

Claiming U.S. Military Medals from the U.S. Government

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Veterans of any U.S. military service may request replacement of medals which have been lost, stolen, destroyed or rendered unfit through no fault of the recipient. Requests may also be filed for awards that were earned but, for any reason, were never issued to the service member. The next-of-kin of deceased veterans may also make the same request.

AIR FORCE - The Air Force processes requests for medals through the National Personnel Records Center, which determines eligibility through the information in the veteran's records. Once verified, a notification of entitlement is forwarded to Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, from which the medals are mailed to the requester. To request medals earned while in the Air Force or its predecessor, the Army Air Corps, veterans or their next-of-kin should write to:

National Personnel Records Center
(Military Personnel Records)
9700 Page Boulevard
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

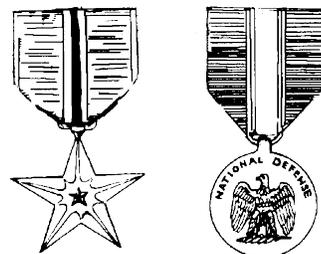
ARMY - The National Personnel Records Center does not determine eligibility for awards issued by the other services. If the person served in the Army, the request should be sent to:

U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Center
Attn. DARP-VSE-A
9700 Page Boulevard
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

ALL NAVAL SERVICES - Requests pertaining to persons who served in the Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard should be sent to:

Navy Liaison Office (Navy Medals)
Room 3475
9700 Page Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

It is recommended that requesters use Standard Form 180, Request Pertaining to Military Records when applying. Forms are available from offices of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or



The Bronze Star (Decoration) , and The National Defense Service Medal (Medal)

photocopy the example on page 75. If the Standard Form 180 is not used, a letter may be sent, but it must include: the veteran's full name used while in service, the branch of service, approximate dates of service and service number. The letter should indicate if the request is for a specific medal(s) or for all medals earned. The letter must be signed by the veteran or his next-of-kin, indicating the relationship to the deceased.

It is also helpful to include copies of any military service documents that indicate eligibility for medals, such as military orders or the report of separation (OD Form 214 or its earlier equivalent). This is especially important if the request pertains to one of the millions of veteran's whose original records were lost in a fire at the National Personnel Records Center in 1973. The destroyed records involved all veterans who were discharged from the Army or Army Air Corps before 1960, or from the Air Force before 1964 and whose last names fall alphabetically between Hubbard (James E.) and Z. Although the requested medals can often be issued on the basis of alternate records, the documents sent in with the request are sometimes the only means of determining proper eligibility.

Finally, requesters should exercise extreme patience. It may take several months or, in some cases, a year to determine eligibility and dispatch the appropriate medals.

The material presented here in electronic form is from *Medals of America Presents United States Military Medals 1939-1994* by Lawrence H Borts and Cold. (Ret.) Frank C. Foster (1st Edition) ISBN 1-884452-09-4.

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