedited and fair consideration of eligible reinstatement cases before the Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records (BCM/NRs).
- E. Coordinate with the Defense Finance Accounting Service, Defense Health Agency, and Department of Veterans Affairs to implement an assistance process to facilitate expedited estimation of the pecuniary and other benefits entitled to a former Service member upon their return to service within 90 days of the BCM/NR's decision to reinstate.

II. INVOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS (EO 14184, sec. 2(a) and (b))

- A. Identification of Eligible Former Service Members.
 - 1) Using standardized but broad criteria (e.g., separation code, narrative reason, separation package), the Secretaries of the Military Departments will review the records of all former Service members involuntarily discharged in connection with the COVID-19 vaccination mandate to identify those discharged "solely" for refusal to comply.
 - 2) If there is doubt whether the former Service member's record qualifies as a separation "solely" for refusal to be vaccinated, the individual will be included in the group provided direct contact outreach as detailed in paragraph II.B.

B. Outreach.

- 1) The Secretaries of the Military Departments will contact each former Service member that was involuntarily separated solely for refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.
- 2) Consistent with the EO 14184, the Secretaries of the Military Departments will invite these Service members to seek reinstatement by applying to have their records corrected to reflect continued service such that back pay, benefits, bonus payments, or other compensation, subject to required offsets, will be available.
- 3) Outreach will consist of: (1) a mailed written letter; (2) electronic mail outreach (if possible); and (3) follow-up telephonic outreach by a uniformed representative dedicated to reinstating these individuals.
- 4) The written outreach materials will include:
 - a. An invitation to seek reinstatement.
 - b. An explanation of the streamlined expedited process to seek reinstatement, to include instructions on completing the DD Form 149 Application and submitting other required documentation.
 - c. An explanation of the potential financial benefits upon reinstatement, to include a detailed explanation of the requirement for offsets.
 - d. An advisement that reinstatement will not be afforded to those who are unwilling or unable to return to active service for at least 2 years.
 - e. Contact information for a uniformed representative or other official to answer any questions or concerns.

C. Eligibility Pre-Screening.

- 1) Upon confirmation that a former Service member is interested in seeking reinstatement, the Secretary of the Military Department concerned will conduct a pre-screening evaluation of the member's physical and medical eligibility.
- 2) The Secretaries of the Military Departments will evaluate and determine if interested former Service members meet retention standards, including medical retention standards as set forth in Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 6130.03, Volume 2, "Medical Standards for Military Service: Retention," September 4, 2020, as amended, via current Military Service processes.
- 3) As an exception to policy, those individuals who separated involuntarily *solely* for refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccine are exempt from DoDI 6130.03, Volume 1,

“Medical Standards for Military Service: Appointment, Enlistment, or Induction,” May 6, 2018, as amended, Paragraph 5.1.a.(3) which states:

a. The medical standards in this volume apply to applicants for appointment as commissioned or warrant officers or enlistment in any Military Service and Component, to include federally recognized units or organizations of the National Guard.

(3) Applicants for re-accession in any Military Service and Component, including federally recognized units or organizations of the National Guard after a period of more than 12 months have elapsed since the date on their DD Form 214, “Certificate of Uniformed Service,” or separation orders, as applicable. These applicants no longer have a status in any component of the military.

Accordingly, retention medical standards would apply to such persons for purposes of determining eligibility for reinstatement.

- 4) The Secretaries of the Military Departments will broadly apply waiver authorities to permit maximum eligibility, as appropriate. Disapproval authority for any waivers necessary for reinstatement may only be delegated to a civilian official within a Military Department appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

D. BCM/NR Reviews.

- 1) The BCM/NRs will give COVID-19 reinstatement cases priority consideration, subject to existing statutorily specified priority consideration for post traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, and military sexual trauma.
- 2) The BCM/NRs, using the attached guidance in the memorandum, will assess each case to determine if an error or injustice exists within the former Service member’s record and order all appropriate records corrections, which may include but is not limited to reinstatement with no break in service, restoration of the member’s previous grade or rank, and credit for lost service time due to separation.
- 3) Disapproval authority for any BCM/NR case recommendations or decisions not awarding all requested relief must be sent to the Secretary of the Military Department concerned for final decision.
- 4) If the BCM/NR finds that the record should be corrected to reflect reinstatement, they will issue a tentative decision that permits calculation of associated pecuniary benefits but predicates final record correction upon acceptance of reinstatement by the Service member.