



## NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

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ARNG-HRH

23 September 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR The Adjutants General of the States, Territories, and the  
Commanding General of the District of Columbia

SUBJECT: Updated Requirements for the Certification of Honorable Service for  
Members of the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve and Members of the  
Active Component for Purposes of Naturalization (PPOM # 20-034a) CORRECTED  
COPY

1. References:

a. Title 8, U.S.C. § 1440, Naturalization through active-duty service in the Armed Forces during World War I, World War II, Korean hostilities, Vietnam hostilities, or other periods of military hostilities.

b. Memorandum, Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), 13 October 2017, subject: Certification of Honorable Service for Members of Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve and Members of the Active Components of the Military or Naval Forces for Purposes of Naturalization.

c. Memorandum, Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), 31 August 2020, subject: Compliance with Court Order in the Case of Ange Samma v. Department of Defense, et al., Case No. 20-01104.

d. Memorandum, Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), 24 April 2020, subject: Certification of Honorable Service for Purposes of Naturalization.

e. Memorandum, Secretary of the Army, 7 February 2020, subject: Certification of Honorable Service for Members of Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve and Members of the Active Component for Purposes of Naturalization.

f. Memorandum, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), 3 September 2020, subject: Updated Requirements for the certification of Honorable Service for Members of the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve and Members of the Active Component for Purposes of Naturalization.

g. Memorandum, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), 19 February 2020, subject: Delegation of Authority to Certify Honorable Service of Members of the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve and Members of the Active Component for Purposes of Naturalization.

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2. Purpose. The Army National Guard (ARNG) Directorate, to insure compliance with reference 1f, updates guidance for the certifying Honorable service for Soldiers of the ARNG for the express purposes of naturalization.

3. Soldiers are authorized to request certification of honorable service for purposes of naturalization immediately upon entering active duty or attending drill with their Selected Reserve unit effective with date of this memorandum. This includes those Soldiers in the training pipeline attached to the Recruit Sustainment Program. The approval authority must certify or deny a Soldier's certification request and return it to the Soldier within 30 days of submission. Pursuant to reference 1.c., the screening and suitability requirements and time in service requirements in reference 1.b. are suspended.

4. The certification will be completed on the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Form N-426 and must be signed by O-6 or GS-15 or higher. A copy of the certification will be filed in the Soldier's Army Military Human Resource Record.

5. Requirement for Honorable Certification. The characterization of the Soldier's service certified as Honorable the following screening must be completed:

a. Legal and Disciplinary matters: not the subject of pending disciplinary action or pending adverse administrative action or proceeding and not the subject of a law enforcement or command investigation.

b. Background Investigation and Suitability Vetting: Soldier must complete applicable screening and suitability requirements, including a T-3 investigation, and clearance by the Expedited Screening Protocol.

6. Process. The certification will be completed on the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Form N-426, which is found at <https://www.uscis.gov/military>. An O-6 or GS-15 or higher must certify the USCIS form N-426. In addition, to the certified N-426, the USCIS Form N-400 (Application for Naturalization) must be mailed together to USCIS, P.O. Box 4446, Chicago, IL, 60680-4446. There is no requirement to certify the N-400. Mailing the forms to any other USCIS office may place the naturalization petition in the normal USCIS processing, which is neither free nor expedited. If you have questions regarding your biometrics, you can contact the Military Help Line at 877-CIS-4MIL (877-247-4645, TTY: 800-877-8339) or [militaryinfo@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:militaryinfo@uscis.dhs.gov).

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7. This updated policy supersedes all previous Strength Maintenance Operational Messages on the certification of naturalization.
8. States are required to endorse these updated requirements for the certification of Honorable service to all subordinate commands without delay.
9. My point of contact is Mr. Gregory W. Heffner, IPPS-A Policy, (703)-545-2867, or gregory.w.heffner.civ@mail.mil.

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Chief, Personnel Policy Division