



VETS HELPING VETS SINCE 1974

## REQUESTING COPIES OF MILITARY RECORDS

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### There are several ways to order copies of your military records.

You can complete Standard Form 180 and mail it in. The form is available at [www.archives.gov/research/order/standard-form-180.pdf](http://www.archives.gov/research/order/standard-form-180.pdf). It comes with detailed instructions and a chart of mailing addresses.

In some cases, you can order both your **service personnel records** and your **service medical records** from the same address, and you'll need to send out only one Standard Form 180.

In other cases, the request for your **service personnel records** will go to one address, and the request for your **service medical records** will go to another address. You can request both sets of records on the same form, but you'll need to make a photocopy. Mail the original to the first address, and the photocopy to the second.

In all cases, be sure to make a photocopy of your completed Standard Form 180 for your own files.

For any Standard Form 180 sent to the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, you can follow up after two or three weeks by sending an e-mail to [mprstatus@nara.gov](mailto:mprstatus@nara.gov). Give your name and Social Security Number, specify what records you requested, and ask when they'll be sent to you.

You can also telephone the NPRC for a "status update" by calling 314.801.0810 between 7 a.m.-5 p.m., central standard time. If possible, call between 7 a.m.-10 a.m. or 3 p.m.-4:30 p.m.

You may also be able to order your records online. Visit [www.vetrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/home.html](http://www.vetrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/home.html) to launch the eVetRecs system.

However, some veterans have reported problems using the eVetRecs system, and some veterans' advocates believe you're more likely to receive complete records if you order them by mail, instead of online. If an online request doesn't get you the records you need, you can always send a follow-up request by mail.

*Keep a photocopy of the completed Standard Form 180 for your files.*

**We recommend that you make your records request all-inclusive. At a minimum, you should request your complete Official Military Personnel File, your medical records, records of any disciplinary actions, and an “undeleted” copy of your DD-214 discharge certificate.**

If the records you receive don't include the inpatient service medical records that you need, you can request them by submitting NA Form 13042. It's available at [www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/na-13042-request-4-information-needed-2-locate-medical-records.pdf](http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/na-13042-request-4-information-needed-2-locate-medical-records.pdf). If you still don't receive the inpatient records, you may need to write to the Base from which you were discharged or the military medical facility where you were treated, asking if any of your records are held there.

The government sometimes refuses to release records of in-service psychiatric treatment. It will usually release these records to a “treating physician,” so a psychiatrist or psychologist you're seeing may be able to request the records for you. Otherwise, you can have an attorney order them for you, or you can ask your Congressperson for assistance.

*It usually isn't necessary to pay for your records.*

No matter how you order your military records, they're **free of charge**. Private companies and individuals will retrieve your records for a fee, **but it should rarely, if ever, be necessary to hire them**. You'll find information about private retrieval services on the National Archives website. Go to [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov) and search for “Hire an Independent Researcher.”

#### **NOTE**

For information about ordering **courts-martial transcripts** and **military investigative records**, visit [www.stp-sf.org/guides/transcripts](http://www.stp-sf.org/guides/transcripts).

## **Disclaimer**

*This memorandum provides general information only. It does not constitute legal advice, nor does it substitute for the advice of an expert representative or attorney who knows the particulars of your case. Any use you make of the information in this memorandum is at your own risk. We have made every effort to provide reliable, up-to-date information, but we do not guarantee its accuracy. The information in this memorandum is current as of December 2012.*

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