



NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

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ARLINGTON VA 22204-1385

ARNG-HRH

03 AUG 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR THE Military Personnel Management Officers

SUBJECT: Revised Policy for Individual Retroactive Combat Award Recommendations
(ARNG-HRH Policy Memorandum #11-048)

1. References:

- a. Title 10 USC, Chapter 57 - Decorations and Awards, Dated 01 February 2010.
- b. DoD 1348.33-M, Manual of Military Decorations and Awards, dated 23 November 2010.
- c. AR 600-8-22, Military Awards, 11 December 2006.
- d. MILPER Message Number 08-190, Revision Criteria for Awarding Combat Badges (CIB, CMB, and CAB), dated 22 April 2008.
- e. MILPER Message Number 10-236, Purple Heart Approval Authority to Hospital Commanders Receiving Casualties From Wartime Theater, dated 15 September 2010.
- f. MILPER Message Number 11-113, Retroactive Wartime Awards and Decorations Processing Procedures, dated 12 April 2011.
- g. MILPER Message Number 11-125, Army Directive 2011-07 Awarding the Purple Heart, dated 29 April 2011.
- h. MILPER Message Number 11-157, Amendment to Army directive 2011-07 (Awarding the Purple Heart), dated 20 May 2011.
- i. Secretary of The Army Memorandum, Subject: Army Directive 2011-07 (Awarding of the Purple Heart), dated 18 March 2011.
- j. NGB-ARH Policy Memorandum # 10-01, Subject: Revised Policy for Individual Retroactive Combat Award Recommendations, dated 1 March 2010.

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2. Purpose.

a. The purpose of this policy is to clarify the processing procedures for requesting retroactive awards and decorations, as well as identify the required signature authority after a command has departed the combat theater.

b. This policy is effective immediately. It supersedes the 2010 policy referenced in paragraph 1j.

3. Scope and Implementation. The primary role of National Guard Bureau Combat Awards Section (ARNG-HRH-A) is to assist States in ensuring that ARNG Soldiers receive their due awards and/or decorations for valor, achievement, and/or service when those awards or decorations were not issued, or were lost in the theater of operations. States are requested to make widest dissemination of this policy to their respective subordinate units.

4. Definitions.

a. Awards. An award is recognition given to an individual for certain acts or services. Awards include badges, accolades, emblems, citations, and commendations.

b. Combat Badges include the Combat Action Badge (CAB), the Combat Infantry Badge (CIB), and the Combat Medical Badge (CMB).

c. Decoration. A decoration is an award distinctively designed to mark honor, and signifies heroism or meritorious/outstanding service/achievement for an individual. Decorations include the Medal of Honor (MOH), Distinguished Service Cross (DSC), Distinguished Service Medals (DSM), Silver Star (SS), Legion of Merit (LOM), Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC), Soldier's Medal (SM), Bronze Star Medal (BSM), Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal (MSM), Air Medal (AM), Army Commendation Medal (ARCM), and the Army Achievement Medal (AAM).

d. Medical Professional. A medical professional is a civilian physician or physician extender, which includes Nurse Practitioners, Physicians Assistants, and other qualified medical professionals who provide independent treatment. This includes Special Forces medics, but does not include Combat Medics who hold the MOS of 68W.

e. Medical Officer. A physician with officer rank. These include officers in the Army or Navy Medical Corps, or an officer in the Air Force designated as a medical officer in accordance with Title 10, United States Code, section 101.

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f. Submission into Military Channels. This occurs when a document signed by the initiating official and endorsed by a higher official in the chain of command (AR 600-8-22).

g. Valor Awards. An award for heroism performed under combat conditions. Valor awards include Medal of Honor (MOH), Distinguished Service Cross (DSC), Silver Star (SS), Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC), Soldier's Medal (SM), Bronze Star with Valor (BSMV), Air Medal with Valor (AMV), and Army Commendation Medal with Valor (ARCOMV).

5. Processing Decorations. Recommendations for decorations or a request for reconsideration of previously downgraded/disapproved decorations (excluding the Purple Heart) requires original recommendation(s) and endorsement(s) from the wartime chain of command (to include the original approval authority). The recommendation packet will be forwarded through the ARNG Soldier's current (peacetime) chain of command up to the State G1 for review; however, no endorsements are required by the peacetime chain of command. See Annex A for complete requirements.

a. The approval authority for decorations is U.S. Army Human Resources Command (HRC).

b. For all decorations, each Soldier must submit a unique packet.

6. Processing Purple Heart Decorations. The Purple Heart differs from all other decorations in that an individual is not recommended for the decoration, rather the Soldier is entitled to it upon becoming injured or a casualty as a direct result of enemy action. Three criteria must be met before a Soldier becomes entitled to a Purple Heart. First, the wound must be the result of direct enemy action. Second, the wound must have required treatment by a medical officer. Third, there must be an official military medical record of the wound specifically stating that the wound was the direct result of enemy action. See annex B for complete requirements.

a. The approval authority for Purple Heart is HRC.

b. Requests for the award of the Purple Heart that were not completed in theater, when the Soldier has returned to home of record, must be processed through the Soldier's current peacetime chain of command through National Guard Bureau (NGB) to HRC.

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c. Requests for the Purple Heart that were not completed in theater, where the Soldier is on a subsequent deployment, must be processed by the Soldier's current chain of command to HRC.

d. The first General Officer that is in a Soldier's peacetime chain of command has the authority to disapprove a Purple Heart request.

e. Upon request from Soldier or veteran, Army officials shall conduct a onetime reconsideration of previously denied concussion-related Purple Heart request, where the injury occurred after September 11, 2001.

f. Reference 1h requires the Adjutants General of the 54 States and Territories to provide a monthly report of all concussive-related awards of the Purple Heart and requests in an excel format to the ARNG-HRH-A Combat Awards section. Each report should be sent to ngbcombatawards@ng.army.mil no later than the 10th day of each month. See Annex D for a sample spreadsheet.

7. Processing Combat Badges. Requests for the award of a combat badges requires recommendations and endorsements from the Soldier's current (peacetime) chain of command through the first (Army) General Officer in that chain of command. See Annex C for complete requirements.

a. Each request must represent a single incident specific in time. An individual request must be submitted for each Soldier. A request that references multiple incidents listed on a single DA Form 4187, or contains witness statements referencing multiple incidents, will not be considered. Additionally, any request on behalf of multiple Soldiers for the same incident on a single DA Form 4187 will be returned without action. Each combat badge request must include, at a minimum, two unique, individualized eyewitness statements, written by individuals other than the nominated Soldier who were present during the incident.

b. HRC may consider approving the award of a combat badge based on a Purple Heart decoration and/or valor award previously received for the same incident. However, each request is made on a case-by-case basis and is dependent upon the strength of the packet, circumstances, the Soldier's MOS, duty assignment, and unit at the time of the incident.

c. Eyewitness Statements. Each eyewitness statement must clearly identify the following:

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(1) Name of Soldier being recommended.

(2) Date of incident, act, or achievement (formatted as DDMMYYYY). The date must match that contained on the DA Form 638 or DA Form 4187, the narrative, the purposed citation and all other supporting documentation.

(3) Clear description of location of incident to include theater of operations, country, city/area and MGRS grid coordinates.

(4) The location of the recommended Soldier in relation to the location of the incident. Distances must be expressed in meters. Proximity to the incident is an important factor in determining eligibility.

(5) Location of the eyewitness in relation to recommended Soldier (in meters).

(6) Clear description of recommended Soldier's actions in relation to the incident as observed by the eyewitness.

d. The current qualifying period for the award of a combat badge is the overseas contingency Global War on Terror (GWOT). Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), and Operation New Dawn (OND) are all operations within the GWOT qualifying period. Therefore, no matter how many times a Soldier rotates to theater, only one award of each type of combat badge is authorized.

e. The CAB was authorized in May 2005 and is retroactive to 18 September 2001. The only qualifying period for the CAB is the GWOT.

f. For the award of the CAB, a Soldier must not have been assigned or attached to a unit that would have qualified them for the CIB/CMB.

g. Soldiers may earn the award of a CAB, CIB, and CMB for the same qualifying period, provided the criteria for each badge is met. To be awarded the CIB or CMB, the Soldier must have been assigned, attached, or under Operational Control (OPCON) on official orders that would make the Soldier eligible (to an infantry, medical unit, combat arms or combat aviation).

h. The approval authority for retroactive Combat Badges is HRC.

8. Tips, Techniques, and Procedures for Success.

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a. The lack of individualized requests (one Soldier per packet) and individual eyewitness statements, unique to each award, remains the principal reason that award recommendations are returned without action.

b. Commands are submitting retroactive military decorations requests under the signature of the peacetime chain of command. As previously mentioned in paragraph 5, decorations no longer require the peacetime chain of command's endorsement, but must have the endorsements of the original wartime chain of command through the level of the original approval authority.

9. Time Limitations.

a. Recommendations for decorations, except for the Purple Heart, must have been submitted into military channels within two years of the act, achievement, or service. A request for a decoration after the expiration of the two-year period requires a congressional referral.

b. There are no time limits pertaining to the award of combat badges or the Purple Heart decoration.

c. All requests for reconsideration of previously returned and/or denied decorations made via the military chain of command must be submitted into military channels within one year from the date of the original decision.

d. In addition to a request for reconsideration through military channels, a member of Congress can request a review of a recommendation for any award or decoration, as well as the upgrading of a previous decoration without regard to the one-year time limit.

10. Expected processing time through ARNG-HRH-A to HRC for various awards are as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| a. Army Achievement Medal and higher | 60-90 days |
| b. Purple Heart | 90-120 days |
| c. Combat Infantry/Medical Badge | 45-60 days |
| d. Combat Action Badge | 30-45 days |

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11. Submission of Classified Documents. Under no circumstances should classified documents (Confidential, Secret, or Top Secret) be sent via e-mail or U.S. postal mail to ARNG-HRH-A. If classified documentation is vital to the submission of a packet, then consult your State security manager for guidance regarding proper packaging and handling of classified documents.

12. Complete Requests. The unit forwards a completed award/decoration recommendation packet to the respective State Army Personnel Office (G1) for review. Once the State's Personnel Office has verified the packet is complete, it should be forwarded through ARNG-HRH-A for tracking and review, and then processed to HRC Awards Branch for final disposition. All electronic submissions should be e-mailed to ngbcombatawards@ng.army.mil or paper packets may be submitted by mail to Chief, Personnel Policy Division, ATTN: ARNG-HRH-A Combat Awards, 111 South George Mason Drive, Arlington, VA 22204.

13. My point of contact for this action is SGM Bernard J. Hobbs, DSN: 327-0637, (703) 607-0637, or bernard.j.hobbs@ng.army.mil.

Incl
Annex A
Annex B
Annex C
Annex D



GILBERT S. MORALES, JR.
DAC, GS-15
Acting Chief, Personnel Policy Division

Annex A Decorations

The documents listed below are required for a recommendation for decorations, excluding the Purple Heart:

- DA Form 638 (Recommendation for Award) with the endorsements from the original wartime chain of command during the achievement, act, or service.
- A one page narrative description of incident or act of valor that outlines the actions of the recommended Soldier deemed as heroic/valorous, meritorious, or worthy achievement.
- Proposed Award Citation. The information that is annotated in the citation will be transcribed on the award certificate upon approval.
- Each request for a valor award must include, at a minimum, two eyewitness statements, written by individuals other than the Soldier being nominated.
- DD Form 214 Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, and DD Form 215 Correction of DD Form 214, if applicable.

A DA Form 2-1 Personnel Qualification Record, Enlisted Records Brief (ERB), Officer Records Brief (ORB), or Personnel Qualification Record (PQR) is not mandatory, but recommended for correctly determining the number of Oak leaf clusters to which a Soldier may be entitled.

Annex B
Purple Heart Decoration

The following documents are required for a recommendation for the Purple Heart Decoration:

- DA Form 4187 Personnel Action.
- DD Form 214 Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, and DD Form 215 Correction of DD Form 214, if applicable.
- Memo or DA Form 4187-1-R Personnel Action Form Addendum containing command endorsements through first (Army) General Officer in the chain of command.
- Mobilization and Deployment orders (if unit orders – there must be an attached roster which contains the Soldier's name).
- A one-page narrative description of incident.
- All SF-600 Chronological Record of Medical Care pertaining to the specific casualty incident are required. HRC considers the initial casualty report to be the most important document in its decision making process. If the Purple Heart Decoration request is for hearing impairment, both the pre and post injury audiograms (hearing tests) must be included in the packet.
- Casualty Report/Incident report.
- As appropriate, a DA Form 2-1 Personnel Qualification Record, Enlisted Records Brief (ERB), Officer Records Brief (ORB), or Personnel Qualification Record (PQR).
- Two or more eyewitness statements from persons other than the recommended Soldier.

Annex C Combat Badges

The following documents are required for all Combat Badge request.

- DA Form 4187 Personnel Action annotated with date of incident, location, mission/purpose of action and brief description of the incident.
- DD Form 214 Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, and DD Form 215 Correction of DD Form 214.
- Memo or DA Form 4187-1-R Personnel Action Form Addendum containing command endorsements through first (Army) General Officer in the Soldier peace time chain of command.
- Mobilization and Deployment orders (if unit orders – there must be an attached roster which contains the Soldier's name).
- A one page narrative description of the incident.
- As appropriate, a DA Form 2-1 Personnel Qualification Record, Enlisted Records Brief (ERB), Officer Records Brief (ORB), or Personnel Qualification Record (PQR).
- Orders for a Purple Heart and/or valor award received for the same incident, or an awards certificate with a visible permanent order number may be included with the packet. HRC will not consider a certificate without the permanent order number as proof of an award.
- Two or more eyewitness statements from persons other than the recommended Soldier.
- The following documents are helpful in the final determination, but are not required:
 - Situation report (SITREP or SIR)
 - Casualty/Incident report
 - Official unit reports (i.e. S3 logs, SDO Logs, etc.)
 - Spot Report (SPOTREP)

