

**FIVE THINGS** → **EVERY SOLDIER SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ...**

# Replacing records, awards

Army veterans and retirees who served on active duty or in the reserves and their family members can get a variety of service-related documents for free. It's just a matter of knowing how.

Qualified applicants can get the records and other documents from Human Resources Command, Department of Veterans Affairs, National Archives and other official sources.

Because such documents are provided free to those qualified to receive them, there is no reason to get them from commercial firms that charge fees, according to Army officials.

A good first stop for information on how to get Army veteran service documents is HRC's Human Resource Service Center at [www.hrc.army.mil/TAGD](http://www.hrc.army.mil/TAGD); or call toll-free 888-276-9472 or DIN 983-9500, or email [ask-hrc@us.army.mil](mailto:ask-hrc@us.army.mil).

Phones are staffed weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Staff can provide specific information and addresses for submitting document requests to HRC, the VA, National Archives and Records Administration and other government agencies.

Most requests should be submitted on Standard Form 180 (Request Pertaining to Military Records). The form can be downloaded for printing at [www.archives.gov/research/order/standard-form-180.pdf](http://www.archives.gov/research/order/standard-form-180.pdf).

Here are tips to get five commonly requested documents and services:

**1 DD Form 214.** Requests for the Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty can be submitted on a dated and signed letter, but preferably on an SF Form 180 that provides details about what items a veteran believes are in error. Copies of supporting documents (divorce decrees, court orders, birth certificates, etc.) should be included if they are available.

Veterans can receive a copy of a lost DD Form 214 by submitting a request on a SF Form 180. Veterans who were never issued a DD Form 214 can request one, provided there is enough information on file. Any corrections will be reflected on a DD Form 215 (Correction to DD Form



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214).

If there is not enough information in the record, HRC will issue a Transcript of Military Records (DA Form 1569) or a Statement of Service (AHRC Form 2496-E). Both are authorized replacements for DD Form 214.

**2 Statement of Military Service.**

Requests should be submitted on an SF Form 180. Statements will be a compilation of a veteran's service, from date of entry into the military to date of discharge or retirement. The statement will include all promotions, grade reductions (if appropriate), dates of rank, character of service, reason for separation and all retirement points earned during a career.

**3 Lost or missing awards.**

Inquiries and requests for replacement medals should be submitted on a signed and dated letter or SF Form 180. Supporting documents, such as a copy of the veteran's DD Form 214, will facilitate the process. Requests go to the National Archives and Records Administration, 1 Archives Drive, St. Louis, MO 63138-1002. Call 314-801-0800.

**4 College credits.** Many colleges and universities award credits for military training and education. Veterans can request HRC provide a transcript of their military schooling for colleges to determine education credits.

**5 Veteran benefits.** Requests for benefits eligibility should go to a local Veterans Benefits Administration office or Veteran Affairs.

One of the most popular benefits is the VA Home Loan. To qualify, veterans must provide proof of service to the VA with such documents as the DD Form 214, a Chronological Statement of Retirement Points (AHRC Forms 249-E or DARF 249) or the National Guard Bureau Retirement Credits Record (NGB Form 23).

Officials recommend that requests for proof of service be submitted to HRC at the same time a veteran contacts a mortgage company. Processing can take 30 to 45 days. Submit requests on a SF 180 or a signed and dated letter.

- Jim Tice