

VA Lenders Handbook (VA Pamphlet 26-7), Chapter 2, Topic 4 — Proof of Service Requirements

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4. Proof of Service Requirements Change Date March 28, 2019 • This chapter has been revised in its entirety.

a. Discharged Veterans (Regular Military) The DD214 Form, Certificate of Release or Discharge From Active Duty, will generally contain all the information needed for VA to make an eligibility determination for persons who served on active duty of the a regular component of the Armed Forces. The regular Armed Forces include active duty in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard. • VA will accept legible copies of the DD214 Form. • Veterans separated after October 1, 1979, should furnish Member Copy 2, 4, 8, or any copy of a DD214 Form that includes the COS and the narrative reason for separation. Veterans separated from military service after January 1, 1950, should have received DD214 Form. Veterans separated from active duty before January 1, 1950, received documentation other than DD214 Form. To be acceptable, it should indicate: a) LOS, and b) COS b. Veterans Still on Active Duty Proof of service for Veterans on active duty is a Statement of Service (SOS) signed by, or by the direction of, the adjutant, personnel office, or commander of the unit or higher headquarters they are attached to. There is no one unique form used by the military for an SOS. While an SOS is typically on military letterhead, it may also be electronic and both are acceptable. The SOS must clearly show the: • Veteran's full name, • social Security Number (SSN) or the last 4 digits of the SSN, • entry date on active duty, • duration of lost time, if any, and • name and point of contact for the command or unit. Continued on next page VA Pamphlet 26-7, Revised Chapter 2: Veteran's Eligibility and Entitlement 2-13 4. Proof of Service Requirements, continued c. Discharged Reserve/ Guard Members There is no one form used by the Reserves or National Guard that is similar to DD214 Form. Selected Reserve describes a member or unit with the Ready Reserve designated by their respective services and approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff as so essential to initial wartime missions that they have priority over all other reserves. The National Guard is a unique element of the U.S. Military that serves both community and country. Any state governor or the President of the United States can call on the Guard in a moments notice. Discharged members of the Army or Air National Guard may submit NGB Form 22, Report of Separation and Record of Service, and NGB Form 23B, Retirement Points Summary Statement, with the COS document. Members of the Reserves should submit their points statement with COS. Typically, all members of the Reserves and/or Guard receive an annual retirement points summary which indicates the level and length of participation. The applicant should submit the latest retirement point statement received, along with evidence of honorable service. VA will accept legible copies. d. Current Reserve/ Guard Members Individuals who are still members of the Reserves/National Guard must provide an SOS signed by, or by the direction of, the adjutant, personnel office, or commander of the unit or higher headquarters they are attached to. There is no one form used uniformly by the military for an SOS. While an SOS is typically on military letterhead, some may be electronic and both are acceptable. The statement of service must clearly show the: • Veteran's full name, • the SSN or the last 4 digits of the SSN, • entry date of the applicant's Reserve/Guard duty, and • the

unit must state the creditable (actually drilled) years served in the Reserves or the National Guard. Continued on next page VA Pamphlet 26-7, Revised Chapter 2: Veteran's Eligibility and Entitlement 2-14 4. Proof of Service Requirements, continued d. Current Reserve/ Guard Members, Continued If called to active duty, a copy of the orders must accompany the SOS with the name and point of contact for the command or unit. The statement must clearly indicate that the applicant is an "active" reservist or National Guard member and not just in a control group (inactive status). If Veterans cannot locate proof of service, they can request military documents either through the National Archives, <http://www.ebenefits.va.gov/>, or by completing SF- 180, Request Pertaining to Military Records. The completed form should be submitted to the appropriate address shown. It should not be sent to VA. In many cases, VA internal systems will have sufficient information to make the eligibility determination for those who served on active duty. Lenders and Veterans should not delay requesting a COE pending receipt of requested military documents. VA Pamphlet 26-7, Revised Chapter 2: Veteran's Eligibility and Entitlement 2-15

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