

[DoD, VA Release Online Tool to Help Vets With Discharge Upgrade Process](#)

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DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Jan. 26, 2018 — A joint initiative between the Defense and Veterans Affairs departments has yielded a [web-based tool](#) that will provide customized guidance to veterans who desire to upgrade or change the conditions of their military discharge.

“We are thrilled to have partnered with the Department of Veterans Affairs in developing this wonderful and easily accessible tool,” said Robert Wilkie, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness. “We support our veterans, whether they served recently or long ago, and we are excited to introduce a tool that will individualize the guidance for those who desire an upgrade or change in their military discharge.”

Over the years, some veterans have criticized the review process as daunting or difficult to understand, Pentagon officials said, noting that supplemental guidance over the past few years, while helpful to many, has the side effect of creating multiple guidance documents that can be confusing. Furthermore, officials said, some veterans suffer from mental health or other conditions that make tasks like these more difficult for them than for others.

Simplified, Customized Guidance

The new online tool simplifies and customizes the guidance, officials said. By answering a few short questions, veterans will know which board they need to go to, what form to fill out, any special guidance applicable to their case, where to send their application, and some helpful tips for appealing their discharge, they explained, encouraging veterans who believe their discharge was unjust, erroneous, or warrants an upgrade to use it and then apply for review.

The tool can be found on Vets.gov at <https://www.vets.gov/discharge-upgrade-instructions>. The link is also available on Military OneSource and on each of the review board’s websites listed below.

The link also has been forwarded to a number of veteran service organizations and military service organizations to spread the news to as many veterans as possible, officials said.

Previous Efforts to Help

This initiative was one of many in recent years aimed at improving the review process and guidance available to veterans who believe they may have been unfairly discharged or received an unfair discharge characterization. The Defense Department issued special guidance in 2011 for veterans discharged under “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” or its predecessor policies.

Also, the department issued guidance related to post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury in 2014. Most recently, in February 2016, DoD redoubled its efforts to ensure veterans received the benefit of the latest guidance and statutes of limitations were liberally waived in such cases.

Subsequently, in December 2016, the department launched an internal review of its policies and procedures. That review disclosed some gaps and confusion in the previous guidance. In August 2017, DoD issued significant guidance clarifying how review boards will consider cases involving mental health conditions, including PTSD, TBI, sexual assault or sexual harassment.

Service-Specific Boards

For information on a specific board, contact the board directly or through its website:

-- Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records

Website: <http://www.afpc.af.mil/Career-Management/Board-for-Correction-of-Military-Records/>

Phone: 240-612-5379

Email: usaf.pentagon.saf-mr.mbx.saf-mrbc@mail.mil

-- Air Force Discharge Review Board:

Website: <http://www.afpc.af.mil/Separation/Discharge-Review-Board/>

Phone: 240-612-0995

Email: usaf.pentagon.saf-mr.mbx.saf-mrb@mail.mil

-- Army Board for Correction of Military Records:

Website: <http://arba.army.pentagon.mil/>

Email: army.arbainquiry@mail.mil

-- Army Discharge Review Board:

Website: <http://arba.army.pentagon.mil/>

Email: army.arbainquiry@mail.mil

-- Navy Board for Correction of Naval Records:

Website: <http://www.secnav.navy.mil/mra/bcnr/Pages/home.aspx>

Phone: 703-607-6111

Email: BCNR_Application@navy.mil

-- Navy Discharge Review Board:

Website: <http://www.secnav.navy.mil/mra/CORB/Pages/NDRB/default.aspx>

Phone: 202-685-6600

Email: NDRB@navy.mil