

TO BUY BACK MILITARY TIME

1. Complete a separate Estimated Earnings During Military Service request form, RI 20-97 for each branch of service.
2. Attach your **Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty**, DD 214 (or equivalent), and any available records of pay or promotions to the RI 20-97 and send to the appropriate military finance center. Verification of your service is required to obtain your estimated earnings. A list of documents that may be used to verify your service is on the Acceptable Documents page.
To obtain a copy of your DD214 or a Request Pertaining to Military Records, Standard Form 180 (SF-180), submit requests to:

**National Personnel Records Center
Military Personnel Records
9700 Page Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100**

***Note:** If you have not received notice after 30 days, contact the appropriate military finance center.*

3. After you receive your estimated military earnings computation from the military finance center via postal mail, please have your human resource office assist you in completing and certifying the appropriate application(s) listed below based on your personal situation:
 - If you are a Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) employee, fill out the Application to Make Service Credit Payment, SF 3108.
 - If you are a Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) employee, fill out the Application to Make Deposit or Redeposit, SF 2803.
4. Send your completed estimated earnings statement (RI-20-97), DD 214 or military orders and SF 2803 or SF 3108 to the address below:

**Office Civilian Human Resources - Norfolk Operations Center
Attn: Civilian Benefits Center
NNSY Building 17
Portsmouth, VA 23709-1005**

***Note:** you can also fax the documents to OCHR Norfolk Operations Center at 757-396-7826. Be sure to state "Attn: Civilian Benefits Center" on the cover page.*

5. The Civilian Benefits Center representative will prepare a calculated estimate of your military deposit amount due, certify your Post-56 military service credit deposit application and forward the required documents to Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS).

** **Please note** that if the Civilian Benefits Center representative shifts the responsibility for submitting the application to you, you will need to provide all necessary documentation, including your completed application and estimated earnings statement. If the application is incomplete, a notification requesting additional information will be sent directly to you via mail and there may be a delay in processing your military deposit.*
6. DFAS will calculate your conclusive military deposit amount along with any applicable interest due, inform you of the amount you owe by mail and provide instructions for making payments.
7. You can make payments directly to DFAS by check, money order or payroll deductions as directed in the military deposit payment request letter you receive. You may also use pay.gov to make your payments directly to DFAS. The deposit may be made in a single lump sum or by paying in installments. Your deposit account balance and each payment will be reflected in block 20 of your Leave and Earnings Statement (LES). Each payment and a year-to-date total will be reflected in the "Deductions" box of your LES.

8. After you have paid your military deposit in full by check, money order or pay.gov, DFAS will send you a **Paid-in-Full Letter**. If your military deposit is paid-in-full by payroll deductions, you must request a **Paid-in-Full Letter** through Civilian Benefits Center or Customer Service Representative (CSR). **Important Reminder:** Verification of your service is required to obtain your estimated earnings. Estimated earnings are required regardless if you are buying back time based on a Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

Common Questions and Answers:

Q: How long will it take to process my request?

A: Once your Post-56 military service credit deposit application has been sent to DFAS, it takes approximately 60 **business** days to process your request. If you have not received notice after 30 business days, please contact them at 1-800-729-3277.

Q: What is a Military Service Deposit?

A: If you served in the military and now hold a civilian position, your military service time may apply toward your civil service retirement. There are specific regulations in regards to these requests that the Civilian Benefits Center should answer that will be specific to your situation. To proceed with this request, you must "buy back" your military service time. You will be required to obtain your estimated earnings from the appropriate military finance center prior to starting the process.

Q: How will buying back my military time impact me?

A: To understand how buying back your military service will impact you specifically, to include how many years of credit you would receive and if it would affect your disability, it is recommended that you speak with a OCHR Retirement Counselor. Since every individual's situation is unique and specific, OCHR Retirement Counselor can assist in interpreting specific regulations and potential impacts, opportunities, etc. To better assist the OCHR Retirement Counselor in his/her recommendations specific to your situation, it is recommended that you take a copy of your approximate earnings and buyback amount as projected by the Estimator tool when meeting with the counselor.

Q: What are Estimated Earnings?

A: Estimated Earnings are an estimate of basic pay earned during a period of military service performed after December 31, 1956.

Q: Am I eligible to "buy back" military service time?

A: If you have **any** prior active duty military service, you may be eligible to buy back that time.