



CLIENT SERVICES & POLICY DIVISION Legal Assistance Office



Army Discharge Review Board

Mission Statement

Reviews discharges of former soldiers, on the basis of issues of propriety and equity; except if the date of the former soldier's discharge is more than 15 years or if the former soldier was punitively discharged by a General Court Martial. The purpose of the review is to determine if the discharge was granted in a proper manner, according to regulatory procedures in effect at the time, and that it was equitable, considering current policy, mitigating factors, and the total record.

Overview

The Army Discharge Review Board (ADRB) examines an applicant's request to review the individual's administrative discharge and to change the characterization of service and/or the reason for discharge based on the standards of equity and propriety. If punitively discharged by a General Court Martial or it is more than 15 years since the applicant's date of discharge, these issues must be addressed by submitting a DD Form 149 (Application for Correction of Military Records Under the Provisions of Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 1552) to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR).

The ADRB is not authorized to revoke a discharge, to reinstate a person who was separated from the Army, or to recall a person to active duty. Bad conduct discharges given as a result of a special court martial may be upgraded only on the basis of clemency.

The ADRB considers applications on a records review basis or through personal appearance boards in Arlington, Virginia or through quarterly travel board personal appearances at select locations in the Continental United States.

The ADRB conducts reviews in one of three ways at the applicant's request:

- (1) The Board evaluates the case in a records review based on the documentation in the military record and with additional evidence provided by the applicant.
- (2) The applicant appears in person, with or without Counsel, before the Board providing information that further supports the applicant's contention.

(3) The applicant's counsel appears before the Board on behalf of the applicant.

Expenses incurred by an applicant, applicant's representative, or witness(es) will not be paid by the Department of the Army or the Department of Defense.

Applicants may engage private counsel at their own expense and/or may contact one of the Military or Veterans Service organizations who provide free counsel or a representative to assist with case preparation.

To learn about application procedures: <https://arba.army.pentagon.mil/adrb-app.html>

Frequently asked questions: <https://arba.army.pentagon.mil/adrb-faq.html>

VA Guidance on How to Apply for Discharge Upgrade <http://www.vets.gov/discharge-upgrade-instructions>

Publications

- DODI 1332.28 - Discharge Review Board (DRB) Procedures and Standards
<https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/133228p.pdf>
- Army Regulation 15-180 - Army Discharge Review Board
<https://arba.army.pentagon.mil/documents/ArmyRegulation15-180.pdf>