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New Online Tool Will Provide Veterans With Customized Instructions for Discharge Upgrade Process

WASHINGTON — The Department of Defense (DOD), through a joint initiative with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), has launched a new [web-based tool](#) that will provide customized guidance to Veterans who desire to upgrade or change the conditions of their military discharge.

By answering a few short questions, Veterans will receive information on the specific armed services board to contact, the form/s to fill out, special guidance applicable to their case, where to send their application and helpful tips for appealing their discharge.

“This new tool and partnership with DOD is one of many VA initiatives offered to Veterans who believe they may have been unfairly discharged or received an unfair discharge characterization,” said VA Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. “Veterans who believe their discharge was unjust, erroneous or warrants an upgrade are encouraged to use the tool and then apply for review.”

DOD officials also praised the new innovative tool.

“We are thrilled to have partnered with the Department of Veterans Affairs in developing this wonderful and easily accessible tool,” said Mr. Robert Wilkie, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. “We support our Veterans, whether they served recently or long ago, and we are excited to introduce a tool that will individualize the guidance for those who desire an upgrade or change in their military discharge.”

The military has estimated that tens of thousands of Veterans with less than honorable discharges are especially likely to have unjust discharges deserving of upgrades. These are Veterans who were discharged due to incidents relating to post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury or sexual orientation. Fragmented and confusing information has historically deterred Veterans from obtaining crucial information and — in many cases — necessary benefits.

The discharge upgrade tool is available at <https://www.vets.gov/discharge-upgrade-instructions>.

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