



# Department of Defense INSTRUCTION

NUMBER 1348.34  
September 1, 2011

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USD(P&R)

SUBJECT: Presidential Recognition on Retirement from Military Service

- References:
- (a) DoD Instruction 1348.34, "Presidential Recognition on Retirement from Military Service," September 13, 1989 (hereby cancelled)
  - (b) DoD Directive 5124.02, "Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R))," June 23, 2008
  - (c) White House Memorandum, "Appreciation Certificates for Military Retirements," March 2, 1989<sup>1</sup>

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction reissues Reference (a) consistent with the authority in Reference (b) to establish policy, assign responsibilities, and provide procedures for conveying the appreciation of the President to Military Service members upon their retirement, in accordance with Reference (c).

2. APPLICABILITY. This Instruction applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (hereinafter referred to collectively as the "DoD Components"). As used herein, the term "Military Services" refers to the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps.

3. POLICY. It is DoD policy that:

a. A DD Form 2542, "Certificate of Appreciation for Service in the Armed Forces of the United States:"

(1) Shall be presented to each member retiring from the Military Services after serving 20 or more years and attaining eligibility to receive retired pay.

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<sup>1</sup> Available upon request from the Office and Enlisted Personnel Management Directorate, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

(2) May be presented to other members retiring from the Military Services, as determined by the Secretary concerned.

b. Members of the Reserve Components will be presented this certificate upon their transfer to the Retired Reserve.

c. Letters of appreciation, signed by the President, shall also be presented to select personnel specified in section 2 of the enclosure to this Instruction.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

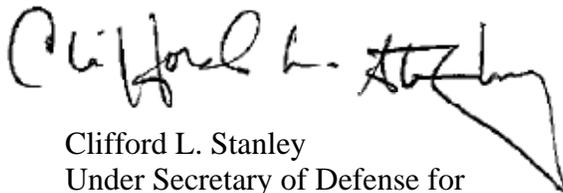
a. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness shall oversee compliance with this Instruction.

b. Secretaries of the Military Departments. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall ensure compliance with this Instruction.

5. PROCEDURES. See Enclosure.

6. RELEASABILITY. UNLIMITED. This Instruction is approved for public release and is available on the Internet from the DoD Issuances Website at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives>.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Instruction is effective upon its publication to the DoD Issuances Website.



Clifford L. Stanley  
Under Secretary of Defense for  
Personnel and Readiness

Enclosure  
Procedures

ENCLOSURE

PROCEDURES

1. CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

a. The DD Form 2542 extends the Nation's appreciation to those who are retiring after honorable service in the Military Services. The DD Form 2542 is signed by the President, as Commander in Chief. See

<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/forminfo/forminfo1872.html> for information on obtaining copies.

b. The DD Form 2542 shall be appropriately completed with the name, grade, and Military Service, and will be presented at the time of the Service member's retirement from the Military Service, in accordance with the policy of this Instruction.

c. The words "DD Form 2542" shall not appear on the actual certificate.

d. The DD Form 2542 expresses gratitude to the individual for military service. It is not intended to have any legal effect on entitlements or benefits. Accordingly, a copy of the DD Form 2542, or a notation that the Service member received it, shall not be included in the Service member's permanent military record.

e. Military Departments shall present certificates of appreciation to all Service members retiring on or after January 20, 1989. Only one certificate is provided for each Service member.

2. LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

a. In addition to the DD Form 2542, the following personnel shall receive a standard letter of appreciation upon retirement, prepared by the White House and signed by the President of the United States:

(1) Service members retiring with at least 30 years of military service. Reserve Component members must have served 30 years of creditable service for retired pay purposes in order to qualify for a retirement letter of appreciation from the President of the United States.

(2) The Chairman and the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Chiefs of Staff of the Military Services.

(3) The senior enlisted member from each Military Service.

(4) Recipients of the Medal of Honor.

(5) Former prisoners of war who qualify for or have been awarded the Prisoner of War Medal.

b. The Military Departments shall request Presidential letters of appreciation through their respective White House liaison officer and provide the information necessary to complete the letter, using the format in the Figure. Requests shall be routed through the Executive Secretary of the DoD.

c. Presidential retirement letters of appreciation should be requested 90 days in advance of actual retirement date or retirement ceremony (whichever comes first), but will be processed up to 60 days after retirement date. A request submitted more than 60 days after retirement date is subject to the current Presidential Administration's enforcement guidelines regarding submission suspense.

Figure. Sample Format For Requests for a Presidential Letter Of Appreciation

	Date
MEMORANDUM FOR THE MILITARY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT	
THRU EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE	
SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation for Military/Civilian Retiree	
Request for Presidential Retirement Letter for:	
NAME:	
RANK:	
SERVICE:	
YEARS OF SERVICE: (must be 30 years or more)	
RETIREMENT DATE:	
CEREMONY DATE:	
HOME ADDRESS:	
UNIT ADDRESS:	
DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS: MAIL TO:	
POC FOR THIS ACTION: Name, phone#, and e-mail address	
RETIREE: MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT: YES/NO (optional)	
FORMER PRISIONER OF WAR: YES/NO (optional)	
Signature of requestor Printed name, title and office	