



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER
JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, TEXAS**

Air Force Discharge Review Board Required Documents

Applicable to: Military

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The only document that an applicant is required to submit is a DD Form 293, *Application for the Review of Discharge or Dismissal from the Armed Forces of the United States*. The following documents can assist in the evaluation of your case.

A letter accompanying your application is acceptable. It should be clear and concise, emphasizing good aspects of the applicant's military and post service record, noting relevant personal and situational factors that tend to mitigate disciplinary and other problems the applicant had while in service, and concluding with a summary of basic reasons why an upgrade is warranted.

Evidence of Good Post-Service Conduct

Evidence of good post-service conduct may come from various areas of the applicant's life:

- Standing in the community, as established by general character references from people in the community such as clergy, teachers, or family members
- Employment, verified and characterized in letters from employers; Education, evidenced by copies of certificates, diplomas, transcripts, etc.;
- Absence of a criminal record, evidenced through a police check indicating no civilian arrests
Rehabilitation, indicated by participation in a drug or alcohol rehabilitation program, etc.;
- Family responsibility, development and stability, documented by birth and marriage certificates; and Awards, achievement, etc.

Note: Letters submitted as character references and employment letters should preferably be on letterhead stationary. Each letter should state the length of time the writer has known the applicant and the context in which they have been associated.

The Discharge Review Board (DRB) is permitted to consider outstanding post-service conduct to the extent that such matters provide a basis for a more thorough understanding of the performance of the applicant during the period of service which is the subject of discharge review. The DRB looks to post-service conduct to understand in-service conduct; however, if it can be demonstrated that the applicant is a good citizen and is not undesirable, the Board will usually look for a way to grant relief, absent a very serious offense.

The bottom line is, the Board may take into consideration post-service circumstances of the applicant's life when reviewing appeals. Specific factors of unusual importance can be given consideration, but of greater value is the sum total of the manner in which the applicant has conducted himself since separation. By and of itself, post-service conduct of an outstanding nature is not enough to outweigh in-service conduct that clearly could not be tolerated by a military organization. However, if the Board can establish to its satisfaction that in-service conduct was not major in scope and represented an abnormality to the normal pattern of the individual's life, then outstanding post-service conduct can be given significant weight. It is the overall character of the applicant that is of importance, and it is in that determination of character that the Board may establish what weight it may give to post-service conduct.

There is no definition of outstanding post-service conduct and this requirement should not be taken too literally. The applicant should attempt to demonstrate that they have matured and has lived a productive life contributing positively to society. Even if the applicant is not a leading citizen, steady employment and no criminal behavior can make in-service misbehavior appear minor or perhaps the fault of someone else (i.e. an inadequate supervisor). When possible, however, the presentation should be phrased in a way relating post-service conduct to an understanding of in-service conduct.

For example, an applicant may state that his/her post-service conduct indicates they:

- Are a person who should be believed;
- Are a person who would not have committed the act for which (s)he was discharged;
- Are a person who merely made (one) mistake, but not maliciously;
- Are a person whose overall character outweighs the in-service conduct (whole person concept);
- Are a person of limited capacity who could not perform the duties assigned or conform to military life;
- Are a good citizen

Good post-service conduct can be shown by demonstrating:

- Stable family life through birth and marriage certificates;
- Steady work history through employer statements;
- Civic involvement by statements from, among others, ministers, friends, neighbors, and politicians;
- Law-abiding nature through statements from local law enforcement authorities;
- Educational achievement through transcripts or diplomas;
- Reform or treatment for the root of the in-service problem, i.e. by successfully completing an alcohol rehabilitation program

The methods of proof for the variety of factors making up outstanding post-service conduct are virtually unlimited.

WHOLE PERSON CONCEPT

The function of the discharge review is theoretically limited to consideration of events that transpired from the day of entry into the service to the day of separation from the service. Consequently, documentation and data from those time frames is adequate for determination of regulatory and procedural propriety. However, such are not necessarily adequate when attempting to read the human element into the equation, since it is evident that there is and was a before, during, and after to the period of military service, which involves human concern that may or may not be documented.

This can have a distinct bearing on the conduct during service and ability to cope with service. During the review, it is incumbent upon Board members to attempt to establish an understanding of the human involved before endeavoring to objectively evaluate the propriety and equity of the separation process. In some respects, this understanding of the human involved can have a major bearing on someone's inability to perform.