

# Veterans Questions & Answers

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## Service Documentation

A DD-214 documents active duty service time, which is the time credible for military service deposits. Further information regarding DD-214 and other service documentation can be found:

- [The United States National Archives](#)
- [This article, by The Military Wallet website](#)

Be wary of websites claiming to “help” obtain military records. The National Archives site above is a government site, and the best source to obtain any necessary service records. Keep in mind that your Official Military Personnel File (OMPF), also [available from the National Archives](#), is not the same thing as your DD-214. Most veterans can request a copy of their DD-214 directly from the National Archives using [their online form](#).

## Leave Accrual Adjustment

### General Information

Annual Leave accrual is covered by IRM 30.4.6.2, and sets the following categories for full-time employees:

<i>Years of Federal service</i>	<i>Annual leave earned each pay period</i>
Less than 3 years	4 hours
More than 3 but less than 15 years	6 hours
15 or more years	8 hours

And for part-time employees:

<i>Years of Federal service</i>	<i>Annual leave earned each pay period</i>
Less than 3 years	1 hour for each 20 hours worked
More than 3 but less than 15 years	1 hour for each 13 hours worked
15 or more years	1 hour for each 10 hours worked

### Credit for Military Service

[OPM’s Guide to Processing Personnel Actions, Chapter 6](#), discusses credible service for leave accrual, as well as how to compute and process SCD changes on their basis. In general, any period of service that is **potentially** credible for CSRS, is credible for annual leave accrual. Potentially credible does not mean that it must be claimed. As such, deposits are not required to get credit for annual leave accrual, with the following exception for retirees.

### Retirees Leave Accrual Credit

Retirees do not receive credit for leave accrual, unless:

- (a) the retirement is based on a disability received as a direct result of an armed conflict, **or**

(b) the retiree has:

- a. service during a war declared by Congress, **or**
- b. participated in a campaign or expedition, for which a campaign badge is authorized

Additional information and clarification can be found in [OPM's Pay & Leave webpage](#), under the heading "Credible Service for Leave Accrual".

## Campaign or Expeditionary Badge

A commonly asked question is whether or not the Global War on Terrorism medals qualify as "campaign badges", meeting the exception for credible service of retirees in calculating leave accrual. There are two medals awarded with this name:

- Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal (GWOT-EM)
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal (GWOT-S)

The latter of the two (GWOT-S) does NOT qualify for the criteria. Other campaign badges, such as the Afghanistan Campaign Medal (ACM), the Iraq Campaign Medal (ICM), the Inherent Resolve Campaign Medal (IRCM), as well as the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal all qualify for the criteria.

## Retirement Buy-Back (Military Service Deposits):

Military Service Deposits are used to adjust your Service Computation Date (SCD) for retirement. The deposits are equivalencies to your CSRS/FERS pension deposits as a civilian federal employee, and calculated based on your military base pay, over your period of service.

### Step 1 – Obtain Estimated Earnings

1. Obtain your DD-214, from each branch you served in
2. **For each branch of service served in:** Complete an [RI 20-97 form](#)
3. Send copies of both your DD-214 and the RI 20-97 to the [appropriate military finance office](#)

### Step 2 – Begin Service Deposits

1. After receiving the estimated military earnings from ALL branches served in:
  - a. Submit an OS Get Services ERC ticket [Order Services > My Career > Employee Information > SCD/EOD/Leave Category Changes
  - b. Include information that you want to perform military service deposits for CSRS/FERS
2. A BeST specialist will assist you in completing the AD-343 and SF-3108/2803:
  - a. AD-343: Payroll Action Request - *requests the National Finance Center deduct deposits from your pay*
  - b. SF-3108/2803: Application to Make Service Credit Payment (CSRS/FERS) – *communicates to CSRS/FERS the change to your retirement system*

### Step 3 – Military Service is "Bought Back"

1. The National Finance Center will automatically stop payments when complete, and issue a "Paid-In-Full" statement

2. IRS Human Capital will automatically adjust your Service Computation Date (SCD) for Leave via SF-50
3. CSRS/FERS will adjust your projected retirement pay, which will become available on the GRB platform
4. Each of these steps could take up to one or two pay periods to process

## Retired Military Personnel

### Disability Retired Personnel – Paid by the VA

A service-connected disability retirement is a separate benefit, unaffected by military service deposits. All credible military service can be “bought back” without affecting a service-connected disability retirement pension. No waiver is necessary.

### Active Duty Retired Personnel – Paid by DFAS

Personnel who retired from active duty and began receiving retirement pay immediately, **MUST** waive their retirement pay, in order to make military service deposits and obtain credit for their service, toward CSRS or FERS.

### Reserve Retired Personnel – Paid by DFAS

Personnel who retired from the reserve component, and are in a “retired awaiting pay” status, **DO NOT** need to waive their retirement pay, in order to make military service deposits and obtain credit for their service, toward CSRS or FERS.

## Why the Differences?

### Disability vs Retired:

Disability retirement is a separate benefit, where servicemembers will either be placed on the TDRL (Temporary Disability Retired List) or PDRL (Permanent Disability Retired List). The law specifically allows for a dual-payment of both military pension (retirement after 20 years of service) and disability retirement; either under the Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP) or Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC). The Concurrent Receipt rules replaced the VA Disability Offset rules.

### Active vs Reserve:

Two major differences between the Active Duty and Reserve retirement systems are:

1. Active duty retirement is paid immediately upon retirement, whereas Reservists who meet retirement guidelines are placed in a “retired awaiting pay” status, similar to federal deferred retirement. Pension is not paid until the reserve retiree reaches 60 years of age.
2. Active duty retirement is calculated by multiplying 2.5% by the number of years of credible service (in general). Reserve retirement is based upon a calculation of points. The points are then converted to equivalent years (by dividing by 360), and multiplied by 2.5%.

In general, reserve retirement pay is lower, as can be seen in [this article comparing hypothetical E7s](#), in addition to the difference in the time-value of immediate payments for active duty retirement. It is possible for reserve retirees to technically “double-dip”, since they can receive credit toward their reserve retirement and buy-back the same periods of active duty. However, the lower rate of retirement pay, combined with the deferral of retirement payments; more than make up for this de-minimis “double-dipping”.