

Paperwork/Planning Priorities: Before Departing the Military

- ✓ **Be your [own best advocate](#)!** Make time to leave the military with what you need as a military veteran. Don't be rushed by yourself or others. Before you sign any document, understand it and ensure it is 100% accurate.
- ✓ **DD214: This is a critically important document!** Ensure your [DD214/NGB22](#) is 100% accurate—all tours of duty dates and locations, decorations, and periods of service. Safeguard it throughout your lifetime!
- ✓ **Personnel Records:** Make at least one copy of 100% of your official personnel records—performance/fitness reports, decorations, Permanent Change of Station (PCS) and Temporary Duty (TDY) orders, and other documents.
 - ✓ You may need these for future employment opportunities, filing compensation and other benefits claims with the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), state and town/municipal veteran benefits, and other unforeseen events.
- ✓ **Medical/Health Records:** Make at least 3 complete copies—one for you, future health care providers, and possibly for filing a veteran benefits claim.
 - ✓ **Retirement/Separation Physical:** Ensure all your medical concerns, conditions, and care is thoroughly documented in your medical records.
- ✓ **Meet with VA-Accredited Veteran Service Officer (VSO), Attorney, or Claims Agent:** This [claim representative](#) reviews your medical records, may file a Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) compensation claim, and assist with other benefits (education, home loan, etc.) on your behalf. They usually work your compensation claim from beginning to end regardless of where you choose to live and work. **Make a copy of your VBA claim form for your home file.**
- ✓ **Will & Estate Planning:** Ensure you have a [copy of your most current will](#). Be aware that state recognition of a will executed in the military varies.
- ✓ **Benefits & Services:** Visit the [WomenVetsUSA Home Page](#) for education, employment, finances, health care, housing, legal, state and other resource links.

Securing this paperwork and researching other resources can clarify and expedite “after-the-military” tasks you’ll need to do. Also, reference the WomenVetsUSA: [Planning Priorities: Transitioning Out/After Departing the Military Checklist](#)