

. How to Obtain Standard Form 180 (SF-180) to Request Military Service Records

There are several ways to obtain an SF-180. You can:

a. **Download and print a copy of the [SF-180 in PDF format](#).**

- You need access to a printer and the Adobe Acrobat Reader software (see link below). The form is a total of 3 pages.
- The SF-180 is formatted for letter size paper (8.5" x 11"). If your printer cannot accommodate this, select "*shrink to fit*" when the Adobe Acrobat Reader "*Print*" dialog box appears.
- This is also a fillable version of the SF-180. It will allow you to type the needed information into the form using your keyboard. **You will still need to print, sign and mail the form.** Otherwise, it works the same as stated above.

Please Note: While Section II, Paragraph 1 of the Standard Form 180 outlines multiple types of records that may be available to the requester, **the DD Form 214 is the most common document necessary to obtain most veteran's benefits.** If a complete copy of the military service record is desired, please check the "Other" box and specify "Complete Copy" in the provided space.

Where to Return the Form:

- Review the tables on page 3 of SF-180 to identify the correct location of the record you need (based on branch of service, dates of separation, and type of record) send the completed form to the address identified on the table

b. **Contact Us to order the form through the mail**

National Personnel Records Center

1 Archives Drive

St. Louis, Missouri 63138

Other Ways to Obtain the SF-180:

- From the Department of Defense
- From Federal Information Centers
- From [local Veterans Administration offices](#)
- From veterans service organizations

The SF-180 may be photocopied as needed. Please submit a separate SF-180 for each individual whose records are being requested.

2. Write a Letter to Request Records

If you are not able to obtain a SF-180, you may still submit a request for military records. Requests must contain enough information to allow us to identify the record from among the more than 70 million on file at the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC). For example, if you are requesting an Official Military Personnel File (OMPF), please include as much of the following information as possible:

- The veteran's complete name used while in service
- [Service number or social security number](#)
- Branch of service
- Dates of service
- Date and place of birth may also be helpful, especially if the service number is not known
- If the request pertains to a record that may have been involved in the [1973 fire](#), also include:
 - Place of discharge
 - Last unit of assignment
 - Place of entry into the service, if known.

Please submit a separate request (either SF-180 or letter) for each individual whose records are being requested.

Please Note: Next-of-kin (*the un-remarried widow or widower, son, daughter, father, mother, brother or sister of the deceased veteran*) must provide proof of death of the veteran, such as a copy of the death certificate, a letter from the funeral home or a published obituary.

Additional information is required if you are requesting clinical or medical treatment records (see [Federal Records](#)).

How to Submit Requests:

[Federal law](#) [5 USC 552a(b)] requires that **all written requests for Federal (non-archival) records and information be signed (in cursive) and dated (within the last year).**

You may submit more than one request per envelope or fax, but please submit a separate request (either SF-180 or letter) for each individual whose records are being requested.

Please Note: While Section II, Paragraph 1 of the Standard Form 180 outlines multiple types of records that may be available to the requester, **the DD Form 214 is the most common document necessary to obtain most veteran's benefits.** If a complete copy of the military service record is desired, please check the "Other" box and specify "Complete Copy" in the provided space.

- **Mail a letter or [Standard Form \(SF\) 180, Request Pertaining to Military Records](#) to:**

National Personnel Records Center
1 Archives Drive
St. Louis, MO 63138

- **Fax a letter or Standard Form 180 to:** 314-801-9195

The Center will respond in writing by U.S. Mail.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FEDERAL AND ARCHIVAL RECORDS? [Learn more](#)

Order Processing Time:

Response time for records requested from the [National Personnel Records Center \(NPRC\)](#) varies and is dependent upon the complexity of your request, the availability of records and our workload.

Please do not send a follow-up request before 90 days have elapsed, as it may cause further delays.

While the NPRC works actively to respond to each request in a timely fashion, the Center receives approximately 4,000 - 5,000 requests per day. However, requests that involve reconstruction efforts due to the [1973 Fire](#), or older records which require extensive search efforts, may take longer to complete.

Emergency Requests:

If your request is urgent (e.g. upcoming surgery, funeral, etc.) please provide this information in the **"Comments"** section of [eVetrecs](#) or in the **"Purpose"** section of the **SF-180** and **fax it to our Customer Service Team at (314) 801-0764**. Please contact our customer service staff at (314) 801-0800 if you have questions. Due to the large number of calls we receive at this number, hold times are often long. However, once you reach a technician they will be happy to assist you with emergency service.

If your burial request involves internment at a Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery, contact the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at (800) 535-1117 or visit their website http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/burial_benefits/. We work directly with the Veterans Affairs staff to obtain records to verify service for burial benefits. If the veteran is not going to be interred at a National Cemetery, the requester may fax the SF-180 (including signature of the next of kin and proof of death) to the Customer Service Team at (314) 801-0764.