



TRIAL DEFENSE SERVICE FACT SHEET Applying for an Upgrade of Your Discharge (Army Discharge Review Board)



1. Who May Apply

Former members of the Regular Army, the Army Reserve, and the Army National Guard may submit an application (DD Form 293) to the Army Discharge Review Board (ADRB). If the former member is deceased or incompetent, the surviving spouse, next of kin or legal representative may apply. The application must include supporting documents (i.e. copy of marriage license, death certificate, or power of attorney).

2. What Do I Do First

If you need any of your personnel records for inclusion in your application, obtain them before you submit your request for review. After your application for discharge review is submitted, your records are sent to the ADRB where they cannot be reproduced. To obtain copies of your military personnel records, submit a Standard Form 180 (Request Pertaining to Military Records) to:

National Personnel Records Center
(NPRC) 9700 Page Boulevard
St. Louis, MO 62132-5200

3. How Do I Apply

After you have all your documents ready, submit an original, completed and signed Application for Review of Discharge or Dismissal (DD Form 293). Blank forms and instructions are available on the ADRB web site: <http://arba.army.pentagon.mil/adrb.htm>. Application forms can also be obtained by sending a request to:

Army Review Boards Agency (ARBA)
ATTN: Client Information and Quality
Assurance Arlington, VA 22202-4508

Telephonic assistance is available at 703-607-1600

4. How Long Do I Have to Apply

Requests for review must be made within 15 years of discharge/dismissal. However, it is suggested that you wait at least a short time (6 months- 2 years) after discharge before applying to the ADRB in order to allow time for you to establish some references in the civilian community where you live.

5. What Characterization of Discharge Can I Request

You can apply to have your discharge upgraded to honorable the first time you apply (regardless of the characterization of discharge you were awarded). However, we suggest you be realistic in your request. Soldiers discharged under Other Than Honorable conditions after 1 October 1982 while in entry level status (less than 6 months service) may request upgrade to an uncharacterized discharge. To do this, write in block 3c "Change to Entry Level Separation".

6. What Reasons Justify an Upgrade of My Discharge

There are two grounds for upgrading a discharge:

- a. Propriety – requesting change in discharge due to an error in the application of a regulation, statute, constitutional provision or other source of law.

- b. Equity – requesting change in discharge due to: (1) the policies and procedures under you were discharged differing in material respects from those currently applicable on a service-wide basis; (2) the discharge being inconsistent with the standards of discipline in the military service of which you were a member at the time of issuance; (3) your exemplary service record and other evidence presented to the ADRB; or (4) your capability to serve (age, educational level and aptitude scores, family and personal problems, capricious actions or discrimination).