



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE COMMAND
4710 KNOX STREET
FORT BRAGG, NC 28310-5010

AFRC-PRA (600-8-22e2)

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Commanding General Policy #21-01: Military Awards Processing

1. Military Awards management is a commander's responsibility. All commanders will ensure their subordinate leaders execute the enclosed policy guidance.
2. Deserving Soldiers will receive formal recognition for their accomplishments. Their personal achievements must fully justify the level of recognition for the recommended award and adhere to the guidelines within Army Regulation 600-8-22, Military Awards. Awards should be timely and presented to the Soldier in a unit formation when possible. Soldiers who retire from the military after a successful career should receive recognition for their meritorious service to the Nation.
3. Exceptions to policy will not be granted for late award submissions to the Headquarters, United States Army Reserve Command (USARC). Commanders will utilize their authority to approve interim awards to properly recognize Soldiers while awaiting adjudication of final award submissions.
4. For additional information, contact the USARC G-1, Personnel Actions Branch, at usarmy.usarc.usarc-hq.list.awards-branch@mail.mil.

Encl

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U.S. Army Reserve Command Military Awards Processing Guidance

1. Purpose. This policy guidance provides the standards and procedures to submit, process, and complete military awards within the Headquarters, United States Army Reserve Command (USARC), and all subordinate commands. This policy does not apply to personnel assigned to the Office of the Chief of Army Reserve (OCAR).

2. References.

a. Title 10, United States Code, Section 1130, Consideration of proposals for decorations not previously submitted in timely fashion.

b. Army Regulation (AR) 600-8-22, Military Awards, 5 Mar 19.

c. AR 600-8-2, Suspension of Favorable Personnel Actions (Flag), 5 Apr 21.

d. AR 350-1, Army Training and Leader Development, 10 Dec 17.

e. AR 600-9, The Army Body Composition Program, 16 Jul 19.

f. MILPER Message Number 20-178, Clarification of Period of Service for Retirement Awards, 16 Jun 20.

3. Intent. The intent of this policy is to ensure timely submission of USARC awards that comply with regulatory requirements for efficient processing and presentation to deserving Soldiers. It is essential to maintain the integrity of the military awards program outlined in AR 600-8-22.

4. General Information.

a. The goal of the USARC military awards program is to produce awards that comply with AR 600-8-22 while tangibly recognizing acts of valor, exceptional service or achievement, and acts of heroism not involving combat, which distinguishes Soldiers from their contemporaries.

b. This policy does not assume, infer, or otherwise presuppose that Soldiers are entitled to an award merely through their departure from an assignment, supervisor's departure, or for performing the normal duties inherent in their job and/or position of responsibility.

c. Recommending officials must have first-hand personal knowledge of the event or be senior in grade to the individual recommended for an award at the time of the action(s) or service. Additionally, the recommending official must have knowledge of all the action(s) or service cited. A Soldier may not recommend himself/herself for an award or decoration.

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5. Types/Definitions of Awards.

a. Achievement. An act that is well above the expected performance of duty. The act should be an exceptional accomplishment with a definite beginning and ending date. The length of time is not a primary consideration; however, the speed of accomplishment of an important task can be a factor in determining the value of an act and should not exceed 12 months.

b. Service. Service that is distinguished by a succession of outstanding acts or significant achievements over a sustained period. Individual performance must exceed that expected by virtue of grade and experience and be based on accomplishment during an entire tour of duty. Typical service awards include:

(1) Permanent Change of Station (PCS) and Troop Program Unit (TPU) transfer. In most cases, awards for PCS and TPU transfer are for individuals who performed outstanding service in their assignment for a minimum period of 12 months and will change duty location.

(2) Expiration Term of Service (ETS) Awards. Awards for deserving Soldiers of all grades who reach ETS.

(3) Retirement (RET). Each Soldier will receive consideration for an appropriate decoration as they approach retirement (to include medical retirement) based on their years of service, scope of responsibility, and manner of performance.

(a) Army policy limits recommendations for meritorious service awards to the period of service during which the individual served under the recommending command. An extended period will only be considered in those cases where the length or nature of the individual's terminal assignment would not qualify him or her for an appropriate award. It is neither necessary nor desirable to consider an extended period of service when the length and character of service of retirees in their terminal assignments would qualify them for an appropriate award. Extended periods, up to 10 years, are an exception and not the standard. It is not necessary to indicate the time period when writing citations; it is only pertinent to mention the total number of years of service (i.e. over 22 years or 30 years of service).

(b) A Soldier is only authorized one retirement award.

c. Heroism or Humane Action. It is imperative to process recommendations immediately to ensure timely recognition and to preclude the possibility of diminishing valorous acts through administrative and processing delays.

6. Responsibilities.

a. Commanders, Major Subordinate Commands:

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(1) The military awards program is ultimately a command responsibility. All commanders will ensure their leaders are familiar with their command's internal awards processing and the guidelines set forth in this policy through the oversight of their respective G-1/S-1(s).

(2) Commanders must ensure approval and endorsement of appropriate level of awards to the next level of command, as applicable. Do not base awards solely on the grade of the intended recipient. The award should reflect both the Soldier's scope of responsibility and manner of performance.

(3) Commanders will have a plan to ensure timely submission of all awards. Leaders will establish a process to identify Soldiers departing on PCS, TPU transfer, Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) transfer, ETS, or retirement orders. Submit awards well in advance to facilitate maximum opportunity for Soldiers to receive their award in-person prior to departure from the unit.

b. Subordinate G-1/S-1 and Unit Administrators:

(1) Ensure leaders are familiar with the procedures and requirements of this policy.

(2) Develop and execute internal awards policies and standard operating procedures (SOP) incorporating the applicable procedures and requirements of this policy.

c. USARC G-1 Military Awards Section:

(1) Establish procedures for military award submissions for all subordinate commands and provide administrative overview and guidance regarding the processing of military award submissions.

(2) Review and process award submissions and ensure adherence to regulatory requirements including proper routing for either approval or endorsement. The internal routing process will action awards on a first-in, first-out basis.

(3) Monitor and track awards submitted from all entities to higher headquarters for review and approval.

(4) Return awards for correction if errors exist or if required documentation is missing.

7. Approval Authorities.

a. In accordance with (IAW) AR 600-8-22, paragraph 3-6 (b), all approval authorities must occupy a command position. All Commanding Generals (CG) may

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delegate peacetime awards approval authority, in writing, to their Deputy Commanding Generals (DCG) commensurate with the DCG's rank. DCGs are further defined as an Army officer in the grade of BG/O-7 (including COL/O-6 promotable (P) in a general officer billet) and above.

(1) In instances where the incumbent commander is not available to act on recommendations (e.g. hospitalization, extended TDY, or leave), the acting commander, regardless of rank, may take final action provided their assumption of command is officially documented. In such cases, the acting commander will sign documents using the title "Acting Commander" and attach a copy of the assumption of command orders with the DA Form 638.

(2) In the case of mobilization, rear detachment commanders cannot serve as approval authority if the command is deployed forward. If this situation exists, forward the award recommendations to the next higher command awards approval authority.

b. The Chief of Staff, Army, is the approval authority for the Distinguished Service Medal (DSM). The CG, Forces Command (FORSCOM) has downgrade authority for the DSM IAW AR 600-8-22, paragraph 3-5 (f).

c. The CG, USARC is the approval authority for the Legion of Merit (LM) for Soldiers in the grade of O-6 and below. The CG, USARC delegated disapproval/downgrade authority for the LM for Soldiers in the grade of O-6 and below to the DCG and to Major Subordinate Command (MSC) Commanders who have authority to approve the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM). In the case of a disapproved or downgraded LM at the MSC level, the award will not be submitted to USARC for further processing. The deciding commander will be the signature authority for both the DA Form 638 and the award certificate.

d. The CG, USARC delegated authority to the DCG to approve, disapprove, downgrade, or recommend upgrade on all military awards from MSM and below IAW AR 600-8-22, paragraph 3-5 (c) and paragraph 3-5 (e) for Headquarters, USARC, and the Army Reserve Careers Group (ARCG). The DCG will approve, downgrade, or recommend approval of all awards submitted to the USARC, depending on the type of award submitted.

e. All General Officer awards process through FORSCOM. The CG, FORSCOM is the approval authority for the LM and below.

f. Each intermediate commander will recommend either approval, upgrade, downgrade, or disapproval.

8. Military Award Submission Timelines. Award recommendations forwarded to

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USARC G-1 for processing must arrive error free, with all required supporting documents, and IAW the following minimum number of days prior to the end period of the award (DA Form 638, Block 11b).

a. MSM and below (all ranks): A minimum of **60 days** prior to the end period of the award.

b. LM (COL (P) and below): A minimum of **75 days** prior to the end period of the award.

c. LM (for General Officers): A minimum of **120 days** prior to the end period of the award. Retiring General Officers (GOs) cannot receive interim awards. Units must plan accordingly. MSCs must properly plan and submit departing GO awards in a timely manner.

d. DSM and higher (all ranks): A minimum of **120 days** prior to the end period of the award.

9. Late Awards.

a. Award recommendations for General Officers, Defense Service Medals, and Soldiers Medals that fail to meet the military award submission timelines require a detailed memorandum. The subject line will reflect "Letter of Lateness" and will address the following:

- (1) Why the award is late?
- (2) Who is responsible for the late award submission?
- (3) What control measures are in place to prevent future, late submissions?
- (4) Who is the point of contact for that information?

b. MSC Commanders, Chiefs of Staff, Deputy Commanders, or Command Executive Officers will endorse the memorandum. No further delegation to subordinate commanders or staff officers is authorized.

c. There is no requirement for a letter of lateness for all other awards.

10. Awards Returned to Major Subordinate Commands. MSCs have no more than 30 working days to take corrective action, reenter the award into the Electronic Personnel Action Tracker (ePAT) (name file as "corrected"), and route to the Personnel Actions Branch (PAB), AG Division, USARC G-1 for awards returned for correction, missing documentation, or by the DCG, USARC for a one-time correction.

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11. Time Limitation. Each recommendation for award of a military decoration, except those outlined in AR 600-8-22, para 1-14; Purple Heart, Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, and Distinguished Service Medal, must enter administratively into military channels within two years of the act, achievement, or service. Submission into military channels is defined as the date the award is signed by the initiating official (the recommender) and endorsed by a higher official in the chain of command.

12. Processing the DA Form 638, Recommendation for Award, IAW AR 600-8-22, paragraph 3-20 (all USARC).

a. For Wartime Awards (i.e. Purple Heart (PH), Combat Action Badge (CAB), etc.), refer to the Human Resources Command (HRC) Awards and Decorations Branch website for processing information: <https://www.hrc.army.mil/TAGD/Awards%20and%20Decorations%20Branch>.

b. Digitally sign all award recommendations utilizing the fillable version of the DA Form 638 located on the Army Publishing Directorate's (APD) website at <http://www.apd.army.mil>. Scanned copies of the DA Form 638 are not acceptable; lost award recommendations and award recommendations outside of the two-year period are the only exceptions to this requirement.

c. The DA Form 638, block 1 (TO Addresses):

The address for Soldiers recommended for the LM and below awards in the grade of O-6 and below :
Commander, USARC Fort Bragg, NC 28310-5010
The address for DSM and Wartime recommendations:
U.S. Army Human Resources Command Fort Knox, KY 40122
The address for all General Officer award recommendations, LM and below :
Commander, FORSCOM Fort Bragg, NC 28310-5000

d. Recommenders will verify administrative data and previous awards with unit S-1s.

e. Unit Human Resource professionals/S-1s are responsible for ensuring all administrative data is correct, verifying Soldiers are not flagged, and ensuring awards are error-free prior to signing block 22a.

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f. Limit the narrative description of service or achievement for awards of the MSM, ARCOM, and AAM to the space allowed on the DA Form 638.

g. Type the LM and DSM narrative and proposed citation on the Narrative/Citation page provided in the DA Form 638 by selecting the enclosure feature on the DA Form 638. Narratives for Retirement Awards will not duplicate award narratives and citations for previously approved awards submitted to the Soldier's Army Military Human Resource Record (AMHRR). Additionally, the narrative and citation will not mention any achievement or accomplishment outside of the 10-year period, as described in AR 600-8-22.

h. Forward all award recommendations through command channels to the designated commander authorized to approve or disapprove the award.

i. Submit military awards requiring USARC approval or endorsement to the USARC G-1, PAB through the Reserve Component Manpower System (RCMS), ePAT module using action type **T-5-A-2 Request for Awards (Requiring USARC Approval)**. For Active Component (AC) Soldiers assigned to Army Reserve units, email the complete award elements to the USARC G1 Awards Team mailbox. Nominations for USAR Soldiers emailed to the team will not be actioned. For AC nominations, the email subject will include the component, level of award, Soldier rank, Soldier name, and MSC (AC, LM, COL DOE JOHN, 377th TSC).

j. USARC G-1, PAB will process awards in the order received. Awards that arrive to USARC outside of the submission timelines will not receive priority. There is no requirement for a letter of lateness except for award recommendations listed in paragraph 9a.

13. USARC Staff Military Award Process.

a. USARC directorates and staff personnel will adhere to all requirements and procedures set forth within this policy.

b. Directors will endorse/sign award recommendations.

c. Directorates and staff sections will designate award managers to manage award recommendation submissions. Submit award recommendations through RCMS, (ePAT) module using action type T-5-A-2 to UIC "W47AAA", EPAT-G1.

14. Required documents. An award packet submission consists of the following documents. These documents are applicable to both USARC staff and all other USARC submissions.

a. DA Form 638 (dated Apr 21).

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b. Automated Record Brief (ARB) for verification of previous awards and previous assignment data as indicated in narrative awards when applicable.

c. DA Form 705, APFT/ACFT Scorecard, completion date IAW AR 350-1, or copy of profile, if exempt. Any DA Form 705 that lists an alternate event(s) requires the submission of a memorandum verifying the Soldier's Physical Profile Record (DA Form 3349). If a Soldier's last APFT/ACFT date is outside of the required timeframe listed in AR 350-1, provide a memorandum explaining the Soldier is exempt from taking the APFT/ACFT due to physical profile.

d. IAW AR 600-9, paragraph 3-2, height/weight screening must be within 6 months of the thru date, block 11.b. of the DA Form 638, unless the Soldier is exempt IAW paragraph 3-3.

e. DA Form 5500/5501 if Soldier exceeds the height/weight standards of AR 600-9.

f. An approved waiver of overweight or APFT/ACFT failure flags, signed by the first GO in the Soldier's chain of command, for retirement award recommendations only.

g. Letter of Lateness as outlined in paragraph 9a.

15. Required Reports.

a. Purple Heart (PH) Report. All commands will report the following. Reports are due to USARC G-1, PAB no later than (NLT) the 10th of each month to usarmy.usarc.usarc-hq.list.awards-branch@mail.mil.

(1) PH concussion related injury award recommendations endorsed by the chain of command for approval (submitted to HRC for further processing).

(2) Disapproved PH concussion related award recommendations.

(3) PH award recommendations returned without action.

b. Annual Awards Report. All commands will prepare a DA Form 4612 (Number and Type of Decorations Approved) of approved awards for each calendar year, dividing each award by grade of recipient and indicate whether the award is for retirement, service, or achievement. The report is due to USARC G-1, PAB annually, NLT 15 December of each calendar year to usarmy.usarc.usarc-hq.list.awards-branch@mail.mil.

16. Templates. Checklists and example documents are located on the USARC G-1, PAB website at <https://xtranet/usarc/g1-agd/PAB/Pages/default.aspx>.

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17. Points of Contact. For additional information, contact the USARC G-1, Personnel Actions Branch, at usarmy.usarc.usarc-hq.list.awards-branch@mail.mil.

Appendices:

- A. Military Awards Checklist (DSM, LM, MSM, ARCOM, AAM)
- B. Sample DA Form 638
- C. Format for Letter of Lateness
- D. Format for Overweight Waiver Memorandum