

Admin Officer Guide: Unauthorized Absence and Deserters

INTRODUCTION

This Admin Officer (AO) Guide supplements AO Guide 5800-1, “Legal Officer.” As the AO, you serve as the Commanding Officer’s (CO) primary advisor for the proper documentation and processing of Unauthorized Absence (UA) and deserter cases. Your actions ensure these cases are handled accurately, consistently, and in accordance with Navy policy. Timely and correct processing protects the command, supports appropriate legal disposition, and ensures proper accountability of personnel across Navy administrative systems, including Navy Standard Integrated Personnel System (NSIPS), Master Military Pay Account (MMPA), Naval Criminal Investigative Service Automated Case Information System (NACIC), Official Military Personnel File (OMPF), and Salesforce Case Management System.

OVERVIEW

This guide provides a wave-top overview of UA and deserter case processing. It aligns with MyNavy Career Center (MNCC) Legal Processing procedures and the applicable MILPERSMAN 1600 and 1626 series. While this guide highlights key responsibilities and procedural considerations for AOs, it does not replace the requirement to review and apply the governing instructions and policies that formally govern UA and deserter processing.

1. INITIAL UA ACTIONS

UA less than 24 hours: UA occurs when a member is absent from their command or assigned place of duty without proper authority:

- Create NAVPERS 1070/613 (Page 13) entry documenting the short UA in NSIPS and OMPF.
- Verify and route Page 13 to the Electronic Service Record via NSIPS and Salesforce.
- NAVPERS 1070/606 (Page 6) is not normally required solely for a UA less than 24 hours unless directed by legal or higher authority.

2. UA > 24 HOURS

When the member is absent for more than 24 hours, on the 5th Day of Absence:

- Create a NAVPERS 1070/606 (Page 6) Record of Unauthorized Absence in NSIPS documenting the start date and time of the absence.
- After 5 consecutive days of UA:
 - Submit the Page 6 to Transaction Service Center (TSC) to process a Stop Pay transaction (SJ04) in the member’s MMPA.
 - The SJ04 transaction places the member’s pay account in an Absent Without Leave (AWOL) status in MMPA. This action suspends all pay and allowances and stops all allotments. Additionally, the SJ04 transaction stops Savings Bond allotments effective with the last bond issue date.
 - Follow MILPERSMAN 1600-040 procedures for Next of Kin notification procedures and MILPERSMAN 1920-260 for Officers.

3. RETURN FROM UA < 30 DAYS

- Update and close the Page 6 with the exact start and stop date, total days and hours of absence, and submit the updated entry to the appropriate TSC to resume pay.

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- Ensure lost time is correctly accounted for in MMPA using the appropriate transaction codes: LOPG (Enlisted) or LOOG (Officer) in accordance with MILPERSMAN 1600-100. If UA is not excused, process SA04 to record lost time. If the UA is excused, process SJ06 to remove the lost time and submit SB03 to charge leave as applicable. Proper documentation of lost time is critical, as unexcused UA may affect TIR, advancement and Good Conduct eligibility.

4. UA MEMOS & KEY SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (KSDs)

- For all UA periods exceeding 24 hours, commands must maintain KSDs supporting pay and legal actions. Refer to the applicable guidance below for case routing procedures and documentation requirements.
- Page 6, Page 13, and associated UA memos form the core KSD package supporting potential NJP, administrative separation processing, or pay audits.

5. DESERTER DECLARATION: Conditions to Declare a Deserter

- Member must be declared a deserter when:
 - UA has reached 30 consecutive days, OR
 - Evidence shows the member committed the offense of desertion (intent to remain away permanently, avoid hazardous duty, avoid ship movement, etc.), OR
 - Member is UA and has gone to a foreign country or sought/accepted asylum.

6. ADMIN ACTIONS > 30 DAYS UA:

- At 30 days UA (or earlier if desertion criteria are clearly met):
 - Update Page 6 entry in NSIPS to reflect the status “Declared Deserter.” Verify the start date and total period of absence, then submit the updated Page 6 to TSC to process UA FID deserter (SP04) transaction in MMPA.
 - Complete DD Form 553 (Deserter/Absentee Wanted by the Armed Forces).
- Transmit DD Form 553 to the Navy Absentee Collection and Information Center (NACIC) nacic-ops@navy.mil via encrypted email and to the supporting TSC. Coordination and assistance requests from NACIC via telephone at (901) 874-2522 or via distribution email are highly encouraged. Upon receipt of DD 553, NACIC will validate and change the Service Member’s personnel accounting status to deserter accounting code (ACC) 109.

7. RETURN FROM UA/DESERTION:

- When a deserter returns to Navy control, the activity will submit DD Form 616 report of Return of Absentee to nacic-ops@navy.mil via encrypted email and a return of deserter message to report the member’s return to military control per MILPERSMAN 1600-070. **Do not accept deserters from civilian authorities until approval is obtained from NACIC.**
- Confirm NACIC shows the member returned; update ACC code (e.g., ACC 100) as directed by PERS/NACIC.
- Modify NAVPERS Page 6 to:
 - Close out the deserter period.
 - Charge all unauthorized days as lost time if unexcused.
 - E-submit Page 6 to OMPF.
- Submit all KSDs to TSC to:
 - Restart pay and allotments (especially family/dental), FID SA04 to Change on Station Status and LH04 to Change Payments to a Financial Institution.”
 - Verify lost time in LOPG and MMPA (TA & TB lines) per MILPERSMAN 1600-100

8. NJP & SERVICE RECORD ENTRIES

- When UA/desertion results in disciplinary action:
 - Use NAVPERS 1626/7 (Report and Disposition of Offense(s)) as the official record documenting NJP.
 - When NJP punishment affects pay, rate, or Good Conduct eligibility, create a NAVPERS 1070/607 (Court Memorandum) entry in NSIPS to document the action in the member's service record.
 - Use Page 6 for UA/lost-time accounting, even if the UA is later excused or dismissed.
- Misconduct Reporting (NJP/Civil Actions/Court-Martial) packages are to be mailed for filing in the OMPF to PERS-313 (E5 and below) or PERS 832 (E-6 and above).

9. ADMIN OFFICER ROLES & BEST PRACTICES

- Establish a battle rhythm:
 - Daily muster review and quick coordination with LCPOs to identify UA early.
 - Maintain a Standardized Key Supporting Document (KSD) Packet.
 - Templates for UA memo, confinement memo, return-from-UA/deserter memo, DD Form 553, and Return of Deserter message. Checklists for documents required for eCRM legal cases.
 - Verify SK03, Report of Deserter message or SK04, Change Confinement transaction posted in MMPA
- Coordinate across stakeholders:
 - CO/XO/CMC: Keep them informed of significant UA cases and impending desertion declarations.
 - Legal Officer/JAG: Validate desertion criteria, charges, and message formats.
 - TSC/PSD: Confirm pay transactions, ACC codes, and lost-time entries.
 - NACIC: Track status of declared deserters and ensure final disposition is reported.
- Audit Records after Resolution
 - Confirm NSIPS, MMPA, LOPG, and OMPF all reflect the same dates and statuses.
 - Ensure Good Conduct award dates and advancement TIR were adjusted when required (Enlisted).
- Train Your CPPA Team
 - Use MNCC Legal Processing briefs and KSD matrices as training tools.

****NOTE – OFFICER CASES:**

UA and deserter processing procedures including NAVPERS 1070/606 entries, pay stop/start actions, DD Form 553 submission, NACIC notification, and required message traffic, are generally the same for both Officers and Enlisted personnel. Officers, however, are subject to separate disciplinary and administrative separation procedures, including Show Cause proceedings, Board of Inquiry processing, and Secretary of the Navy level decisions, in accordance with applicable Officer separation policies. For any Officer UA or desertion case, the Admin Officer must coordinate closely with the Staff Judge Advocate and PERS-834 to ensure proper documentation, reporting, forwarding of NJP or court-martial results, and accurate filing in the Officer's OMPF.

REFERENCES:

MILPERSMAN 1600-010: Deserters (Policy and Criteria)

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Reference/MILPERSMAN/1000/1600Performance/1600-010.pdf?ver=Cp57dryAEEEooE38K5DAwQ%3D%3D>

MILPERSMAN 1600-020: Apprehension of Absentees and Deserters.

https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Reference/MILPERSMAN/1000/1600Performance/1600-020.pdf?ver=SU6xL_GVF5ctA4BcFw3AYg%3D%3D

MILPERSMAN 1600-030: Acceptance and Disposition of Returned Deserters

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/References/MILPERSMAN/1000-Military-Personnel/1600-Performance/>

MILPERSMAN 1600-040: Procedures for Commands to Which Enlisted and Officer Absentees are Attached

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/References/MILPERSMAN/1000-Military-Personnel/1600-Performance/>

MILPERSMAN 1600-050: Procedures When an Enlisted Absentee Returns to Naval Jurisdiction

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Reference/MILPERSMAN/1000/1600Performance/1600-050.pdf?ver=n5r0CkILeQGCSKsN86aF2Q%3d%3d>

MILPERSMAN 1600-060: Declaration of Desertion.

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Reference/MILPERSMAN/1000/1600Performance/1600-060.pdf?ver=H51Lu6y2th1VhTjHDkeB3Q%3D%3D>

MILPERSMAN 1600-070: Declaration of Return from Desertion.

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Reference/MILPERSMAN/1000/1600Performance/1600-070.pdf?ver=hF-oCB4a5W9Tgj5MkPPH6A%3D%3D>

MILPERSMAN 1600-090: Removal of Marks of Desertion.

https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Reference/MILPERSMAN/1000/1600Performance/1600-090.pdf?ver=hzc280ykji_WNMe3WyJRgA%3d%3d

MILPERSMAN 1600-100: Lost Time

https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Reference/MILPERSMAN/1000/1600Performance/1600-100.pdf?ver=t9_flaKp4y6t5X-Qbxc7gQ%3D%3D

MILPERSMAN 1600-120: Procedures for Reporting Members as Failed to Report Under Permanent Change of Station/Temporary Duty Orders

https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Reference/MILPERSMAN/1000/1600Performance/1600-120.pdf?ver=F2_mA4mpl4r9FyYHYVfIEg%3D%3D

MILPERSMAN 1626-020 Enlisted Service Record Entries After NJP.

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Reference/MILPERSMAN/1000/1600Performance/1626-020.pdf>

MILPERSMAN 1920-260: Officer Unauthorized Absence (UA)

https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Reference/MILPERSMAN/1000/1900Separation/1920-260.pdf?ver=2ebS7giMff2UYe_F7Ko7lg%3D%3D

MILPERSMAN 1070-300: NAVPERS 1070/606, Record of Unauthorized Absence

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Reference/MILPERSMAN/1000/1000General/1070-300.pdf?ver=gIIPBDbNNGZzU15fWhErRQ%3D%3D>

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CPPA Case Routing Guidance (Legal Restricted Cases) dtd 28 May 2024

https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Support/PayPers/CPCResources/Legal_CRG_24MAY28.pdf?ver=EnsSo68jwreK951LwXVZLw%3D%3D

MNCC Legal Processing Brief

https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Support/PayPers/CPCResources/Legal_Processing_MNCC_041425.pdf?ver=OMA8jIefuskMv7lcu_QakA%3D%3D

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