

2004—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 108-375 substituted “Final” for “Effective October 1, 2002, final”.

1999—Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 106-65 substituted “and the Committee on Armed Services” for “and the Committee on National Security”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

TERMINATION OF REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

For termination, effective Dec. 31, 2021, of provisions in subsec. (e) of this section requiring submittal of report to Congress, see section 1061 of Pub. L. 114-328, set out as a note under section 111 of this title.

§ 1558. Review of actions of selection boards: correction of military records by special boards; judicial review

(a) CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS.—The Secretary of a military department may correct a person’s military records in accordance with a recommendation made by a special board. Any such correction may be made effective as of the effective date of the action taken on a report of a previous selection board that resulted in the action corrected in the person’s military records.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) SPECIAL BOARD.—(A) The term “special board” means a board that the Secretary of a military department convenes under any authority to consider whether to recommend a person for appointment, enlistment, reenlistment, assignment, promotion, retention, separation, retirement, or transfer to inactive status in a reserve component, or the Space Force, instead of referring the records of that person for consideration by a previously convened selection board which considered or should have considered that person.

(B) Such term includes a board for the correction of military records convened under section 1552 of this title, if designated as a special board by the Secretary concerned.

(C) Such term does not include a promotion special selection board convened under section 628, 14502, or 20252 of this title.

(2) SELECTION BOARD.—(A) The term “selection board” means a selection board convened under section 573(c), 580, 580a, 581, 611(b), 637, 638, 638a, 14101(b), 14701, 14701a, 14704, 14705, or 20403 of this title, and any other board convened by the Secretary of a military department under any authority to recommend persons for appointment, enlistment, reenlistment, assignment, promotion, or retention in the armed forces or for separation, retirement, or transfer to inactive status in a reserve component, or the Space Force, for the purpose of reducing the number of persons serving in the armed forces.

(B) Such term does not include any of the following:

(i) A promotion board convened under section 573(a), 611(a), 14101(a), or 20211 of this title.

(ii) A special board.

(iii) A special selection board convened under section 628 of this title.

(iv) A board for the correction of military records convened under section 1552 of this title.

(3) INVOLUNTARILY BOARD-SEPARATED.—The term “involuntarily board-separated” means

separated or retired from an armed force, or transferred to the Retired Reserve or to inactive status in a reserve component, or the Space Force, as a result of a recommendation of a selection board.

(c) RELIEF ASSOCIATED WITH CORRECTION OF CERTAIN ACTIONS.—(1) The Secretary of the military department concerned shall ensure that an involuntarily board-separated person receives relief under paragraph (2) or under paragraph (3) if the person, as a result of a correction of the person’s military records under subsection (a), becomes entitled to retention on or restoration to active duty or to active status in a reserve component, or the Space Force.¹

(2)(A) A person referred to in paragraph (1) shall, with that person’s consent, be restored to the same status, rights, and entitlements (less appropriate offsets against back pay and allowances) in that person’s armed force as the person would have had if the person had not been selected to be involuntarily board-separated as a result of an action the record of which is corrected under subsection (a). An action under this subparagraph is subject to subparagraph (B).

(B) Nothing in subparagraph (A) may be construed to permit a person to be on active duty or in an active status in a reserve component, or the Space Force, after the date on which the person would have been separated, retired, or transferred to the Retired Reserve or to inactive status in a reserve component, or the Space Force, if the person had not been selected to be involuntarily board-separated in an action of a selection board the record of which is corrected under subsection (a).

(3) If an involuntarily board-separated person referred to in paragraph (1) does not consent to a restoration of status, rights, and entitlements under paragraph (2), the Secretary concerned shall pay that person back pay and allowances (less appropriate offsets), and shall provide that person service credit, for the period—

(A) beginning on the date of the person’s separation, retirement, or transfer to the Retired Reserve or to inactive status in a reserve component, or the Space Force, as the case may be; and

(B) ending on the earlier of—

(i) the date on which the person would have been so restored under paragraph (2), as determined by the Secretary concerned; or

(ii) the date on which the person would otherwise have been separated, retired, or transferred to the Retired Reserve or to inactive status in a reserve component, or the Space Force, as the case may be.

(d) FINALITY OF UNFAVORABLE ACTION.—If a special board makes a recommendation not to correct the military records of a person regarding action taken in the case of that person on the basis of a previous report of a selection board, the action previously taken on that report shall be considered as final as of the date of the action taken on that report.

(e) REGULATIONS.—(1) The Secretary of each military department shall prescribe regulations to carry out this section. Regulations under this

¹ So in original.

subsection may not apply to subsection (f), other than to paragraph (4)(C) of that subsection.

(2) The Secretary may prescribe in the regulations under paragraph (1) the circumstances under which consideration by a special board may be provided for under this section, including the following:

(A) The circumstances under which consideration of a person's case by a special board is contingent upon application by or for that person.

(B) Any time limits applicable to the filing of an application for such consideration.

(3) Regulations prescribed by the Secretary of a military department under this subsection may not take effect until approved by the Secretary of Defense.

(f) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—(1) A person seeking to challenge an action or recommendation of a selection board, or an action taken by the Secretary of the military department concerned on the report of a selection board, is not entitled to relief in any judicial proceeding unless the action or recommendation has first been considered by a special board under this section or the Secretary concerned has denied the convening of such a board for such consideration.

(2)(A) A court of the United States may review a determination by the Secretary of a military department not to convene a special board in the case of any person. In any such case, the court may set aside the Secretary's determination only if the court finds the determination to be—

- (i) arbitrary or capricious;
- (ii) not based on substantial evidence;
- (iii) a result of material error of fact or material administrative error; or
- (iv) otherwise contrary to law.

(B) If a court sets aside a determination by the Secretary of a military department not to convene a special board, it shall remand the case to the Secretary concerned, who shall provide for consideration by a special board.

(3) A court of the United States may review a recommendation of a special board or an action of the Secretary of the military department concerned on the report of a special board. In any such case, a court may set aside the action only if the court finds that the recommendation or action was—

- (A) arbitrary or capricious;
- (B) not based on substantial evidence;
- (C) a result of material error of fact or material administrative error; or
- (D) otherwise contrary to law.

(4)(A) If, six months after receiving a complete application for consideration by a special board in any case, the Secretary concerned has not convened a special board and has not denied consideration by a special board in that case, the Secretary shall be deemed for the purposes of this subsection to have denied consideration of the case by a special board.

(B) If, six months after the convening of a special board in any case, the Secretary concerned has not taken final action on the report of the special board, the Secretary shall be deemed for the purposes of this subsection to have denied relief in such case.

(C) Under regulations prescribed under subsection (e), the Secretary of a military department may waive the applicability of subparagraph (A) or (B) in a case if the Secretary determines that a longer period for consideration of the case is warranted. Such a waiver may be for an additional period of not more than six months. The Secretary concerned may not delegate authority to make a determination under this subparagraph.

(g) EXISTING JURISDICTION.—Nothing in this section limits—

(1) the jurisdiction of any court of the United States under any provision of law to determine the validity of any law, regulation, or policy relating to selection boards; or

(2) the authority of the Secretary of a military department to correct a military record under section 1552 of this title.

(Added Pub. L. 107–107, div. A, title V, §503(a)(1), Dec. 28, 2001, 115 Stat. 1080; amended Pub. L. 118–31, div. A, title XVII, §1722(j)(1), Dec. 22, 2023, 137 Stat. 673; Pub. L. 118–159, div. A, title V, §513(c)(1), title XVII, §1701(a)(23), Dec. 23, 2024, 138 Stat. 1876, 2204.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2024—Subsec. (b)(2)(A). Pub. L. 118–159, §1701(a)(23)(B), substituted “14705” for “14507”.

Pub. L. 118–159, §513(c)(1), inserted “14701a,” after “14701.”

Subsecs. (b)(3), (c)(3)(A), (B)(ii). Pub. L. 118–159, §1701(a)(23)(A), substituted “Space Force,” for “Space Force.”

2023—Pub. L. 118–31, §1722(j)(1)(A), inserted “, or the Space Force,” after “reserve component” wherever appearing.

Subsec. (b)(1)(C). Pub. L. 118–31, §1722(j)(1)(B)(i), substituted “section 628, 14502, or 20252” for “section 628 or 14502”.

Subsec. (b)(2)(A). Pub. L. 118–31, §1722(j)(1)(B)(ii), substituted “14507, or 20403” for “or 14705”.

Subsec. (b)(2)(B)(i). Pub. L. 118–31, §1722(j)(1)(B)(iii), substituted “14101(a), or 20211” for “or 14101(a)”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section applicable with respect to any proceeding pending on or after Dec. 28, 2001, without regard to whether a challenge to an action of a selection board of any of the Armed Forces being considered in the proceeding was initiated before, on, or after that date, but not applicable with respect to any action commenced in a court of the United States before Dec. 28, 2001, see section 503(c) of Pub. L. 107–107, set out as an Effective Date of 2001 Amendment note under section 628 of this title.

§ 1559. Personnel limitation

(a) LIMITATION.—Before December 31, 2025, the Secretary of a military department may not carry out any reduction in the number of military and civilian personnel assigned to duty with the service review agency for that military department below the baseline number for that agency.

(b) BASELINE NUMBER.—The baseline number for a service review agency under this section is—

- (1) for purposes of the first report with respect to a service review agency under this