

**BY ORDER OF THE COMMANDER
HQ AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER**

**AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER
INSTRUCTION 36-114**



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Personnel

PURPLE HEART REVIEW BOARD

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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(Lt Col Erica K. Rabe)

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This Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC) Instruction (AFPCI) has been approved by the AFPC Commander and provides guidance and outlines internal operating procedures for execution of the Purple Heart Review Board (PHRB) in accordance with (IAW) Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36-2803, *The AF Military Awards and Decorations Programs*. This publication does apply to Air Force Reserve Command Units. This publication does apply to Air National Guard (ANG). This publication may not be supplemented or further implemented/extended.

Ensure all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with (IAW) Air Force Manual (AFMAN) 33-363, *Management of Records*, and disposed of IAW with the Air Force Records Information Management System (AFRIMS) Records Disposition Schedule (RDS). Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) using the AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*; route AF Form 847 from the field through the appropriate functional chain of command.

Refer to **attachment 1** for Glossary of References and Supporting Information.

1. Purpose. This instruction establishes the Purple Heart Review Board under the authority of the Secretary of the Air Force IAW AFI 36-2803, *The Air Force Military Awards and Decorations Program* and states its functions and delegates responsibilities for reviewing and rendering decisions by the Board.

2. Objective. The Purple Heart Review Board reviews, evaluates, makes recommendations on applications and awards of the Purple Heart Medal to AF military members and the Defense of Freedom Medal to Air Force civilians.

3. Roles and Responsibilities.

3.1. Administrator of Recognition and Evaluation Programs, Director of Personnel Programs (AFPC/DP3SP) will:

3.1.1. Serve as the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) for this instruction.

3.2. The Director of Personnel Programs (DP3) will:

3.2.1. Ensure this instruction is in compliance with existing laws and Department of Defense Instructions.

3.2.2. Appoint a minimum of three board members and a board president/reviewing authority.

3.2.3. Appoint primary and alternate board president/reviewing authorities in the rank of Colonel (O-6).

3.2.4. Appoint individuals to serve as board members in the minimum grade of Major (O-4) or civilian equivalents or above.

3.2.5. Ensure Directorate of Personnel Operations (DP2) and Director of Total Force Service Center (DP1) are notified of appointment of board members in writing and replacements are identified as necessary within 15 days of departing individuals.

3.3. The Directorate of Personnel Operations (DP2) will:

3.3.1. Ensure a representative from the Recognition Operation Section is appointed as a technical advisor (non-voting) to the board.

3.3.1.1. Ensure the Promotions, Evaluations and Recognition Branch (DP3SP) and the Military Promotions, Evaluations and Recognitions Branch (DP1SP) is notified in writing of this appointment.

3.3.2. Ensure replacements are identified as necessary within 15 days of departing individuals.

3.4. The Directorate of Total Force Service Center (DP1) will:

3.4.1. Ensure a representative from the Recognitions Section of the Military Promotion, Evaluation and Recognitions Branch is appointed to serve as a recorder (non-voting).

3.4.1.1. Ensure the Promotion, Evaluation and Recognition Branch (DP3SP) and the Recognition Operation Section (DP2SP) is notified in writing of this appointment.

3.4.2. Ensure replacements are identified as necessary within 15 days of departing individuals.

3.5. Staff Judge Advocate (AFPC/JA) will:

3.5.1. Provide legal guidance and analysis to ensure compliance with federal statutes, Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) and/or AFIs.

3.5.2. Clarify guidance with higher headquarters legal offices, including AF/JA and SAF/GC, advocating AFPC's position as necessary.

3.5.3. Recommend changes to proposed guidance, procedures and information to ensure conformity with existing regulations and laws.

3.5.4. Discuss potential changes in existing regulations and laws, if required, to allow proposed guidance, procedures and information into conformity with existing regulations and laws.

4. Evaluation Procedures.

4.1. A key aspect of an awards and decorations program is its consistent application. Accordingly, board members will evaluate applications on the basis of criteria and policy effective when the applicant was wounded or injured.

4.1.1. Awarded for wounds received as a direct result of enemy actions (e.g., gunshot or shrapnel wounds, hand-to-hand combat wounds, forced aircraft bailout injuries, etc.). In addition, it is necessary the wound required or received treatment by medical personnel. Indirect injuries do not meet the criteria for award of the PH. These include, but are not limited to, injuries received while *seeking shelter* during mortar or rocket attacks, aircraft bombings, grenades, and injuries incurred while serving as an aircrew member or in a passenger status because of the aircraft's evasive measures against hostile fire. For example, if Airman hits his head causing a laceration while entering the shelter, the laceration is a result of indirect injury as it was not caused by the mortar or rocket attack.

4.1.2. Each request is considered based on the policies and criteria in use at the time the veteran was injured, and the determination is dependent on the documentary evidence presented. Request MUST consist of the following:

4.2. A detailed personal account of the circumstances surrounding the injury to include specifics as to how the injury occurred, exact date of injury, unit of assignment, and rank held at the time of the injury.

4.2.1. Medical documentation from the time of the incident to substantiate medical treatment was received.

4.2.1.1. If medical documentation is not available, a statement from a medical officer (military or civilian) attesting that an examination revealed that an injury of the type incurred would or should have received medical treatment at the time of the incident may be submitted.

4.2.1.2. Statements from individuals not substantiated by either medical or official records will not be considered sufficient evidence of wounds. In this respect, entries on Reports of Separation are not considered official. Concerning service-related conditions noted by the Veterans Administration (VA), the injury must have been a direct result of the enemy and meet the PH criteria. Not all service-connected conditions, as determined by the VA, were caused by the enemy.

4.2.2. Eyewitness account from an individual who witnessed the injury and can attest to the circumstances surrounding the personal account.

4.2.2.1. In the event eyewitness account from individuals is unable to be obtained, it is the responsibility of the applicant to provide other creditable inputs.

4.3. The board may request input from the Historical Research Agency.

5. Board Process.

5.1. Board will consist of two members and a board president/reviewing authority.

5.2. Board President will be a minimum of an 0-6/Civilian equivalent.

5.3. Board members will be a minimum of 0-4/GS-12 or above.

5.4. Board will be an in-person board and convene on a monthly basis (if needed).

5.5. Recorder will ensure minutes of board results are typed and maintained (see **attachment 2**).

5.6. Board responsibilities:

5.6.1. Review each case on an individual basis to ensure compliance with criteria for award of the Purple Heart.

5.7. Criteria:

5.7.1. Event: Hostile enemy act/while in action in the face of an enemy (includes friendly fire), international terrorist attack, or as a result of military peacekeeping force.

5.7.2. Wound: Injury (magnitude undefined) to any part of the body from an outside force, element, or agent.

5.7.3. Medical Treatment: Documentation by competent, medical authority. Casualty reports are the primary means of documenting entitlements and describe the event, nature of injury, and whether the member was treated and released, hospitalized, or deceased. Absent a casualty report, the board must require a signed statement of circumstances (member and witness to collaborate circumstances) and medical documentation from official medical records.

6. Revocation.

6.1. The board will, at their discretion, revoke the Purple Heart/Defense of Freedom Medal which was previously approved if new information is discovered which brings doubt that the actions of the awardee did not meet the established criteria for award of the medal.

6.2. In the event the board revokes the Purple Heart/Defense of Freedom Medal, a notification will be sent to AF/A1S, Secretary of the Air Force Personnel Council and AFPC/CC.

6.2.1. AF/A1S, upon notification, will notify the SecAF of the board decisions to revoke the Purple Heart/Defense of Freedom Medals.

MARGARET B. POORE, Maj Gen, USAF
Commander, Air Force Personnel Center

Attachment 1**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

AFI 33-360, *Publications and Forms Management*, 1 December 2015

AFI 36-2603, *AF Board For Correction of Military Records*, 5 March 2012

AFI 36-2803, *The AF Military Awards and Decorations Programs*, 18 December 2013

AFMAN 33-363, *Management of Records*, 1 March 2008

Adopted Forms

AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFI—Air Force Instruction

AFMAN—AF Manual

AFRIMS—Air Force Records Information Management System

ANG—Air National Guard

DFM—Defense of Freedom Medal

DoDI—Department of Defense Instruction

IAW—In accordance with

OPR—Office of primary responsibility

PHRB—Purple Heart Review Board

RDS—Records Disposition Schedule

VA—Veterans Administration

Attachment 2

BOARD PROCEEDINGS (SEE EXAMPLE) PURPLE HEART REVIEW BOARD MINUTES

PURPOSE: To review and determine if the Purple Heart or Defense of Freedom Medal should be awarded to an Airman for wounds received as a direct result of enemy actions (e.g., gunshot or shrapnel wounds, hand-to-hand combat wounds, forced aircraft bailout injuries, etc.).

BOARD PROCEEDINGS: The Purple Heart Review Board met on XXXXX and the results of the board are as follows:

The board approved the (list which medal, Purple Heart or Defense of Freedom) for the following individual(s) whom the board determined met the criteria:

1Lt Beetle Bailey

The board disapproved the (list which medal, Purple Heart or Defense of Freedom) for the following individual(s) whom the board determined did not meet the criteria:

SSgt Snuffy Smith

Rational for disapproval:

(Typed Name here), Colonel, USAF/Date

(signature) Date

Board President/Reviewing Authority

Recorder