



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1500 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-1500

MANPOWER AND
RESERVE AFFAIRS

MAR 28 2025

Dear Fellow Veteran,

It is with great pleasure that I invite you to return to service in the finest military in history. Your career ended too soon, and on behalf of Secretary Hegseth, the Department of Defense is eager to welcome you back.

On August 24, 2021, the Secretary of Defense mandated that all Service members receive a COVID-19 vaccine. In 2022, Congress passed a law requiring the Secretary of Defense to repeal that wrongful mandate, but not before more than 8,000 Service members had been forced out of the military under that policy. I deeply regret that you were forced to choose between compliance and ending your military career. You and thousands of your comrades in arms deserved much better, and the Department is committed to righting that wrong.

In Executive Order 14184, "Reinstating Service Members Discharged under the Military's COVID-19 Vaccination Mandate," dated January 27, 2025, President Trump directed the Department to make reinstatement available to those Service members whose careers were ended by the Department's since-repealed "unfair, overbroad, and completely unnecessary" COVID-19 vaccine requirement. EO 14184 also provides for backpay for Service members who return, consistent with applicable law.

On February 7, 2025, Secretary of Defense Hegseth directed the Secretaries of the Military Departments to "provide an accelerated process" for those who choose to return. Pursuant to that guidance, you will find enclosed instructions from your Military Service concerning the process to return, which will generally include a service obligation of four years, although in some cases a service obligation may be as little as two years for those eligible to retire within that time. If you choose to pursue reinstatement, the Department is committed to guiding you through the necessary steps.

Secretary Hegseth is committed to reviving the warrior ethos and restoring trust in our military, and I hope you choose to contribute your skill and experience to that effort. Thank you for your service to the United States of America, and I hope to welcome you back soon.

Sincerely,

Tim Dill
Performing the Duties of the Assistant Secretary
of Defense for Manpower and Reserve
Affairs