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Discharge Upgrade Initial Instructions

Thank you for retaining the services of The Mayer Law Office for your Discharge Upgrade case. We look forward to representing you.

Initially, it is necessary for us to collect documents relevant to your case in order to prepare for the written submissions in your case. The more you help us to organize and sort this paperwork, the more my office can focus our attention and efforts on the merits of your case. These directions are designed to assist you in providing us with a complete, well-organized file.

To obtain military records, you should search your own personal files as well as requesting a copy of your official military records via archives.gov. When requesting your records, specify that you need your entire veteran file, including medical records, punitive records, page 11 entries (if applicable), enlistment contracts, and anything else related to your service and discharge. Otherwise, they will only send a copy of your DD-214.

The DD-214 is the most important form needed to facilitate your discharge upgrade case. We must have a clear copy of your DD-214 MEMBER-4 (sometimes called a COPY-4). This is clearly marked at the bottom of the form. Other versions of this form are not acceptable.

It is also necessary for you to organize the paperwork when you send it to us. In the past, clients sent boxes of unorganized papers which caused us to focus on sorting documents rather than organizing the merits of their case. Our goal is to spend the majority of our time focusing on attaining the best outcome for your case. Your help is necessary to achieve this goal.

Please organize your paperwork in the following groups:

Group	Description
A	DD-214 (Member-4 or Copy-4 ONLY) and all other discharge paperwork to include outprocessing paperwork, separation board paperwork/evidence, and commander memos. Also include any investigations done related to allegations of misconduct (command or law enforcement). If you have more than one DD-214, please include all. If you are a National Guard member, include all NGB-22 forms. Commander memos stating the reason for your separation and rights are especially important in preparing your case. Again, the DD-214 must be the Member-4 or Copy-4.
B	All evaluation reports (Enlisted, NCO, Officer, or Academic)
C	All awards and certificates of appreciation/commendation/achievement.
D	Any diplomas and transcripts from college, trade school, or service schools.
E	Other service-related documents.
F	<p>Letters of recommendation. These can be from anyone (Officers, NCOs, Junior Enlisted, High School Teachers/Coaches, family, friends, pastors, etc). When in doubt, ask the person for a letter. Each letter should cover, at a minimum:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How they know you. 2. How long they've known you. 3. What they think of you as a person and/or servicemember. 4. How they believe that your character as a person and rehabilitative potential. 5. Specific events they witnessed that show that you are a quality person/servicemember.
G	Photographs of you as a good service member, parent, family member. These should be pictures that illustrate your human side in order to show the board that you are a caring, conscientious person. Digital copies are preferred.
H	Timeline. You need to lay-out a timeline that covers all significant events from the time you entered the service until present day. This includes all promotions, deployments, and anything you can remember about the acts surrounding your separation from the service. Dates should be as specific as possible. It is also preferable if you include any non-military important dates, as they may add to our overall theme. Include as much detail as possible regarding the events and acts that gave rise to your administrative discharge.
I	Evidence that helps us to prove that the underlying reasons for separation are not severe or true. This includes the statements of others (preferably eye-witnesses), pictures, and official forms/memos/letters.
J	Medical Records (if relevant to the upgrade case)

These materials may be mailed (via any shipping company or USPS) to my office address, faxed, or emailed (though, email or faxed records are preferred). However, they must be organized and clearly labeled. If you mail these materials, do not feel the need to expedite delivery unless told otherwise. The 1 or 2 days you save in shipping time is normally not worth the expense. The process takes time. Do not expect a rush-job.

If you email scanned files, please clearly label the title of the email with your last name, first name, group letter, and brief description (i.e. Smith, John, B NCO Evaluation Reports). This helps us to properly organize the files on our computers.

REMOVE ALL STAPLES. Use only paperclips or other easily-removed fasteners.