

§ 3.12a

38 CFR Ch. I (7–1–25 Edition)

awarded under the standards set forth in paragraph (h) of this section. Accounts in payment status on or after October 8, 1977, shall be terminated the end of the month in which it is determined that the original other than honorable discharge was not issued under conditions other than dishonorable following notice from the appropriate discharge review board that the discharge would not have been upgraded under the standards set forth in paragraph (h) of this section, or April 7, 1978, whichever is the earliest. Accounts in suspense (either before or after October 8, 1977) shall be terminated on the date of last payment or April 7, 1978, whichever is the earliest.

(k) *Overpayments after October 8, 1977, based on application of AWOL statutory bar.* No overpayment shall be created as a result of payments made after October 8, 1977, in cases in which the bar contained in paragraph (c)(6) of this section is for application. Accounts in payment status on or after October 8, 1977, shall be terminated at the end of the month in which it is determined that compelling circumstances do not exist, or April 7, 1978, whichever is the earliest. Accounts in suspense (either before or after October 8, 1977) shall be terminated on the date of last payment, or April 7, 1978, whichever is the earliest.

(l) *Uncharacterized separations.* Where enlisted personnel are administratively separated from service on the basis of proceedings initiated on or after October 1, 1982, the separation may be classified as one of the three categories of administrative separation that do not require characterization of service by the military department concerned. In such cases conditions of discharge will be determined by the VA as follows:

(1) *Entry level separation.* Uncharacterized administrative separations of this type shall be considered under conditions other than dishonorable.

(2) *Void enlistment or induction.* Uncharacterized administrative separations of this type shall be reviewed based on facts and circumstances surrounding separation, with reference to the provisions of § 3.14 of this part, to determine whether separation was

under conditions other than dishonorable.

(3) *Dropped from the rolls.* Uncharacterized administrative separations of this type shall be reviewed based on facts and circumstances surrounding separation to determine whether separation was under conditions other than dishonorable.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 101, 501, and 5303)

CROSS REFERENCES: Validity of enlistments. See § 3.14. Revision of decisions. See § 3.105. Effective dates. See § 3.400(g). Minimum active-duty service requirement. See § 3.12a.

[28 FR 123, Jan. 4, 1963, as amended at 41 FR 12656, Mar. 26, 1976; 43 FR 15153, Apr. 11, 1978; 45 FR 2318, Jan. 11, 1980; 49 FR 44099, Nov. 2, 1984; 62 FR 14823, Mar. 28, 1997; 87 FR 26125, May 3, 2022; 89 FR 32372, Apr. 26, 2024]

§ 3.12a Minimum active-duty service requirement.

(a) *Definitions.* (1) The term *minimum period of active duty* means, for the purposes of this section, the shorter of the following periods.

(i) Twenty-four months of continuous active duty. Non-duty periods that are excludable in determining the Department of Veterans Affairs benefit entitlement (e.g., see § 3.15) are not considered as a break in service for continuity purposes but are to be subtracted from total time served.

(ii) The full period for which a person was called or ordered to active duty.

(2) The term *benefit* includes a right or privilege but does not include a refund of a participant's contributions under 38 U.S.C. Ch. 32.

(b) *Effect on Department of Veterans Affairs benefits.* Except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, a person listed in paragraph (c) of this section who does not complete a minimum period of active duty is not eligible for any benefit under title 38, United States Code or under any law administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs based on that period of active service.

(c) *Persons included.* Except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, the provisions of paragraph (b) of this section apply to the following persons:

(1) A person who originally enlists (enlisted person only) in a regular component of the Armed Forces after September 7, 1980 (a person who signed a delayed-entry contract with one of the service branches prior to September 8, 1980, and under that contract was assigned to a reserve component until entering on active duty after September 7, 1980, shall be considered to have enlisted on the date the person entered on active duty); and

(2) Any other person (officer as well as enlisted) who enters on active duty after October 16, 1981 and who has not previously completed a continuous period of active duty of at least 24 months or been discharged or released from active duty under 10 U.S.C. 1171 (early out).

(d) *Exclusions.* The provisions of paragraph (b) of this section are not applicable to the following cases:

(1) To a person who is discharged or released under 10 U.S.C. 1171 or 1173 (early out or hardship discharge).

(2) To a person who is discharged or released from active duty for a disability adjudged service connected without presumptive provisions of law, or who at time of discharge had such a service-connected disability, shown by official service records, which in medical judgment would have justified a discharge for disability.

(3) To a person with a compensable service-connected disability.

(4) To the provision of a benefit for or in connection with a service-connected disability, condition, or death.

(5) To benefits under chapter 19 of title 38, United States Code.

(e) *Dependent or survivor benefits*—(1) *General.* If a person is, by reason of this section, barred from receiving any benefits under title 38, United States Code (or under any other law administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs based on a period of active duty, the person's dependents or survivors are also barred from receiving benefits based on the same period of active duty.

(2) *Exceptions.* Paragraph (e)(1) of this section does not apply to benefits under chapters 19 and 37 of title 38, United States Code. (38 U.S.C. 5303A)

[47 FR 24549, June 7, 1982]

§ 3.13 Discharge to change status.

(a) A discharge to accept appointment as a commissioned or warrant officer, or to change from a Reserve or Regular commission to accept a commission in the other component, or to reenlist is a conditional discharge if it was issued during one of the following periods:

(1) World War I; prior to November 11, 1918. As to reenlistments, this subparagraph applies only to Army and National Guard. No involuntary extension or other restrictions existed on Navy enlistments.

(2) World War II, the Korean conflict or the Vietnam era; prior to the date the person was eligible for discharge under the point or length of service system, or under any other criteria in effect.

(3) Peacetime service; prior to the date the person was eligible for an unconditional discharge.

(b) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, the entire period of service under the circumstances stated in paragraph (a) of this section constitutes one period of service and entitlement will be determined by the character of the final termination of such period of active service except that, for death pension purposes, § 3.3(b)(3) and (4) is controlling as to basic entitlement when the conditions prescribed therein are met.

(c) Despite the fact that no unconditional discharge may have been issued, a person shall be considered to have been unconditionally discharged or released from active military, naval, air, or space service when the following conditions are met:

(1) The person served in the active military, naval, air, or space service for the period of time the person was obligated to serve at the time of entry into service;

(2) The person was not discharged or released from such service at the time of completing that period of obligation due to an intervening enlistment or reenlistment; and

(3) The person would have been eligible for a discharge or release under conditions other than dishonorable at