

and responsibilities for Regional Boards are outlined in § 865.124.

§ 865.108 Availability of records and documents.

(a) Before applying for discharge review, potential applicants or their designated representatives may, and are encouraged to obtain copies of their military personnel records by submitting a General Services Administration Standard Form 180, Request Pertaining to Military Records, to the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) 9700 Page Boulevard, St. Louis, Mo 63132; thus avoiding any lengthy delays in the processing of the application (DD Form 293) and the scheduling of reviews.

(1) Once the application for discharge review (DD Form 293) is submitted, an applicant's military records are forwarded to the DRB where they cannot be reproduced. Submission of a request for an applicant's military records, including a request under the Freedom of Information Act or Privacy Act after the DD Form 293 has been submitted, shall result automatically in the temporary suspension of processing of the application for discharge review until the requested records are sent to an appropriate location for copying, are copied, and returned to the headquarters of the DRB. Processing of the application shall then be resumed at whatever stage of the discharge review process is practicable.

(2) Applicants and their designated representatives also may examine their military personnel records at the site of their scheduled review before the hearing. The DRB shall notify applicants and their designated representatives of the dates the records are available for examination in their standard scheduling information.

(b) The DRB is not authorized to provide copies of documents that are under the cognizance of another government department, office, or activity. Applications for such information must be made by the applicant to the cognizant authority. The DRB shall advise the applicant of the mailing address of the government department, office, or activity to which the request should be submitted.

(c) If the official records relevant to the discharge review are not available at the agency having custody of the records, the applicant shall be so notified and requested to provide such information and documents as may be desired in support of the request for discharge review. A period of not less than 30 days shall be allowed for such documents to be submitted. At the expiration of this period, the review may be conducted with information available to the DRB.

(d) The DRB may take steps to obtain additional evidence that is relevant to the discharge under consideration beyond that found in the official military records or submitted by the applicant, if a review of available evidence suggests that it would be incomplete without the additional information, or when the applicant presents testimony or documents that require additional information to evaluate properly. Such information shall be made available to the applicant, upon request, with appropriate modifications regarding classified material.

(1) In any case heard on the request of an applicant, the DRB shall provide the applicant and counsel or representative, if any, at a reasonable time before initiating the decision process, a notice of the availability of all regulations and documents to be considered in the discharge review, except for documents in the official personnel or medical records and any documents submitted by the applicant. The DRB shall also notify the applicant or counsel or representative (i) of the right to examine such documents or to be provided with copies of documents upon request; (ii) of the date by which such request must be received; and (iii) of the opportunity to respond within a reasonable period of time to be set by the DRB.

(2) When necessary to acquaint the applicant with the substance of a classified document, the classifying authority, on the request of the DRB, shall prepare a summary of or an extract from the document, deleting all reference to source of information and other matters, the disclosure of which, in the opinion of the classifying authority, would be detrimental to the national security interest of the United

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States. Should preparation of such summary be deemed impracticable by the classifying authority, information from the classified source shall not be considered by the DRB in its review of the case.

(e) Current Air Force numbered publications may be obtained from the Chief, Central Base Administration at any major Air Force installation or by writing:

HQ USAF/DASJL, Washington, DC 20330

or

DA Military Review Boards Agency, Attention: SPBA (Reading Room), Room 1E520, Washington, DC 20310

§ 865.109 Procedures for hearings.

(a) The applicant is entitled, by law, to appear in person at his or her request before the DRB in open session and to be represented by counsel of his or her own selection. The applicant also may present such witnesses as he or she may desire.

(b) There are two types of reviews. They are:

(1) *Record Review*. A review of the application, available service records, and additional documents (if any) submitted by the applicant.

(2) *Hearing*. A personal appearance before the DRB by the applicant with or without counsel, or by the counsel only.

(c) The Government does not compensate or pay the expenses of the applicant, applicant's witnesses, or counsel.

(d) A summary of the available military records of the applicant is prepared for use by the DRB in the review process. A copy of the summary is available to the applicant and/or his or her counsel, upon request.

(e) When an applicant has requested a personal appearance and/or representation by counsel on the DD Form 293, the DRB sends written notice of the hearing time and place to the applicant and designated counsel. Evidence of such notification will be placed in the applicant's record.

(f) Personal appearance hearings shall be conducted with recognition of the rights of the individual to privacy. Accordingly, presence at hearings of individuals other than those whose presence is required will be limited to

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persons authorized by the presiding officer and/or expressly requested by the applicant, subject to reasonable limitations based upon available space.

(g) Formal rules of evidence shall not be applied in DRB proceedings. The presiding officer shall rule on matters of procedure and shall ensure that reasonable bounds of relevancy and materiality are maintained in the taking of evidence and presentation of witnesses. Applicants and witnesses may present evidence to the DRB panel either in person or by affidavit or through counsel. If an applicant or witness testifies under oath or affirmation, he or she is subject to questioning by Board members.

(h) There is a presumption of regularity in the conduct of governmental affairs. This presumption can be applied in any review unless there is substantial credible evidence to rebut the presumption.

(i) *Failure to appear at a hearing or respond to scheduling notice*. (1) Except as otherwise authorized by the Secretary of the Air Force, further opportunity for a personal appearance hearing shall not be made available in the following circumstances to an applicant who has requested a hearing.

(i) When the applicant and/or a designated counsel or representative has been sent a letter containing the date and location of a proposed hearing and fails to make a timely response; or

(ii) When the applicant and/or a designated representative, after being notified by letter of the time and place of the hearing, fails to appear at the appointed time, either in person or by representative, without having made a prior, timely request for a postponement or withdrawal.

(2) In such cases, the applicant shall be deemed to have waived his/her right to a hearing, and the DRB shall complete its review of the discharge. Further request for a hearing shall not be granted unless the applicant can demonstrate that the failure to appear or respond was due to circumstances beyond the applicant's control.

(j) *Continuance and postponements*. (1) A continuance of a discharge review hearing may be authorized by the presiding officer of the Board concerned, provided that such continuance is of a